

## Updated Clinical Criteria for ABA and TMS Services Applies to Commercial members in Colorado effective May 15, 2026

---

To support improved access to mental health and substance use disorder services, Colorado recently updated its insurance laws and regulations regarding the clinical criteria used to determine medical necessity.

[Colorado Revised Statutes § 10-16-104 \(5.5\)](#) (as amended by [HB25-1002](#)), and [3 CCR 702-4, Regulation 4-2-64](#) (Mental Health Parity) requires health plans to use independent, nationally recognized clinical guidelines developed by nonprofit organizations for making coverage and utilization review decisions.

In response, Optum Behavioral Health is updating the clinical criteria used for medical necessity and utilization review of services. Effective May 15, 2026, the following criteria will be used to evaluate services for members covered by a Commercial health plan:

### Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA)

- [Council of Autism Service Providers \(CASP\) guidelines](#)

### Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation (TMS)

The following guidelines are used together to support medical necessity determinations for TMS:

- [CANMAT Guidelines \(2016 edition\)](#)
- [CANMAT Guidelines \(2023 edition\)](#)
- [American Psychiatric Association \(APA\) Position Statement on TMS](#)

### What this means for providers

The updated criteria applies only to ABA and TMS services for Commercial members. Please update your practice guidelines to align with these updated criteria.

All other applicable clinical criteria used for other behavioral health services have not changed. Those criteria are already aligned with the requirement to be developed by a non-profit association. This includes ASAM, LOCUS, CALOCUS-CASII and the APA Psychological and Neuropsychological Testing Billing and Coding Guide.

### Resources

- [Clinical Criteria and Guidelines](#)
  - For state-specific guidelines, scroll down the page to State/Contract-Specific Clinical Criteria
- [Clinical Practice Guidelines](#)