

Quick Reference Guide

EIBI Benefit Administration Changes Effective July 1, 2026

MGBHP is transitioning administration to Optum Behavioral Health

Overview

On July 1, 2026, Mass General Brigham Health Plan (MGBHP) will transition the administration of Early Intensive Behavioral Intervention (EIBI) benefits to Optum Behavioral Health. This applies to all MGBHP Commercial and MassHealth (Medicaid) plans.

MGBHP covers EIBI services for eligible members from birth up to 3 years of age. Qualifying members must have a confirmed diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and/or Down Syndrome, be actively involved in Early Intervention, meet criteria and have a prior authorization for EIBI services.

Autism Spectrum Disorder

- Diagnosis must be made by a licensed physician (e.g., PCP, etc.), Advanced Practice Registered Nurse, Physician Assistant or Psychologist experienced in the diagnosis and treatment of autism with developmental or child/adolescent expertise.
- Evidence may be gathered by a multidisciplinary team to assist in the diagnostic process.
- Documentation used to confer ASD diagnosis must include evidence that aligns with current Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM) criteria across ASD core deficits.

Down Syndrome

- The member has a diagnosis of Down Syndrome from a physician who is licensed and qualified to make such a diagnosis, and the diagnosis is confirmed by genetic testing.
- **Commercial Coverage Note:** Not all employer groups include coverage for EIBI services for members with a Down syndrome diagnosis.
 - Please refer to the member's plan materials, handbook and/or amendments to confirm coverage.
 - You can also call the number on the back of the member's ID card for assistance.
- EIBI providers (also referred to as Specialty Service Providers or SSP) must be certified by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health. Please review the [Early Intervention Policies, Forms, and Guidance](#) for detailed information about EIBI services, requirements, authorizations and more.

Here's additional insight about this transition from MGBHP to Optum Behavioral Health to help you and your practice navigate the change.

Member Notification

Will members be notified of this change?

No. This is an administrative change that only affects providers. This change should be seamless to members.

Contracting and Certification

Do I now need to contract with Optum Behavioral Health?

To continue providing EIBI services to MGBHP members on or after July 1, 2026, participation in the Optum Behavioral Health ABA network and EIBI certification by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health are required.

The vast majority of providers who are certified by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) to deliver EIBI services are already credentialed and contracted with Optum Behavioral Health as part of its Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) provider network.

Optum will be reaching out to a few providers who are not currently in our ABA network to encourage them to become a network provider..

Is certification by DPH still required?

All EIBI providers must be certified by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) in order to deliver EIBI services.

For providers who are currently certified by the Massachusetts DPH to be contracted with Mass General Brigham Health Plan, no action is needed at this time. You do not need to request a separate certification. Providers will be expected to renew certification based on existing DPH guidance and timelines.

If I'm not certified by the DPH, can I render and bill for EIBI services?

No. All EIBI providers must be certified by the Massachusetts DPH in order to render EIBI services.

Please review the [Please review the Early Intervention Policies, Forms, and Guidance](#) for information.

DPH has a list of [certified EIBI providers](#) on their website. ABA providers seeking EIBI certification must follow [the DPH instructions](#).

Authorization of Services

What clinical criteria should I follow beginning July 1?

Refer to the Optum Supplemental Clinical Criteria for Massachusetts:

- [Massachusetts Medicaid](#)
- [Massachusetts Commercial](#)

I have open/existing service authorizations with Mass General Brigham Health Plan. Will those be valid for services after July 1?

Here's how prior authorizations will be managed:

- **For date(s) of service through June 30, 2026:**
 - Mass General Brigham Health Plan will honor open (existing) authorizations for services delivered before the end of June.
 - If you need to request authorization of new service(s) to begin before July 1, please use the existing MGBHP request process.
- **For date(s) of service on or after July 1, 2026:**
 - For open (existing) authorizations approved by MGBHP that extend beyond July 1, Optum Behavioral Health will create authorizations as part of this transition. These will align with the existing approved EIBI services and date(s) of service. You will receive a copy of each Optum authorization for your records.

- If you need to request authorization of new services to begin on or after July 1, please follow Optum's [Massachusetts ABA prior authorization process](#).

Will the medical criteria change?

No. EIBI services are approved based on the age of the child and the medical criteria outlined by the State of Massachusetts.

- [EIBI Medical Necessity Guidelines](#)
- [EIBI Provider Payment Guidelines](#)

Claims and Reimbursement

Which company will process and pay my claims?

- For dates of service up to and including June 30, 2026, claims will be processed and paid by Mass General Brigham Health Plan.
- For dates of service on or after July 1, 2026, Optum Behavioral Health will process claims and reimburse providers.

Questions and Resources

If I have questions, whom do I contact?

Please email Optum Provider Relations Advocate Heather Willis at heather.willis@optum.com.