



## Two new provider license types authorized for Medicare plans effective Jan. 1, 2024

### Marriage and Family Therapists and Mental Health Counselors will be added to Medicare's Part B covered provider list and your participation agreement with Optum will be updated

To help increase the availability of mental health providers to Medicare beneficiaries, Marriage and Family Therapists and Mental Health Counselors will be added to the covered provider list under Medicare Part B beginning Jan. 1, 2024. This expansion of providers who can provide services under Medicare Part B is authorized by the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2023, [H.R. 2617 version dated Dec. 29, 2022](#).

This means Marriage and Family Therapists and Mental Health Counselors will be able to offer services to Medicare members in most practice settings. This includes private practice, clinical settings, Federally Qualified Health Centers and Rural Health Clinics. The expansion of Medicare Part B provider types does not apply to services furnished to a patient in a hospital.

### Here's what you need to know:

1. **Appropriate licensure is required.** Providers must be legally authorized to perform behavioral health services under either state law or the state's regulatory mechanism provided by state law.
2. **Optum Behavioral Health participation agreements will automatically be updated.** We'll add these license types for all eligible providers that are a participating group practice for Medicare.
3. **Some providers may be eligible to opt out of adding these license types to their network contract.** Individual providers who didn't want these license types added to their contract had the opportunity to opt out by Sept. 30, 2023.

### Participation requirements

#### Marriage and Family Therapists:

As outlined in the statute, you are eligible to be reimbursed for services provided to Medicare-covered members provided you meet all of the following requirements:

- a. Hold a master's degree or doctor's degree which qualifies for licensure or certification as a marriage and family therapist according to the state law of the state in which the individual furnishes the services;
- b. Is licensed or certified as a marriage and family therapist by the state in which the individual furnishes the services;
- c. After obtaining such degree has performed at least 2 years or 3,000 hours of post-master's degree clinical supervised experience in marriage and family therapy; and
- d. Meets such other requirements as specified by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS).

#### Mental Health Counselors:

As outlined in the statute, you are eligible to be reimbursed for services rendered to Medicare-covered members provided you meet all of the following requirements:

- a. Possesses a master's or doctor's degree which qualifies for licensure or certification as a mental health counselor, clinical professional counselor, or professional counselor according to the state law of the state in which the individual furnishes the services;
- b. Is licensed or certified as a mental health counselor, clinical professional counselor, or professional counselor by the state in which the services are furnished;
- c. After obtaining such a degree has performed at least 2 years or 3,000 hours of post master's degree of clinical supervised experience in mental health counseling; and
- d. Meets such other requirements as specified by CMS.

For specific license types eligible with Optum see the [CAA 2023 Network Eligibility Grid](#).

### Questions?

Review these [FAQs](#) for details. For additional information or questions not answered in this document, please call the Optum Behavioral Health Provider Service Line at **1-877-614-0484**.