

# Autism resource guide

For behavioral health providers

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## Thank you for your participation in our network.

The goal of this guide is to help ease your administrative burden, so you can spend more time at the heart of your practice — providing care to your patients. It provides information about contacts and our administrative and clinical processes related to autism treatment. Please note, obtaining autism-related treatment is dependent upon a patient's specific benefit plan.

### Need more information?

For more administrative, clinical, and quality management information, consult the Evernorth® provider website ([Provider.Evernorth.com](https://Provider.Evernorth.com)).

**Not registered for the website?** Go to [Provider.Evernorth.com](https://Provider.Evernorth.com) > [Register](#).

## Contacting us

We understand that an efficient communications process allows you to spend more time and energy on patient care. Below is some helpful information for when you need to contact us.

### Autism Care Coordinator team

The Autism Care Coordinator team is a nonclinical team dedicated to assisting providers with information regarding patient benefits and eligibility, authorization information, and autism-related treatment, such as applied behavior analysis (ABA). The team is available Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. CT at **877.279.7603**.

If you need to request ABA prior authorization, please complete and submit the [Applied Behavior Analysis Prior Authorization Form](#).

### Provider Services department

The Provider Services department handles questions regarding billing, benefits, and eligibility for autism-related treatment, such as ABA. This department is available Monday through Friday from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. CT at **800.926.2273**.

You can also retrieve eligibility and benefits information in other ways:

- + Log in to the Evernorth® provider website ([Provider.Evernorth.com](https://Provider.Evernorth.com)) and confirm benefits via the Procedure Code Benefit Tool.
- + Use the Coverage Confirmation Grid (an Excel spreadsheet) to verify general benefits and eligibility, including a specific provider's network status, prior authorization requirements, and accumulation information.
  - A completed grid will be returned via secure email within one business day from the date it was received.
  - The Coverage Confirmation Grid and instructions for its use are available on the [Verify Coverage, Benefits, and Network Status](#) web page.

### Provider Relations team

The Provider Relations team is dedicated to improving your experience when working with us. Contact your [provider relations representative](#) if you have questions about credentialing, contracts, or rates or if there is a question that the Provider Services department cannot resolve.

## Care Management team

Evernorth has a team of care managers who work with patients who have an autism diagnosis and their caregivers. All care managers have specialized autism training and are individually licensed providers. If you have a patient or caregiver who can benefit from care management, please have them call **800.274.7603**.

The Care Management team also supports your patients by finding available providers when care is needed. In these situations, a member of the Evernorth team will email in-network providers in the patient's local area, inquiring if they are able to accept the patient. In the event the provider is available and responds to the email, the provider's information is given to the patient/family so they can reach out to the provider directly to schedule an appointment.

- + Providers should respond to the email outreach with their real-time availability for both assessment and treatment.
- + Due to the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA), the patient's name is not disclosed in the email outreach, but their age is indicated.

**Note:** This email outreach is separate and distinct from the quarterly email outreach sent by the Provider Relations team to assess general availability and provider directory accuracy.

## Provider guidance and education

A 20-minute tutorial is available for in-network autism providers. This tutorial provides applied behavior analysis (ABA) provider guidance and education — touching on all of the basics to help you effectively do business with Evernorth®.

We strongly encourage you and your administrative staff to view the tutorial to learn about:

- + How to work with Evernorth administratively and clinically.
- + Tools and resources that may assist you in your practice (including claims payment).
- + Related administrative services we offer to you and your patients.
- + Product offerings.
- + Care advocacy processes.
- + Medical necessity criteria.
- + Evernorth Behavioral Health Administrative Guidelines.

The [ABA provider guidance and education tutorial](#) is available on the Evernorth provider website ([Provider.Evernorth.com](#)).

## Contracting and credentialing

To help fulfill our mission to improve the health and vitality of those we serve, Evernorth® Behavioral Health (Evernorth) is committed to expanding our network of autism providers. Evernorth requires providers to be certified by a national governing agency or a state licensing board (e.g., Board Certified Behavior Analyst®, Board Certified Behavior Analyst-Doctoral®, Board Certified Assistant Behavior Analyst®, licensed behavior analyst, licensed behavior specialist, or other behavioral health licensure).

### Credentialing

Individual providers and autism clinics must complete an application if they would like to join our network.

- + Individual providers must complete the [Evernorth Behavioral Provider Information Form](#).
- + Autism clinics and large group practices must complete the [Evernorth Screening Application for Autism Clinics](#).<sup>1</sup>

It may take up to 90 days for an application to be processed. After the 90-day period, providers can email any questions to [BehavioralContracting@Evernorth.com](mailto:BehavioralContracting@Evernorth.com).

If you have colleagues who are autism providers and they are not in the Evernorth network, please refer them to the [credentialing](#) web page on the Evernorth provider website ([Provider.Evernorth.com](https://Provider.Evernorth.com)) to learn more about our credentialing process. If they have specific questions about joining our network, encourage them to call Provider Services at **800.926.2273**.

### Demographic updates

If a provider is leaving your clinic or you need to update the clinic roster, call Provider Services at **800.926.2273** or complete and submit the [Clinic Location Changes For Existing Clinic Contracts Form](#).

1. Once the clinic contract is completed, each certified or licensed autism provider must become credentialed with Evernorth. This process can take an additional 60 to 90 days. Providers must be fully credentialed to render in-network services to Evernorth customers.

## Autism care management

Patients who have an autism diagnosis and their caregivers may have access to a dedicated team of care managers at Evernorth®. All care managers have specialized autism training and are individually licensed providers. If a patient or their caregiver needs assistance, they can call the Autism Care Coordinator team at **877.279.7603**, Monday–Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. CT.

Providers can also call this team to:

- + Schedule a care manager discussion for questions about the [Intensive Behavioral Interventions - \(EN0499\)](#) coverage policy or medical necessity criteria. These discussions are available before submitting a prior authorization request or after receiving a decision if there are any questions about the outcome.
- + Get information regarding eligibility and benefits, authorization information, and autism-related treatment, such as applied behavior analysis (ABA).

Each time a provider calls Evernorth, HIPAA verification will be necessary. Please be prepared with the Evernorth patient's name, address, date of birth, and ID number as well as your name/clinic name, address, and Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN).

### ABA

It is important to confirm a patient's ABA eligibility and benefits before performing an assessment. This information can be confirmed by:

- + Using the Procedure Code Benefit Tool on the Evernorth provider website ([Provider.Evernorth.com](https://Provider.Evernorth.com)). This tool allows you to view benefit information for selected procedure codes when performing an eligibility and benefit search, verify if prior authorization is required, see the completed and remaining status when a benefit has limitations, and save benefit reference numbers. To learn more about this tool, view the [Eligibility and Benefits video tutorial](#).
- + Calling the Autism Care Coordinator team at **877.279.7603**, Monday–Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. CT.

All plans may not allow for ABA services. This determination is contingent upon the specific benefit plan.

- + For patients whose plans include the ABA benefit, a diagnosis of autism is required for benefit eligibility, unless otherwise specified.
- + If ABA benefits are not loaded in our system for a patient's benefit plan, a representative from our Autism Care Coordinator team will take your contact information, research coverage, and return your call within two business days.
- + For ABA, we encourage providers to request authorizations up to 30 days in advance of or two weeks after the start date of service. A delay in request may result in a retrospective review and could delay the determination for up to 30 days.
- + Prior authorization is no longer required for assessment Current Procedural Terminology (CPT®) codes 97151, 97152, or 0362T with a diagnosis of autism, as long as the provider is independently licensed or a Board Certified Behavior Analyst® and the patient's policy covers ABA services. If you provide ABA services, you only need to submit claims for these assessment services and they will be evaluated for payment. Claims submissions are evaluated according to industry standards.
- + After you complete the assessment and treatment plan, complete the [Applied Behavior Analysis Prior Authorization Form](#). For a summary of the information to include for the medical necessity review, please see the supporting clinical documentation for medical necessity criteria section of the form.
- + To discuss specific case details or for questions about the [Intensive Behavioral Interventions - \(EN0499\)](#) coverage policy, you can schedule a care manager discussion by calling the Autism Care Coordinator team at **877.279.7603**.

## Billing codes for applied behavior analysis

The table below outlines the CPT codes that Evernorth® Behavioral Health uses for autism services, service descriptions/how the codes should be used, and the provider types that can provide and bill for the services (i.e., Board Certified Behavior Analyst-Doctoral® [BCBA-D®], Board Certified Behavior Analyst® [BCBA®], Board Certified Assistant Behavior Analyst® [BCaBA®], and nonlicensed/noncertified autism caregivers).

It is important to confirm a patient's applied behavior analysis (ABA) eligibility and benefits before performing an assessment. For verification, call the Autism Care Coordinator team at **877.279.7603**, Monday–Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. CT.

**All of the ABA CPT codes are in 15-minute increments.**

Code	Description	Provider types that can provide service	Provider types that can bill for service
97151	<b>Behavior identification assessment</b> , administered by a physician or other qualified health care provider, each 15 minutes of the physician's or other qualified health care provider's time face-to-face with patient and/or guardian(s)/caregiver(s) administering assessments and discussing findings and recommendations, and non-face-to-face analyzing past data, scoring/interpreting the assessment, and preparing the report/treatment plan.	BCBA-D, BCBA, or licensed mental health provider	BCBA-D, BCBA, or licensed mental health provider
97152	<b>Observational behavioral follow-up assessment</b> , includes physician or other qualified health care provider direction with interpretation and report, administered by one technician.	BCaBA, technician	BCBA-D, BCBA, or licensed mental health provider
97153	<b>Adaptive behavior treatment by protocol</b> , administered by technician, face-to-face with one patient.	BCaBA, technician	BCBA-D, BCBA, or licensed mental health provider
97154	<b>Group adaptive behavior treatment by protocol</b> , administered by technician, face-to-face with two or more patients.	BCaBA, technician	BCBA-D, BCBA, or licensed mental health provider
97155	<b>Adaptive behavior treatment with protocol modification</b> , administered by physician or other qualified health care provider with one patient.	BCBA-D, BCBA, or licensed mental health provider	BCBA-D, BCBA, or licensed mental health provider
97156	<b>Family adaptive behavior treatment guidance</b> , administered by physician or other qualified health care provider (with or without the patient present).	BCBA-D, BCBA, or licensed mental health provider	BCBA-D, BCBA, or licensed mental health provider
97157	<b>Multiple-family group adaptive behavior treatment guidance</b> , administered by physician or other qualified health care provider (without the patient present).	BCBA-D, BCBA, or licensed mental health provider	BCBA-D, BCBA, or licensed mental health provider
97158	<b>Adaptive behavior treatment social skills group</b> , administered by physician or other qualified health care provider, face-to-face with multiple patients.	BCBA-D, BCBA, or licensed mental health provider	BCBA-D, BCBA, or licensed mental health provider
0362T	<b>Exposure behavioral follow-up assessment</b> , includes physician or other qualified health care provider direction with the assistance of one or more technicians. 0362T is reported based on a single technician's face-to-face time with the patient and not the combined time of multiple technicians.	BCBA-D, BCBA, or licensed mental health provider	BCBA-D, BCBA, or licensed mental health provider
0373T	<b>Exposure adaptive behavior treatment with protocol modification</b> , requiring two or more technicians for severe maladaptive behavior(s). 0373T is reported based on a single technician's face-to-face time with the patient and not the combined time of multiple technicians.	BCBA-D, BCBA, or licensed mental health provider	BCBA-D, BCBA, or licensed mental health provider



## Billing information for applied behavior analysis

In addition to the billing codes table, below is some other information to reference when billing services for applied behavior analysis (ABA). If you have any billing-related questions, call Provider Services at **800.926.2273**.

- + Evernorth® Behavioral Health (Evernorth) utilizes the CPT billing codes proposed by the American Medical Association (AMA) for ABA treatment. We recommend reviewing the definitions of each code in the most recent CPT manual. As you submit new and renewing treatment plans for your patients, please request ABA services using the codes set forth by the AMA.
- + All of the ABA CPT codes are in 15-minute increments.
- + All ABA services must be billed with CPT codes 97151–97158, 0362T, and 0373T ONLY.
- + Prior authorization is no longer required for assessment CPT codes 97151, 97152, or 0362T with a diagnosis of autism, as long as the provider is independently licensed or a Board Certified Behavior Analyst® (BCBA®) and the patient's policy covers ABA services. If you provide ABA services, you only need to submit claims for these assessment services and they will be evaluated for payment. Claims submissions are evaluated according to industry standards.
- + Only one provider can bill for a unit of time, with the exception of CPT codes 97153, 97154, and 97155 (direct supervision when the BCBA/qualified health care provider directs the technician and both are face-to-face with the patient at the same time).
- + Evernorth does not credential nonlicensed/noncertified staff. Services for these staff members must be billed under the supervising provider.
- + Codes 0362T and 0373T describe services provided to patients with one or more specific severe destructive behaviors (for example, self-injurious behavior, aggression, or property destruction) with direct supervision by a physician or other qualified health care provider, which requires two or more technicians to be face-to-face with the patient for safe treatment.

## Telehealth

All ABA CPT codes are covered telehealth services. For more information, see the [Intensive Behavioral Interventions - \(EN0499\)](#) coverage policy.

## Electronic data interchange

Electronic claims submission can save time and money and improve processing accuracy. You can send, view, and track claims electronically through one of our electronic data interchange (EDI) vendors.

- + Use Evernorth payer ID **62308**.
- + Refer to the [electronic data interchange vendors](#) web page on [Cigna.com](#) for a complete, up-to-date list of EDI vendors.

## Paper claims

If you need to file a paper claim, use Form CMS-1500 and follow these guidelines:

- + Print your name in box 31.
- + Include your claims mailing address as it is listed on your W-9.
- + List only a BCBA or other licensed provider in box 33.
- + Send health maintenance organization and preferred provider organization claims to PO Box 188022, Chattanooga, TN 37422.

## Website resources

The Evernorth® provider website ([Provider.Evernorth.com](https://Provider.Evernorth.com)) offers a variety of clinical, quality-of-care, and educational materials for autism providers.

### Education center

Our [behavioral education and training](#) web page on [Provider.Evernorth.com](https://Provider.Evernorth.com) has resources that can help you work more efficiently with Evernorth. On this page, you can easily access:

- + Videos to help you learn about how to use [Provider.Evernorth.com](https://Provider.Evernorth.com), such as [registration and access](#).
- + Learning materials, such as a [website overview document](#) that outlines claims, remittance reports, the My Practice tool, and website access/entitlements.

### Behavioral health administrative guidelines

The Evernorth Behavioral Health Administrative Guidelines are an extension of your contract. They provide information on a variety of topics, including care management processes, claims payments, and billing for services. The [Evernorth Behavioral Health Administrative Guidelines](#) are available on [Provider.Evernorth.com](https://Provider.Evernorth.com).

### Coverage policy

Evernorth bases authorization determinations for applied behavior analysis (ABA) on the [Intensive Behavioral Interventions - \(EN0499\)](#) coverage policy unless contractual requirements or federal or state law requires the use of other specifically identified clinical criteria.

To request prior authorization, complete the assessment and treatment plan and attach it to the completed [Applied Behavior Analysis Prior Authorization Form](#). For a summary of the information to include for the medical necessity review, please see the supporting clinical documentation for medical necessity criteria section of the form.

To discuss specific case details or for questions about the [Intensive Behavioral Interventions - \(EN0499\)](#) coverage policy, you can schedule a care manager discussion by calling the Autism Care Coordinator team at **877.279.7603**.

### Website access manager training

Each group registered on [Provider.Evernorth.com](https://Provider.Evernorth.com) is required to have between one and 15 website access managers assigned to it to oversee registration for and grant the appropriate level of access to the website.

Website access managers approve new users for [Provider.Evernorth.com](https://Provider.Evernorth.com), assign or modify the website functions to which users have access, and remove access for users who no longer need it.

For more information and to access a website access manager training, visit the [website access managers](#) web page on [Provider.Evernorth.com](https://Provider.Evernorth.com).