This document provides guidance regarding coding and billing for Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). A separate guidance document provides information on documenting virtual visits: Coding and Billing Interim Guidance: Virtual Visits.

This document will be updated as more information is available. Please check back frequently.
VERSION: May 26, 2020

Contents
Coding ........................................................................................................................................... 2
Completing the Claim Form ............................................................................................................. 2
Frequently Asked Questions ........................................................................................................... 2
Payer Programs & Policies (UPDATED) ......................................................................................... 5
United Concordia (UCCI) ................................................................................................................ 5
Principal........................................................................................................................................ 5
The Dental Care Plus Group ........................................................................................................... 5
Northeast Delta Dental .................................................................................................................... 6
Delta Dental of Kansas .................................................................................................................... 6
Hawaii Dental Service (HDS) .......................................................................................................... 8
Delta Dental of Arkansas ................................................................................................................ 8
Delta Dental of Rhode Island .......................................................................................................... 8
Delta Dental of Wisconsin ............................................................................................................... 8
Delta Dental of Iowa ....................................................................................................................... 9
Delta Dental of South Dakota (DDSD) .......................................................................................... 9
Delta Dental of Tennessee .............................................................................................................. 9
Delta Dental of New Jersey (DDNJ) and Delta Dental of Connecticut (DDCT) ......................... 10
Delta Dental of Michigan, Indiana & Ohio .................................................................................... 10

The American Dental Association recognizes the extraordinary circumstances dentists and their patients face as we navigate the COVID pandemic. The cost of infection control procedures has skyrocketed and dental offices are facing a significant financial challenge navigating this environment. Further, costs of personal protective equipment (PPE) including N95 masks, surgical masks, face shields, gowns and shoe covers, has increased due to supply shortages with prices variable across the nation. Operatory protective barriers, protective equipment for front office staff, additional disinfection protocols and other administrative or engineering controls (e.g. isolation systems, air purifiers, filters, etc.) are adding overhead for dental offices. In this environment, the ADA has issued a Statement on Third Party Payer Reimbursement for Costs Associated with Increased Standards for Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). This guide provides additional information regarding coding and billing for PPE. In the long-term dentists

Will be updated as more information becomes available.
whose overhead has remarkably changed, may choose to approach third party administrators to re-negotiate their fee schedules. The ADA has developed a guide on Handling Contract Negotiations.

Coding

As noted in the Statement on Third Party Payer Reimbursement for PPE the ADA is urging third party benefit programs to either:

1. Adjust the maximum allowable fees for all procedures or
2. Allow a standard fee per date of service per patient to accommodate the rising costs of PPE.

Prior to such adjustments taking effect, dental offices may wish to use CDT code “D1999 - unspecified preventive procedure, by report” to document and report the use and cost of additional PPE. Dentists can use this code once per patient visit/claim to attempt to cover the cost of PPE.

**D1999 unspecified preventive procedure, by report**

Used for a procedure that is not adequately described by a code. Describe the procedure.

Completing the Claim Form

Because D1999 is a “by report” code, Box 35 of the ADA Claim Form must include the explanation for charges reported against this code. When additional charges for PPE are being billed, an entry of “PPE” may suffice for Box 35.

Frequently Asked Questions

**What PPE should I use?**

The use of PPE is dependent upon professional judgment based on hazard assessment including community transmission, administrative & engineering controls, availability of PPE as well as any states laws or regulations. Consult the ADA’s Return To Work Interim Guidance Toolkit for guidance on appropriate infection control procedures and PPE. The ADA has also issued guidance on Extending the Use of N95 Masks.

**How much can I charge for PPE?**

The ADA does not provide fee guidance. Please note that:

- A dentist individually determines whether to charge and his or her full fee for any procedure delivered and reported with a CDT code.
- Neither the ADA nor the CDT Code establish fee schedules for the listed procedures.
- Third-party payers determine their own reimbursement amounts for services covered by the applicable dental benefit plan.

Will be updated as more information becomes available.
It is always best to inform patients of any additional charges to avoid any surprise bills. Providing a documented financial policy and seeking consent is desirable.

**How do I document charges for PPE?**

Dentists should develop a standard office policy to document the additional infection control procedures or specific PPE that will be used across all patients. This documentation methodology will help justify a standard fee across all patients. Alternatively, dentists may wish to add a note in the patient’s record to document the details of the PPE uniquely necessary for the visit when charging different fees based on the level of PPE used.

**How much will I be paid for PPE?**

For dentists who have signed participating provider agreements with third party payment programs, payment for PPE is dependent upon the contract signed between the carrier and the dentist. You may want to call the toll-free number on your patient’s identification cards to determine what coverage may be available for additional costs of PPE and to verify if you can bill the patient if there is no coverage. For Medicaid patients, please check with your state Medicaid agency.

**I don’t think the payment that the third party payer paid me covers the exorbitant costs of PPE I am facing. Can I balance bill my patients separately?**

If you are not a participating provider: yes, you are able to balance bill the patient up to your full fee. Inform the patients prior to the visit on any changes to your charges or financial policy.

If you are a participating provider: it depends. Dentists who have signed participating provider agreements have a contractual relationship with their third party carrier. These agreements determine policies that the dentist has agreed to accept. Refer to the EOB or another communication from a third party payer to determine (1) whether the patient can be billed (i.e. denied versus disallowed/non-billable) and (2) by how much.

If the payer does not pay your full fee, then some scenarios that may occur are as follows:

- Payer may apply a maximum allowable charge and decide to cover only a portion of that amount leaving the remaining as the patient’s responsibility. You can then bill the patient up to the maximum allowable charge.
- Payer may deny the claim as a non-covered service. Denied claims are typically billable to the patient but:
  - In states without non-covered services laws the dentist may still be obligated to only charge the maximum allowed fee as determined by the payer.
  - In states with non-covered services laws the dentist may be able to charge the patient up to his/her full fee. Ensure you are following your state laws on non-covered services.
- Payer may bundle the fee with the payment for other procedures provided during the same visit and disallow or make any other charges non-billable to the patient. If charges are disallowed or noted as non-billable to the patient on the EOB, the patient may not be charged a separate fee for the PPE.

*Will be updated as more information becomes available.*
ADA is actively advocating on this issue. We will update the information in this guide as more information becomes available. For Medicaid patients, please check with your state Medicaid agency. Inform the patients prior to the visit on any changes to your charges or financial policy.

Can I charge only my uninsured patients for increased PPE costs?

It is unethical to only charge uninsured patients or only seek reimbursement for insured patients to address the costs of PPE. See Section 5.B. (Representation of Fees) of the ADA Principles of Ethics and Code of Professional Conduct. See in particular Advisory Opinion 5.B.3. (Fee Differential).

I heard that payment may be delayed because I reported a D1999 code?

In general, a “by report” code may prevent auto-adjudication of claims. Manual review is typically required to process codes with accompanying remarks resulting in a delay in processing payments. The ADA has been informed by third party payers that while some carriers are able to process claims efficiently with the increased use of D1999, other payer systems are experiencing some delays.

Has the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) released any guidance around PPE payments?

While we are still awaiting explicit guidance regarding reimbursement for PPE, thus far CMS has issued the following Q & A:

“During the public health emergency, some providers are experiencing significant cost increases. Without knowing how much costs will increase right now, how should states approach making adjustments to Medicaid payment rates and methodologies to ensure that Medicaid costs are paid during the public health emergency period?

States have flexibility to make reasonable adjustments to Medicaid payments to better align Medicaid payments with the increased cost of providing services to Medicaid beneficiaries during the PHE under the Medicaid state plan through base and supplemental payments. Such adjustments could include, but are not limited to, an increase resource utilization to account for the need for more personal protective equipment or other increased safety measures, but we would consider state’s justification for increases in payment rates during the PHE. We recognize the uncertainty and challenges states and providers are facing and will work with them on their proposals to increase Medicaid payments to help assure Medicaid patients have access to services. Payments must comport with all applicable requirements, including those under section 1902(a)(30)(A) of the Act.”

I heard that some payers may pay a standard fee without my reporting a D1999 code?

Yes. Some payers have begun launching programs to provide financial support for reopening or recovery of dental offices and/or to support the cost of PPE. Please read the following “Payer Programs & Policies” section of this guidance publication for the latest information available. This information is separate and different from other financial programs that third party payers have offered in the past few weeks.

As of 9 AM CENTRAL May 26, 2020 (see next page)
Payer Programs & Policies (*UPDATED*)

This section provides information on the different carrier policies that have been announced. This is not a complete list and only includes information reported to the ADA by members. If you have additional information to share please send to dentalbenefits@ada.org

**United Concordia (UCCI)**

- Allowing providers $10 per patient visit for dates of service from 5/1/2020-6/30/2020 to help cover the costs associated with purchasing masks, sterilization procedures, and other CDC requirements resulting from COVID-19.
- This coverage will apply to United Concordia administered business only, including: PPO commercial, Medicare Advantage, TRICARE Dental Program (TDP), Active Duty Dental Program (ADDP), Federal Employees Dental and Vision Insurance Program (FEDVIP), Gateway Health Medicare and Medicaid and its partnership business.
- To align with ADA guidance, please use procedure code D1999 unspecified preventive procedure, by report.
- Claims must include procedure code D1999 to be eligible to receive payment for PPE.
- D1999 can be used once per patient visit to cover the additional costs for PPE.

**Principal**

- Offering a Personal Protective Equipment payment of $7 per patient for June – December 2020 for in-network dental providers and insured dental customers.
- This payment is intended to support our in-network dentists and keep member’s safe during this time.
- Charges for PPE are considered non-covered services. Any amount charged over $7.00 for Personal Protective Equipment is patient responsibility.
- The $7.00 payment does not apply to the member’s calendar year maximum benefit amount.

**The Dental Care Plus Group**

- DCPG will reimburse your office $10 per patient visit during May and June of 2020.
- This reimbursement will be paid monthly ‘outside’ of the normal claim payment processes and will be based on claims with a date of service in May and June. Separate payment will be issued in June and July of 2020 for the prior month’s patient encounters.
- DCPG prefers that D1999 not be used for PPE. Payments will be made without the use of this code.

*Will be updated as more information becomes available.*
**BCBS Kansas**

- To help offset these additional PPE costs, BCBSKS will provide an add-on increase to all dental allowances starting with dates of service May 15, 2020 for the remainder of the year.
- This special add-on increase does not require any action on the dentist's part, nor does it require any special CDT code billing.
- As such, we will continue to deny D1999 when billed as content of service. BCBSKS will automatically include an add-on allowance to every covered service that our local network dentists bill.
- The new add-on allowances are figured based on a percentage of the maximum allowable payment (MAP) for services. Please note there will be a reduction beginning September 1 based on the anticipation that supply and demand of PPE will eventually level out and prices will come down.
- General Dentistry, Pedodontics, Periodontics: 3.0% (May 15-Aug. 31); 2.25% (Sept. 1-Dec. 31)
- Oral/Maxillofacial Surgery, Orthodontics, Endodontics: 2.0% (May 15-Aug. 31); 1% (Sept. 1-Dec. 31)

**Northeast Delta Dental**

- Covid-19 Interim Supplemental Program available for at least the next two months (May/June dates of service).
- For Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont participating dentists, when treating patients covered by Northeast Delta Dental, NEDD will be providing an additional $10 payment, outside of the normal claims processing payment, for each patient treated in-office on any given day.
- The payment will be $10 regardless of the dentist’s network status (Premier/PPO) or specialty.
- Payment will not exceed $10 for any unique patient for services provided on the same day, and payment will be paid to the practice based on Tax Identification Number (TIN), not the individual dentist.
- The payment will not be made when the claims are adjudicated. Around the 15th of the following month, NEDD shall run a report identifying all the patients your office saw in the prior month, and then an administrative check will be cut outside the normal claims process.
- For claims adjudicated in May, with May dates of service (DOS), a report will be run approximately June 15th, followed closely by the mailing of an administrative check to your office for those claims. The same process will be followed for claims adjudicated in June with June dates of service (and any May DOS run-out), with a check to follow in July.
- The need for any extension of this COVID-19 Interim Supplemental program will be reassessed at that time.

**Delta Dental of Kansas**

- From June 1, 2020 through July 31, 2020, for each patient visit, Delta Dental of Kansas will provide an additional $10 per patient to help assist in covering increased PPE costs.
Delta Dental of Kansas will pay participating dental practices in Kansas $10 per patient visit for patients that are DDKS covered members only.

- No enrollment or applications needed to receive these payments.
- Participating Dentists will submit claims as usual (no special codes or notes needed).
- Claims must be received within 30 days of the date of service in order for DDKS to calculate payments.
- Payments will be issued monthly as a bulk payment for the total number of DDKS patient visits for the prior month.
- Our Professional Relations team is available to help with the program and answer any questions.

**Delta Dental of Colorado**

- DDCO is offering a personal protective equipment (PPE) Reimbursement Program for Delta Dental PPO and Premier network providers in Colorado.
- From May through July 2020, DDCO will automatically pay $8 per adjudicated claim for billable dates of service between May 1 and July 31, 2020.
- Claims must be received by DDCO on or before August 31, 2020.
- Dentists do not need to submit claims or procedure codes for PPE; those will be denied as not billable to the patient and will delay payment.
- DDCO’s first lump-sum payment would be made in June 2020 for adjudicated claims for billable dates of service rendered from May 1 to May 31, 2020. A second lump-sum payment would be made in July 2020 for adjudicated claims for services rendered from May 1 to June 30, 2020 (excluding claims included in the first payment). A third lump-sum payment would be made in August 2020 for adjudicated claims for billable dates of service rendered from May 1 to July 31, 2020 (excluding claims included in the prior two payments). And a final lump-sum payment would come in September 2020 for adjudicated claims for billable dates of service rendered from May 1 to July 31, 2020 (excluding claims included in the prior three payments) and received by DDCO on or before August 31, 2020.
- Unless DDCO decides to extend the PPE Reimbursement Program, the cut-off for the receipt of claims eligible for this program is August 31, 2020, and any claims received after that date will not be eligible for this program.
- Existing open orthodontics claims will receive a one-time payment of $24 per adjudicated claim to cover the full program period. New orthodontic claims will receive a prorated allowance based on banding date. Dentists do not need to submit an additional claim for open treatment cases.
- To be eligible for the PPE Reimbursement Program, providers must: 1. Be enrolled in the DDCO PPO or Premier network as of the date of service. 2. Currently participate in DDCO’s EFT/Direct Deposit or enroll by June 12, 2020. 3. Remain enrolled for the remainder of the program.
Hawaii Dental Service (HDS)

- Offering the HDS COVID-19 Interim Supplemental Program (the “Program”) for participating HDS dentists in Hawaii, Guam, and Saipan to receive a $10 supplemental payment per eligible patient visit, retroactive from May 1, 2020 through July 31, 2020.
- The Program is a new, temporary financial support program that does not have to be repaid to HDS – to help practices alleviate the costs associated with resuming dental operations during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Participating dentists do not have to opt-in to the Program and will automatically receive monthly supplemental payments for eligible patient visits.
- Patient visits are counted once per patient, per date of service, per provider, and per service location, during the Program time period, May 1, 2020 through July 31, 2020.
- Pre-authorizations, duplicate claims for patient visits, non-par visits, and teledentistry patient encounters are not eligible. Per HDS Policy, dentists may not charge PPE costs to the patient.
- Access Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ).

Delta Dental of Arkansas

- $2,500 grants are available to Delta Dental of Arkansas providers to help offset some of the costs of additional Personal Protection Equipment and sanitization supplies
- Applications will be accepted May 13 – June 1, 2020
- Grantees must spend all funds before December 31, 2020.
- DDAR considers infection control costs to be part of the procedure such that there is not a separate payable amount and it is not be billable to the patient.

Delta Dental of Rhode Island

- Allocated $1 million to assist our participating dentists with acquiring much-needed (PPE) supplies as they re-open.
- The amount of each allocation is based on Delta Dental patient volume in the practice.

Delta Dental of Wisconsin

- Practice Recovery Supplement Program (PRSP), to help dental practices offset some costs as they prepare to resume providing routine care to Delta Dental of Wisconsin members.
- Delta Dental of Wisconsin is committing $5 million dollars to support network providers through this program.
- The PRSP will provide financial support with a one-time payment to all Delta Dental PPO™ and Delta Dental Premier® practices in good standing.

Will be updated as more information becomes available.
COVID-19 Coding and Billing Interim Guidance: PPE

- Payments will be allocated based on the average number of in-network DDWI member visits in 2019.
- Orthodontist awards will be based on average number of office visits expected per patient for a full year of treatment.
- All network practices in good standing will receive an award. The minimum award is $500, and the maximum award is $100,000.
- Practices with multiple locations will be aggregated to one minimum or maximum award. For example, if there are three locations that each qualify for $100, the total award will be $500. The cumulative award for any practice or aggregate of multiple locations will not exceed $100,000.
- No application required. No repayment is required for this program.

**Delta Dental of Iowa**

- Reopening Support Payment.
- Participating network (Premier, PPO, and Hawki) dentists will receive $10 for each claim they file for Delta Dental of Iowa members. [Still finalizing payments for DWP members].
- The support payment will apply to services members receive between May 1 and August 31, 2020.
- These support payments will be applied to all claims and there is no need to submit for payment.
- The first payments will begin around June 15.
- Dentists are not able to charge a separate infection control fee for services. This is not a billable charge to the member or Delta Dental.
- Access [Frequently Asked Questions](#)

**Delta Dental of South Dakota (DDSD)**

- Has increased reimbursement for six different exam codes by an average of 6% to help offset offices’ new added PPE costs.
- The exam codes are D0120, D0140, D0145, D0150, D0160 and D0180. The fee increase is effective May 1, 2020.
- Costs for infection control and OSHA compliance are included in the DDSD fees for the dental services, a separate fee for infection control is not billable to the patient by a DDSD participating dentist.

**Delta Dental of Tennessee**

- Operation #SmilesMatter, a grant program to help dentists acquire much-needed supplies, equipment, and technology
- Committing more than $3.3 million for Operation #SmilesMatter

*Will be updated as more information becomes available.*
COVID-19 Coding and Billing
Interim Guidance: PPE

- Grants are available to all licensed dentists practicing within the state of Tennessee who have active NPI numbers.
- Each eligible dentist will receive a $1,000 grant.
- Program will be administered through Henry Schein, Inc. in the form of a credit on the eligible dentists' account with Henry Schein, to be used towards existing account balances and then toward any future purchase of any dental products and/or services from Henry Schein1.
- Dentists with existing Henry Schein accounts at the start of the program will have funds posted to their account in the form of a credit no later than Sunday, May 31.
- This program will begin May 11, 2020, and end on December 31, 2020.

Delta Dental of New Jersey (DDNJ) and Delta Dental of Connecticut (DDCT)

- Will pay participating Delta Dental dentists in New Jersey or Connecticut $10 per patient visit for DDNJ and DDCT members only for a two-month period.
- PPE Program assists dental offices with increased costs related to N95 masks and other sterilization requirements resulting from the COVID-19 crisis.
- Must be enrolled in EFT
- Delta Dental members should not be charged for infection control or D1999. Office visits counts will be calculated by Delta Dental of New Jersey and Delta Dental of Connecticut based on submitted claims.
- These payments will begin when New Jersey and Connecticut lift emergency care restrictions, and dental professionals are once again permitted to provide routine and preventive dental care. No repayment is required for this program.

Delta Dental of Michigan, Indiana & Ohio

- All licensed dentists in Michigan, Ohio and Indiana with active Type 1 NPI numbers are eligible to receive a $1,000 credit to Henry Schein to be used toward existing account balances or toward any future purchase of dental products and/or services from Henry Schein.
- More than one dentist in a practice may receive the credit as long as each dentist is licensed and has an active Type 1 NPI number.
- Dentists with existing Henry Schein accounts at the start of the program will have funds posted to their account in the form of a credit no later than June 12, 2020.
- If you do not already have an account with Henry Schein, call 844-269-4204 or set up your account on the Henry Schein website. Once your account has been created and you have submitted the Delta Dental form, we will confirm your eligibility and provide notice to Henry Schein, who will then credit your account.
- The program will begin for eligible dentists on May 26, 2020, and end December 31, 2020. Unless Delta Dental of Michigan, Ohio, and Indiana decides to extend the credit period, the credit will not be applied to any accounts after December 31, 2020.

Will be updated as more information becomes available.
Current Delta Dental policy is that PPE is not billable to the patient.

These materials are intended to provide helpful information to dentists and dental team members. They are in no way a substitute for actual professional advice based upon your unique facts and circumstances. **This content is not intended or offered, nor should it be taken, as legal or other professional advice.** You should always consult with your own professional advisors (e.g. attorney, accountant, insurance carrier). To the extent ADA has included links to any third party web site(s), ADA intends no endorsement of their content and implies no affiliation with the organizations that provide their content. Further, ADA makes no representations or warranties about the information provided on those sites.

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