

Coding 101

Billing Insurance for Mental Health Services

If you've never coded for therapy or you'd just like a refresher, here's what you need to know to be up to speed!
There's also lots of support during orientation and beyond.

Code Overview

You'll see two acronyms in our EHR.

You don't need to remember what they stand for, only how to use them.

CPT: Current Procedural Terminology

Identifies the service received so insurance companies know what to reimburse.

- ❖ Some services are coded based on how long it lasted > Individual therapy
- ❖ Other services are coded based on who attended > Family therapy

A screenshot of an EHR form. The 'CPT Code / Units' field is highlighted with a red box and contains '(90837 - \$160.00) Psychotherapy 60 min'. Below it are 'Service Modifiers' and 'Start Date / Time' (11/01/2022, 9:00am) and 'End Date / Time' (11/01/2022, 9:53am). The 'POS Code' field is also highlighted with a red box and contains '11 - Office'.

POS: Place of Service

Identifies *where* a service was conducted.

Use the perspective of where the client was physically located.

POS 11: Office

Therapist's office, client was in person

POS 10: Telehealth-Client home:

Remote, client attended from client's home

POS 02: Telehealth-Client not home:

Remote, client attended from somewhere other than client's home

*Ex: Work, someone else's house, sitting in a **parked** car alone...*



Outpatient Mental Health CPT Codes

Our EHR gives descriptions next to each code so you always have a guide.

Intake Assessment

No time range, but it's unlikely to complete in less than 50 minutes.

90791: Diagnostic Evaluation

Individual Therapy: Time-based

90837: "60 min" psychotherapy session → 53 min +

90834: "45 min" psychotherapy session → 38 - 52 min

90832: "30 min" psychotherapy session → 16 - 37 min

Less than 16 minutes isn't billable unless client has Medicaid and case management code is used (ask Ashley Shaw about this).

A screenshot of an EHR form. The 'CPT Code / Units' field is highlighted with a red box and contains '(90837 - \$160.00) Psychotherapy 60 min'. Below it are 'Service Modifiers', 'Start Date / Time' (90847 - \$160.00) Family psytx w/patient, 'End Date / Time' (90785 - \$15.00) Interactive Complexity, and 'POS Code' (90846 - \$160.00) Family therapy w/o pat.

Family & Couples Therapy

Also used by child therapists when meeting with parents if the meeting is of sufficient length.

90847: Family therapy with the client present, 26 min +

90846: Family therapy without the client present, 26 min +

Crisis Sessions

If you hold a crisis or emergency session, a code reimbursed at a higher rate can be used. If used too often, it will get denied or raise red flags about ethical coding, so just be careful about how and when you use it.

90834: Psychotherapy for crisis, 30-74 min 90840: Add-on code for additional 30 min, rarely paid, might as well not use

Crisis Code Guidelines

Use of code generally possible when client is in extreme distress and/or presents in complex/life-threatening circumstances and requires immediate attention.

Examples

- ❖ Client expresses suicidality with intention
- ❖ Presence of overwhelming, disabling symptoms
- ❖ Anytime a call to crisis response or 911 is made
- ❖ Other situation creating high distress that demands immediate attention