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Associate Clinical Social Worker and Associate Marriage and Family Therapist Services for Federally Qualified Health Centers and Rural Health Clinics

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The Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) continues to closely monitor the 2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) situation and provide updates and guidance to Medi-Cal providers related to amended Medi-Cal services or reimbursement policy. To that end, effective immediately, the following temporary new policy is instituted:

Temporarily adds the services of Associate Clinical Social Worker (ACSW) and Associate Marriage and Family Therapist (AMFT) at Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) and Rural Health Clinics (RHCs) as a billable visit.

Note: The California Board of Behavioral Sciences (BBS) does not consider ACSWs or AMFTs as licensed practitioners. Therefore, licensed behavioral health practitioners must supervise and assume the professional liability of services furnished by the unlicensed ACSW and AMFT practitioners. The licensed practitioner must also comply with supervision requirements established by the BBS.

Pursuant to the federally approved State Plan Amendment (SPA) 20-0024, a FQHC or RHC can be reimbursed at the Prospective Payment System (PPS) rate for a visit between a FQHC or RHC patient and an ACSW or AMFT. The visit may be conducted as a face to face encounter or meet the requirements of a face to face visit provided via telehealth.

Payment for ACSW or AMFT Services

- ACSW or AMFT services that meet visit criteria and are provided on, or after March 1, 2020 are eligible for reimbursement at the PPS rate.
- Services are billed under the licensed billable behavioral practitioner of the FQHC or RHC.
- These services are billed utilizing existing claiming processes that includes billing managed care plans first, followed by billing DHCS for the PPS rate wrap payment. Note that the services are billed using the appropriate behavioral health billing code set.

[Please see the Federally Qualified Health Centers/Rural Health Medi-Cal Provider Manual](#)

This temporary change will remain in effect through the end of the public health emergency including any extensions.