



**Re:** *Comparison of Medicaid Reimbursement for ABA Individual Treatment Services*

## Executive Summary

Each state’s Medicaid program reimburses Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA) services differently. All of them have maximum reimbursement rates, but what determines the maximum reimbursement rate depends on each state’s guidelines for service providers and the specific service within ABA that is being provided.<sup>i</sup> This memo compares the reimbursement rates for four ABA individual treatment services procedural codes across the CSG South region, with a focus on how Georgia’s reimbursement schedule differs from those of other states.

## Research Methods

Procedural codes for ABA services where an individual receives treatment (as opposed to group treatment) were identified by using the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services [List of CPT/HCPCS Codes](#). Medicaid reimbursement schedules were gathered from each of the CSG South member states. For comparison, the highest reimbursement rates were selected from states with reimbursement rate modifiers.

## Findings and Analysis

In Georgia, the Department of Community Health has mandated that all insurances provide *meaningful coverage* services for autism spectrum disorder (ASD), including ABA.<sup>ii</sup> This requirement stems from the 2015 law, Ava’s Law ([House Bill 429](#)), and expansion legislation in 2018 ([Senate Bill 118](#)). As such, Georgia’s Medicaid program does reimburse for ABA, with reimbursement rates for ABA services that depend not only on the type of service but also on the provider's credentials and the care setting. There are five levels of ABA care providers: physician/psychiatrist, psychologist/ Board Certified Behavior Analyst-Doctoral (BCBA-D), Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA), Board Certified Assistant Behavior Analyst (BCaBA), and Registered Behavior Technician (RBT).

Table 1 outlines Medicaid procedure codes for ABA services delivered to an individual (e.g. no group interventions). Table 2 details Georgia’s fee schedule for those codes based on the provider and service setting. The Medicaid modifier codes (additional information about the medical procedure, service, or supply involved)<sup>iii</sup> are included alongside the provider and setting descriptions as a reference tool.

Table 1. Procedure Codes and Their Meaning<sup>1</sup>

Code	Meaning
97151	Behavior Identification Assessment
97152	Behavior Identification Supporting Assessment
97153	Adaptive Behavior Treatment by Protocol

<sup>1</sup> The codes chosen are individual services – not group services.



97155	Adaptive Behavior Treatment with Protocol Modification
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SOURCE: Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services<sup>iv</sup>

Table 2. Georgia’s Medicaid Fee Schedule for ABA Providers Based on Service Setting (Modifier Code)

Services Provided by a Physician/Psychiatrist (U1)			
	In-Clinic (U6)	Out-of-Clinic (U7)	Telehealth (GT)
97151	\$59.96	\$76.31	\$59.96
97152	\$59.96	\$76.31	\$59.96
97153	\$59.96	\$76.31	\$59.96
97155	\$59.96	\$76.31	\$56.96
Services Provided by a Psychologist, BCBA-D (U2)			
	In-Clinic (U6)	Out-of-Clinic (U7)	Telehealth (GT)
97151	\$40.14	\$48.16	\$40.14
97152	\$40.14	\$48.16	\$40.14
97153	\$40.14	\$48.16	\$40.14
97155	\$40.14	\$48.16	\$40.14
Services Provided by a BCBA (U3)			
	In-Clinic (U6)	Out-of-Clinic (U7)	Telehealth (GT)
97151	\$30.91	\$37.78	\$30.91
97152	\$30.91	\$37.78	\$30.91
97153	\$30.91	\$37.78	\$30.91
97155	\$30.91	\$37.78	\$30.91
Services Provided by a BCaBA (U4)			
	In-Clinic (U6)	Out-of-Clinic (U7)	Telehealth (GT)
97151			
97152	\$20.19	\$25.09	\$20.91
97153	\$20.91	\$25.09	\$20.91
97155			
Services Provided by a Registered Behavior Technician (U5)			
	In-Clinic (U6)	Out-of-Clinic (U7)	Telehealth (GT)
97151			
97152	\$15.58	\$18.69	\$15.58
97153	\$15.58	\$18.69	\$15.58
97155			

SOURCE: Georgia Medicaid Fee Schedule<sup>v</sup>



Georgia is the only state in the CSG South region that designates different reimbursement rates based on the setting of service delivery. However, other states have modifiers for their reimbursement rates based on provider credentials; when applicable, modifiers are either explicitly denoted in their individual fee schedules.

Some states that do not utilize modifiers in their schedule imply provider preference through their maximum reimbursement rates. An example of where provider preference is implied is Alabama’s Medicaid program. Alabama does not list modifiers, but the maximum reimbursement rate incentivizes lower-credentialed providers over higher-credentialed providers to mitigate uncompensated care.<sup>vi</sup> Table 3 outlines the maximum reimbursement rates by procedural code for the CSG South region states (excluding Georgia).

Table 3. ABA Services Medicaid Maximum Reimbursement by State

		Maximum Reimbursement Rate by Procedural Code <sup>2</sup>			
State	Unit	97151	97152	97153	97155
Alabama	15 minutes	\$25.00	\$12.00	\$10.00	\$15.00
Arkansas	15 minutes	\$20.00	\$0.00	\$15.00	\$22.50
Florida	15 minutes	\$19.05	\$12.19	\$12.26	\$15.37
Kentucky	15 minutes	\$26.57	\$11.77	\$11.77	\$26.57
Louisiana	15 minutes	\$25.00	\$11.00	\$12.50	\$22.50
Mississippi	15 minutes	\$34.18	\$41.74	\$13.42	\$21.19
Missouri	15 minutes	\$25.26	\$25.26	\$20.13	\$25.26
North Carolina	15 minutes	\$30.56	\$61.73	\$20.81	\$32.22
Oklahoma	15 minutes	\$23.55	\$0.00	\$17.35	\$23.55
South Carolina	15 minutes	\$23.51	\$20.50	\$14.88	\$21.25
Tennessee <sup>vii 3</sup>					
Texas	15 minutes	\$24.71	\$0.00	\$13.00	\$18.00
Virginia	15 minutes	\$46.63	\$23.48	\$46.63	\$46.63
West Virginia	15 minutes	\$29.14	\$9.90	\$9.90	\$29.14

SOURCE: Individual State Medicaid Fee Schedules

Table 4 compares states’ reimbursement rates to the average hourly cost of ABA adaptive behavior treatment by protocol. Georgia's hourly rate has been calculated based on its out-of-clinic rate. This comparison reveals that Georgia’s maximum reimbursement is not only greater than that of other states in the region, but it also exceeds the average cost of care, whereas other states’ rates are below the average cost of care.

<sup>2</sup> Where applicable, reimbursement rates are listed as the highest rate between procedural code modifiers.

<sup>3</sup> TennCare, Tennessee’s Medicaid program, uses "at-risk" Managed Care Organizations, and each participating MCO creates its own contracts with providers and maintains its own fee schedules.



Table 4. Average Hourly Cost of ABA Adaptive Behavior Treatment by Protocol (97153) Compared to States' Maximum Hourly Medicaid Reimbursement Rate for the Same Service

State	Maximum Reimbursement Rate/Hour
Average Cost/Hour <sup>viii</sup>	~\$120.00
Alabama	\$40.00
Arkansas	\$60.00
Florida	\$49.04
Georgia	\$305.24
Kentucky	\$47.08
Louisiana	\$50.00
Mississippi	\$53.68
Missouri	\$80.52
North Carolina	\$83.24
Oklahoma	\$69.40
South Carolina	\$59.52
Tennessee	
Texas	\$52.00
Virginia	\$186.52
West Virginia	\$39.6

Comparing other states' maximum reimbursement rates to Georgia's reimbursement rates for physicians and psychiatrists, it appears that Georgia is reimbursing at higher rates than other states in the CSG South region. Furthermore, Georgia reimburses at a higher rate for all types of ABA providers when services are rendered in an at-home setting compared to those rendered in a clinic. One potential explanation for this is that Georgia's Medicaid program could be accounting for travel expenses on the provider side (Georgia also covers transportation costs for Medicaid-eligible patients who cannot secure transportation to in-clinic care through Georgia's Non-Emergency Medical Transportation).<sup>ix</sup>

<sup>i</sup> "Breaking Barriers: How ABA Therapy Became Recognized and Covered by Medicaid." 2024. Rubyaba.com. 2024. <https://www.rubyaba.com/autism-resources/breaking-barriers-how-aba-therapy-became-recognized-and-covered-by-medicaid>.  
<sup>ii</sup> "Autism Spectrum Disorder." 2018. Georgia Medicaid. 2018. <https://medicaid.georgia.gov/programs/all-programs/autism-spectrum-disorder>.  
<sup>iii</sup> "What Are Medical Coding Modifiers?" 2023. Aapc.com. 2023. <https://www.aapc.com/resources/what-are-medical-coding-modifiers>.  
<sup>iv</sup> "List of CPT/HCPCS Codes | CMS." n.d. Wwww.cms.gov. <https://www.cms.gov/medicare/regulations-guidance/physician-self-referral/list-cpt-hcpcs-codes>.  
<sup>v</sup> "Fee Schedules." 2022. Georgia.gov. 2022. <https://www.mmis.georgia.gov/portal/PubAccess.Provider%20Information/Fee%20Schedules/tabId/20/Default.aspx>.  
<sup>vi</sup> "Alabama Medicaid." n.d. Medicaid.alabama.gov. [https://medicaid.alabama.gov/content/Gated/7.3G\\_Fee\\_Schedules.aspx](https://medicaid.alabama.gov/content/Gated/7.3G_Fee_Schedules.aspx).



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vii “Therapy Comply - Tennessee Medicaid Therapy Fee Schedules.” 2025. Therapycomply.com. 2025.

<https://therapycomply.com/Tennessee/Medicaid/Therapy-Fee-Schedules>.

viii “ABA Therapy Cost by State Uncovered.” n.d. [www.crossrivertherapy.com](http://www.crossrivertherapy.com). <https://www.crossrivertherapy.com/research/aba-therapy-cost-by-state>.

ix “Non-Emergency Medical Transportation FAQs | Georgia Medicaid.” n.d. [medicaid.georgia.gov](http://medicaid.georgia.gov).

<https://medicaid.georgia.gov/programs/all-programs/non-emergency-medical-transportation/non-emergency-medical-transportation>.