1 Introduction

Thank you for your participation in the Alabama Title XIX Medicaid Program. The *Alabama Medicaid Provider Manual* has been developed to assist you in receiving reimbursement for providing medically necessary services to eligible Medicaid recipients living in the state of Alabama.

Please note this manual is not a legal description of all aspects of the Medicaid law. It is a practical guide for providers who participate in the Medicaid Program. Should there be a conflict between material in this manual and pertinent laws or *Alabama Medicaid Administrative Code* provisions governing this program, the latter are controlling.

The Alabama Medicaid Agency is the single state agency responsible for the administration of the Alabama Title XIX Medicaid program. The Alabama Medicaid Agency has contracted with HP to be the fiscal agent for the Medicaid program. Medicaid and HP developed this manual for Medicaid providers. HP is responsible for maintaining and distributing the manuals to the Alabama Medicaid provider community.

The HP Provider Relations Department is composed of field representatives who are committed to assisting Alabama Medicaid providers in the submission of claims and the resolution of claims processing concerns. If you have any comments or suggestions for improving this manual, please contact HP Provider Relations at the following address:

HP Provider Relations
P.O. Box 241685
Montgomery, AL 36124-1685
1 (800) 688-7989
e-mail: provrelations@alxix.slg.hp.com

This chapter describes how the manual is organized, how to access and use the online version of the manual, and the method for distributing and documenting changes to the manual.

1.1 How to Use this Manual

This section describes the organization of the *Alabama Medicaid Provider Manual* and provides tips for using the manual to resolve billing and eligibility-related questions.

1.1.1 Manual Organization

The *Alabama Medicaid Provider Manual* is divided into three parts:

Part I – Provider Information

The information in Part I is intended for all health care providers who are enrolled in the Alabama Medicaid Program and who provide services to Medicaid recipients. Specifically, Part I addresses the following:

- *Introduction*, which describes the purpose and organization of the manual
- *Becoming a Medicaid Provider*, which briefly describes the enrollment process required for participation in the Alabama Medicaid program
- *Verifying Recipient Eligibility*, which describes how to determine whether a recipient is eligible to receive Medicaid benefits, and how to interpret the eligibility verification response received through the Provider Electronic Solutions software or Automated Voice Response System (AVRS)
- *Obtaining Prior Authorization,* which describes how to submit a request for services requiring prior authorization
- *Filing Claims*, which informs providers how to correctly complete a claim form for submission to Medicaid
- *Receiving Reimbursement*, which describes the Remittance Advice (RA) statement, a report that lists claim and payment activity for a provider
- *Understanding Your Rights and Responsibilities as a Provider*, which describes fair hearings, utilization review, maintaining provider records, and other information regarding provider rights and responsibilities

Part II – Alabama Medicaid Services

Part II provides enrollment, billing, and reimbursement information specific to each program type identified by the Alabama Medicaid Agency. Each chapter within Part II describes a different program.

Providers who are unaccustomed to general billing or reimbursement requirements should refer to Part I before using the information in Part II.

Part III – Appendices

Part III contains referential information important to all providers, including the following:

- Guidelines for billing EPSDT, family planning, and managed care claims
- Samples of forms used by Alabama Medicaid providers
- Lists of codes and other data useful for providers

1.1.2 Tips for Using the Manual

This section provides information that can enhance your ability to quickly locate information in the manual. To make the manual easier to read, it includes standardized section numbering and use of bold, italics, and notes. Introductions to chapters and sections allow you to quickly determine whether a particular section contains the information you seek. The manual also contains an index and a table of contents to help you locate both broad topics and specific information quickly.

Section Numbering and Page Numbering

The first page of each chapter features a large chapter number, shaded in black, at the top right margin of the page. All major headings within chapters include section numbers. The section numbers may contain up to three heading levels, all of which are documented in the table of contents.

The header for each odd-numbered page identifies the chapter number. All pages also contain the chapter title. The footer of each page contains a unique page number, including the corresponding chapter number. Each chapter begins again at page one: for instance, Chapter 1 numbers 1-1, 1-2, 1-3; Chapter 2 numbers 2-1, 2-2; and so on.

Date Field

The bottom of each page contains a date field indicating when the page went to print. The date field includes the month and year of distribution (for instance, January 2004). Changes to the provider manual are distributed as change pages. The date at the bottom of each page reflects the date the policy changed or procedural information went into effect.

Use of Bold and Italics

To help you locate important information more quickly, chapter and section headings are designated by bold and italics. As much as possible, the section headings describe the content of the sections they introduce.

Index and Table of Contents

The provider manual features a table of contents that uses three heading levels. In the online version of the manual, these headings are referred to as “bookmarks.” You can position your cursor on a bookmark and click your left mouse button to jump to the corresponding page of the manual. For more information about the online version of the manual, please refer to Section 1.2, Using the Online Version of the Manual.

The paper version of the manual also contains an index. The online version of the manual features search capability, so an index is not included.

Notes

Throughout this document, note boxes and margin notes emphasize important details, messages, or references to other sections in the manual. Because the manual will be updated periodically, note boxes and margin notes do not contain specific page references; rather, they contain section references as appropriate. This way, as pages are added to the manual, you may still refer to the same section references to access important data quickly and efficiently.

NOTE:
Note boxes display like this.

General Writing Style

To make the manual easier to read and understand, the manual uses a standard writing approach that includes the following:

- Introductory paragraphs for each chapter and major section heading, which briefly but clearly describe the contents of the chapter or section, enabling you to scan the first few lines of a chapter or section to determine whether it contains the information you seek
- Shorter sentences and paragraphs that employ bullet lists where necessary, enabling you to quickly locate important information
- Tables and graphs, which can convey complex information more clearly than text

1.2 Using the Online Version of the Manual

For your convenience, a copy of the billing manual is available in online format. The online and paper versions of the manual have identical content. However, the online version includes enhanced features that allow you to access information more quickly. Some of these features include:

- Point-and-click access to all sections of the manual, allowing you to quickly locate information by section title
- Update tracking features, such as an update log and online notes indicating the exact location and nature of all modifications to the provider manuals
- Powerful online search capabilities, allowing you to locate information by keywords

Refer to the Section 1.3, Manual Update Log, for a description of the update log. Refer to Section 1.2.2, Benefits of Using the Online Manual, for more information about the other features described.

The manual may be downloaded from the Alabama Medicaid Web site at no charge.

1.2.1 Downloading the Online Manual

The online version of the manual is produced using Adobe® Acrobat™. Acrobat files are in a *portable document format* (*pdf*). A *pdf* file is platform-independent, meaning it may be viewed on a personal computer (PC) running on practically any platform. You may already be familiar with this type of file: the federal government uses *pdf* files as the standard for delivering documents over the Internet. For instance, anyone who has ever downloaded a tax form from the Internet has used a *pdf* file.

NOTE:

To use the online version of the manual, you must have **all** of the following:

- A PC with minimum hardware and software requirements, as listed below
- The Acrobat Reader™, available to you at no charge through the Alabama Medicaid Web Site or other sources on the World Wide Web (WWW)
- An Online version of the *Alabama Medicaid Provider Manual*

This section describes the PC hardware and software requirements, how to download the Acrobat Reader®, and how to download the online manual.

Hardware and Software Requirements

To use the online version of the *Alabama Medicaid Provider Manual*, your computer must meet, at a minimum, the following hardware and software requirements:

- **Windows System Requirements:** i486 or Pentium® processor-based personal computer with Microsoft Windows 95, Windows 98, or Windows NT 4.0 with Service Pack 3 or later. Requires 8 MB of RAM (16 recommended) on Windows 95 or 98; 16 MB of RAM (24 recommended) on Windows NT
- **Macintosh System Requirements:** Apple Power Macintosh computer with Apple System Software version 7.1.2 or later. Requires 4.5 MB of available RAM (6.5 recommended) and 8 MB of available hard-disk space
- **OS/2® System Requirements:** i386, i486, Pentium, or Pentium Pro processor-based personal computer with IBM® OS/2 Warp or Warp Connect 3.0 or later (IBM OS/2 Warp 4.0 recommended). Fixpak 26 required for printing using OS/2 Warp 3.0 or Warp Connect 3.0. Requires 4 MB of application RAM available to Acrobat Reader, 8 MB of RAM available for system, and 5 MB of hard-disk space plus 5 MB of temporary space available during installation. Netscape Navigator 2.02E or later for viewing *pdf* files inside a Web browser

Acrobat files are also viewable on other platforms. For a complete listing of system requirements, please refer to the Adobe home page. Click on the Download Acrobat Reader icon and scroll down the page to access the System Requirements link.

Acrobat Reader

To view a *pdf* file, you must have the Acrobat Reader installed on your PC, or you must be able to access the Reader through a Local Area Network (LAN) connection.

The Acrobat Reader is distributed free of charge, and is commonly bundled, or delivered in conjunction with other software. You may already have a copy of the Reader, acquired through downloading other files from the Web. If not, you may download a free copy of the Reader, along with the *Alabama Medicaid Provider Manual*, from the Alabama Medicaid Home Page.

Online *Alabama Medicaid Provider Manual*

These instructions are written for Internet Explorer. Other browsers may require slightly different procedures. The instructions assume you know how to access the WWW and how to perform a search.

Perform the following steps from your browser to download the manual:

Step 1 Access the Alabama Medicaid home page by choosing the Open option from the File menu. The Open dialog box displays.

Step 2 Enter the following address in the text box: http://www.medicaid.alabama.gov

Step 3 Click OK. The Alabama Medicaid home page displays.

Step 4 Click on the word Providers located across the top of the home page.

Step 5 Click on Manuals. The Alabama Medicaid Manuals page displays. Click on the most current version.

Step 6 If your PC is not equipped with Acrobat Reader version 4.05 or higher, click on the Download Acrobat Reader Icon. The Adobe Acrobat Download page displays. Follow the instructions on the Adobe site, then return to the Alabama Medicaid Manuals page.

Step 7 If your PC is already equipped with Adobe Acrobat Reader version 4.05 or higher, you are ready to download the manual.

Step 8 Click on the appropriate Alabama Medicaid Provider Manual link.

Step 9 If the File Download dialog box displays, choose the Save the File to Disk option to save the manual to your PC. (You should save the manual to your hard drive, to CD, or to ZIP disk. The manual is too large to fit on a standard 1.44 MB 3½ diskette.)

Step 10 When the file has finished downloading, open it by double clicking on the file in Windows Explorer.

1.2.2 Benefits of Using the Online Manual

Although a paper version of the manual is familiar and easy to use, consider how the following advantages save you and your office staff time and money in the billing process.

Maintenance-free and Always at Your Fingertips

The online manual takes up no desk space. It can never be misplaced, and if it is inadvertently deleted, you can download another version. You will never need to insert new pages and throw away old ones; merely download a new version each time you are notified of changes to the manual.

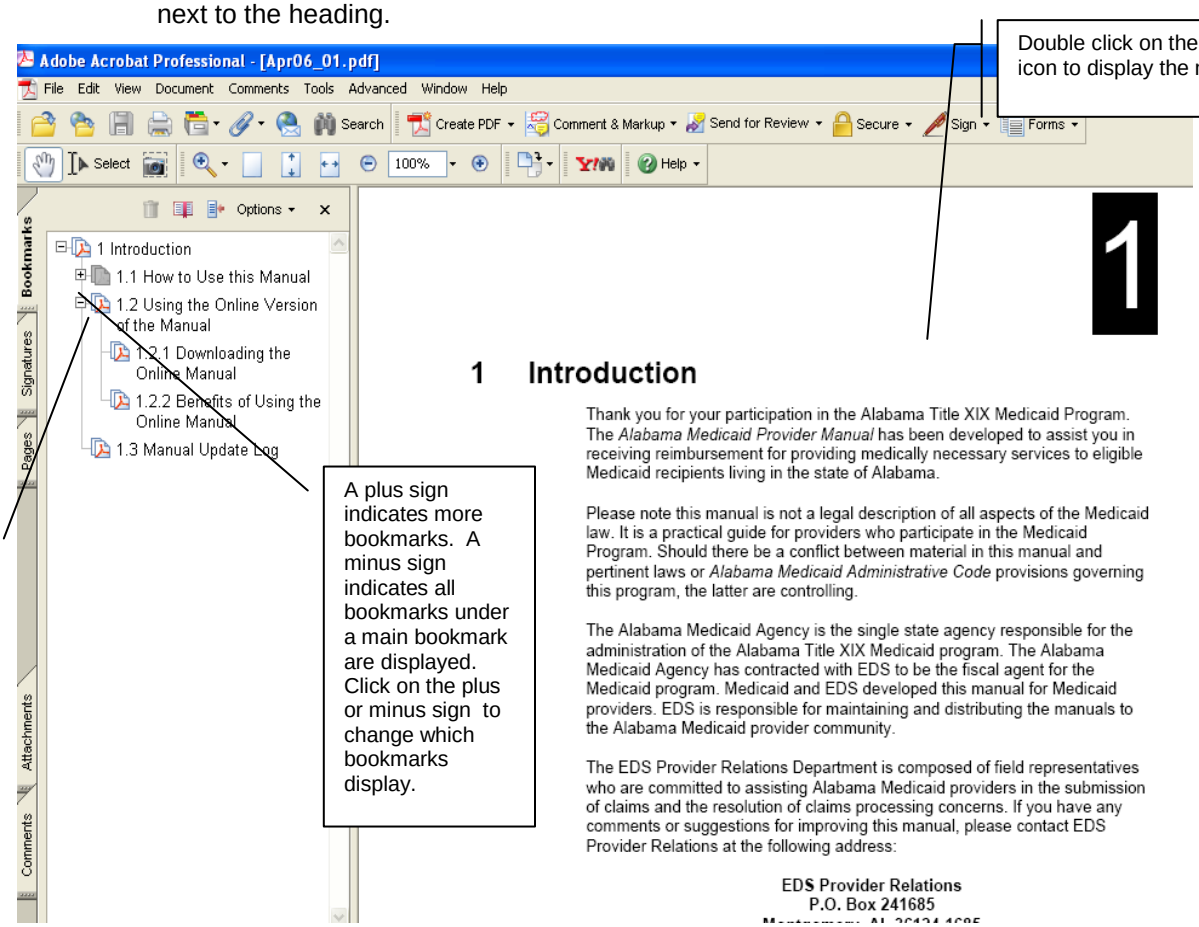
Customized Display Options

Although you cannot alter the contents of the online manual, you can modify how the manual displays online. Acrobat enables you to increase or reduce the font size, which can be helpful if you have vision problems. You may also customize other view options as available through the Acrobat Reader. The help feature resident in Acrobat Reader will guide you through using the Reader and customizing views.

Search and Browse Capabilities

The online manual features an online form of a table of contents that allows you point and click access to all the manual's sections. Acrobat calls each entry in this table of contents a bookmark. To view the bookmarks, select the Bookmark icon, the second icon from the left, on the Acrobat toolbar.

The bookmarks in the manual correspond to the section headings. Primary headings, such as the names of chapters, display as the first level of bookmarks. If a primary heading has secondary headings, a plus sign displays next to the heading.



Double click on the note icon to display the note.

Click on a bookmark to go directly to a particular page in the document.

A plus sign indicates more bookmarks. A minus sign indicates all bookmarks under a main bookmark are displayed. Click on the plus or minus sign to change which bookmarks display.

Simply click on the plus sign to view all headings beneath that heading level. To jump to a particular section of the manual, click on the corresponding bookmark.

You can also access the powerful online search capabilities of Acrobat to quickly locate information by entering a keyword in the Find dialog box. Acrobat searches the entire manual and displays the first occurrence of the word. You can then search again to find the next occurrence.

Access the help functionality in the Acrobat Reader for further instructions on using Acrobat.

1.3 Manual Update Log

Periodically, HP will make updates to this manual and mail updated pages to you. HP also provides an updated Acrobat copy of the manual on the Alabama Medicaid home page (http://www.medicaid.alabama.gov).

The following Manual Update Log describes the updates and document pages that were added, modified, or deleted as a result of the updates. HP sends a copy of this log with each paper copy of updated pages. The online copy of the manual also includes the manual update log, although the changed pages will already have been updated. Acrobat notes display on all individual page changes, or the beginning of each chapter or section replacement, in the online version of the manual. Please refer to Section 1.2.2, Benefits of Using the Online Manual, for more information about Acrobat's notes feature.

Affected Chapter	***Changes made on pages***
Chapter 1 Introduction	1-11, 1-12

NOTE:

Providers who maintain a paper copy of the manual should add or replace pages as updates occur. Providers who maintain the online version of the manual should download another copy. All providers will be notified by mail each time the manual is updated.

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