



# Prior Authorization Quick Reference Guide

Updated March 2025

## Important information:

Prior authorization requests should be submitted electronically through the CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield Provider Portal (CareFirst Direct).

- Log into <http://provider.carefirst.com>
- Once logged in, select the 'Prior Authorization/Notifications' tab
- Select 'Start Now' with the 'Medical' box
- For step-by-step instructions, access the following resources:
  - [Accessing and Registering for CareFirst Direct](#)
  - [Entering Authorizations in the CareFirst Provider Portal](#)
  - [Prior Authorization Lookup Tool Walk-Through](#)

To ensure timeliness of prior authorization requests, documentation should be uploaded with your request and include, but is not limited to:

- Treatment received to date
- Current medical health status
- Complete clinical documentation supporting the request

## CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield Community Health Plan Maryland (CareFirst CHPMD) pre-authorization request forms

- Visit [carefirstchpmd.com](http://carefirstchpmd.com) to access the forms online
- Providers can fax the forms to:
  - 443-552-7407 or 443-552-7408 (medical requests)
  - 844-329-0865 (SNF and Medical Injectable Requests)
- Call 800-730-8543 or 410-779-9359 for telephonic inquiries for prior authorization

## Out-of-network

Before seeking out-of-network care, members should speak with their Primary Care Physician (PCP).

- Urgent or emergent care
  - Maryland Medicaid self referral services (e.g. school-based health centers, family planning services, renal dialysis for CareFirst CHPMD members)
  - See CareFirst CHPMD member handbook for a full listing of benefits and self-referral services.

## Authorization not required

CareFirst CHPMD does not require authorization for most office and routine patient ambulatory based services provided by an in-network provider and/or an in-network freestanding facility.

- Acupuncture
- Cardiac Cath
  - Chemotherapy (exceptions listed under authorization required section)
- Chiropractic Services (under age 21)
- Cholecystectomy (Laparoscopic)
- Colonoscopy
  - Cystoscopy (Cystectomy, w/Urethroscopy, w/Lithotripsy)
- Diabetic education
  - Self-management training
  - Nutritional counseling
  - Screening and supplies
- Dialysis
- DME/DMS purchase less than \$500
- Endoscopy (EGD, ERCP)
- Emergency/Urgent Care (within U.S.)
- Hearing screening
- Hysteroscopy/Hysterectomy
- Laboratory/Pathology
- Nutrition counseling
- Observation
- Office visits for physician or practitioner services
- Primary Care including wellness and/or Preventative Visits,
- Immunizations/Vaccinations, EPSDT
- Specialist consultations/evaluations
  - Pain management consultations/ evaluations
  - Podiatry\* including diabetic care services and routine foot care for vascular disease affecting lower extremities
- Prenatal and post-partum
- Radiation therapy
- Radiology screenings including:
  - Bone density, mammograms, AAA ultrasound, OB ultrasound, low dose lung CT
  - Radiology services performed by freestanding radiology network providers including:
    - CT, CTA, Digital X-ray, MRI, MRA, Nuclear Stress Test, PET and Ultrasound
- Sleep Studies

## Authorization required

### Home visits

Concurrent or additional home visits after the initial evaluation visit for:

- Skilled Nursing
- Physical Therapy
- Occupational Therapy
- Speech Therapy
- Home Health Aide
- Home Infusion
- Hospice
- Private Duty Nursing under 21 years of age
- Social Work

### In-patient admissions

All elective and emergent admissions, including skilled nursing facility and long-term care facility.

### Outpatient

- Acne Surgery
- Audiology
- Bariatric Surgery
- Biofeedback
  - Bone Marrow Biopsy, Harvesting, Transplantation
- Bone Stimulation
- Cell Harvesting (stemcell, t-cell)
- Chemodenervation
- Chemical Peels, Dermabrasions
- Clinical Trials
- Cosmetic Surgery
  - DME/DMS Purchase over \$500 and all Rentals and/ or Repairs
- Facet Joint Injections
- Hearing Aids

- Meals Post-Discharge Hospital or SNF
- NerveBlock
- Neurostimulation
- Outpatient therapy (over age 21)
  - Physical, occupational and speech therapy
- Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery
  - Pain Management Procedures—Joint, Trigger Point and Spinal Injections
- Pharmacy see Carve Outs/Delegation below
- Plastic Surgery
  - Radiology services performed by outpatient hospital radiology providers including
    - CT
    - CTA
    - Digital Xray
    - MRI/MRA
    - Nuclear Stress Test
    - PET
    - Ultrasound
  - Reconstructions, Reductions, Implantations
  - Skin/Subcutaneous Tissue Excisions, Removal of Lesions
- Sterilization
  - Telemedicine and remote patient monitoring
- Vein Ablation Therapy, Ligation or Stripping

### Rehabilitative therapies

Concurrent or additional visits after the Initial Evaluation visit for Seating Evaluations, Pulmonary and/or Cardiac Rehab

See Carve Outs/Delegation for under 21

## Authorization required (cont.)

### Medical injectables

This list of medical injectables, and their related biosimilars, all require prior authorization.

### Carve outs/delegation

Maryland Medicaid (CareFirst CHPMD)

#### Pharmacy

- Member Services—855-566-8397
- Prior Authorization—877-418-4133

Prior authorization for formulary and non-formulary products requiring: PA (Prior Authorization), QL (Quantity Limit), or ST (Step Therapy)

Visit [carefirstchpmd.com](http://carefirstchpmd.com) to access the formulary search tool online. To access the online search tool, click on *For Providers* and select *Pharmacy Information*.

Mental Health/Substance Use Disorder  
Specialty Behavioral Health  
System—800-932-3918

Dental (children/pregnant women)  
Healthy Smiles—855-934-9812

Vision  
Superior Vision 1 (877) 235-5317

Non-Emergent Medical Transportation  
Contact the local Health Department.

Maryland Medical Assistance Beneficiary Hotline—  
800-492-5231:

- Abortions
- Emergency transportation
  - HIV/AIDS services (viral load, genotypic, phenotypic or other resistance testing)
- Medical day services
  - Outpatient PT, OT and ST for recipients under the age of 21
- Personal care services
- Speech augmentation

## Authorization required

Verification of eligibility, and/or benefit information, or authorization is not a guarantee of payment. Authorizations are subject to eligibility requirements and benefit plan limitations and assumes that providers bill with codes billable under the current Medicaid Fee Schedule.