

Modifier 52 - Reduced Services

Last Updated: 4/9/2025

Last Reviewed: 4/9/2025

Originally Effective: 9/13/2007

Last update includes payment policy changes, subject to 28 TAC §3.3703(a)(20)(D)? No

If yes, Texas Last Update Effective Date: n/a

Policy #: RPM003

Scope

Companies: Moda Partners, Inc. and its subsidiaries & affiliates (All)

Provider Contract Status: Any

Claim Forms: CMS1500 & CMS1450 (paper and electronic versions)

Claim Dates: All

Reimbursement Guidelines

A. General

1. Effective for claims with date of service November 15, 2023 and following, procedure codes for reduced services will be reimbursed at 50%.
2. For claims with dates of service prior to November 15, 2023, reduced services are manually priced. The allowance is adjusted based on the percentage of the full service that has been performed and documented.
3. Modifier 52 is used only to report a service that has been reduced when no other code exists to report what has been done (the amount of the procedure that was completed).
4. Other Pricing Adjustments Affect Final Line Item Allowable
Please Note: When modifier 52 reduced services fee reductions apply, other pricing adjustments may also apply before the final allowable amount for each line item is determined. For example, multiple procedure adjustments, bilateral adjustments, assistant surgeon adjustments, co-surgery adjustments, related within global adjustments, etc.

B. Requirements When Modifier 52 is Billed

When services are reduced, the medical records need to document how much of the procedure was performed and the amount, manner, and reason for the reduction.

For dates of service prior to November 15, 2023 with modifier 52 reported, the claim must be accompanied by both a statement explaining what percentage and portion of the service was not completed and the operative report or records documenting the service. If the statement explaining the nature and amount of the service reduction and the medical records for the reduced service did not accompany the claim, this information will need to be requested in most cases, resulting in further delay of the claim.

C. Denials for Modifier -52 Invalid for Procedure Code

When modifier 52 is billed inappropriately in one of the invalid combinations listed below, the 50% reduction may apply or clinical edits/manual review may result in the line item being denied as an invalid code-modifier combination.

Denial explanation codes include:

Code	Explanation Code Description
514	The modifier that was billed is invalid for the procedure.
U13	The modifier used is inconsistent with the procedure code.
u39	Per NPFS PC/TC indicator, this procedure code is a service covered incident to a physician's service and modifier is not appropriate.

835 CARC/RARC denial combination:

Type	Code	CARC/RARC Description
CARC:	4	The procedure code is inconsistent with the modifier used or a required modifier is missing.
RARC:	None used	n/a

D. Invalid Procedure Code Combinations for Modifier -52

Modifier -52 is not considered valid and should not be reported with:

1. All-or-nothing procedure codes
 - a. Examples:
 - i. 72020 XR spine, single view
 - ii. 97010 – 97028 PT modalities, one or more areas, non-timed codes.
 - b. Exception: When repeat radiology films are performed and interpreted only as a comparison study to the previous and/or most recent films.
2. Codes in a series where a lesser code is available
 - a. For example: instead of 90806-52 use 90804.
 - b. Exception: When repeat radiology films are performed and interpreted only as a comparison study to the previous and/or most recent films. (e.g., 71045, 71046, 73090)
3. Codes with descriptions specifying “unilateral or bilateral”
4. Codes with descriptions specifying “up to,” “at least,” “any number of,” or similar phrases. For example:
 - a. 11900 “...up to and including 7 lesions”
 - b. 12001 “...2.5 cm or less”
 - c. 96913 “...requiring at least 4-8 hours of care under direct supervision of the physician...”
 - d. 11719 “...any number”
5. Unlisted procedure codes
6. Evaluation and management (E/M) codes other than Preventive Medicine Service codes.
 - a. Select the code that best describes the level of service performed. If services documented do not meet the criteria for the lowest level of E/M available, then service either is not reportable, or an unlisted code must be used.
 - b. For Preventive Medicine E/M codes modifier 52 will be considered valid to report an annual women’s exam when other systems usually included in an age-appropriate preventive exam are not addressed.

E. Other Incorrect Uses of Modifier -52

1. Another modifier is available to describe the reduced service.

Example:
Code 74246-26-52 is billed with notation on claim “interpretation only.” Use of modifier 52 is not appropriate; modifier 26 already describes “interpretation only.”
2. Another code is available to describe the reduced service.

Example: Precipitous Delivery.^C
59400-52, 59409-52, or 59410-52 may not be reported. This is an incorrect use of modifier 22. If the provider arrives in time to deliver the placenta, CPT code 59414 (*Delivery of placenta, separate procedure*) may be reported. The antepartum care only, and postpartum care only procedure codes may also be reported as appropriate.
3. Multiple attempts were required to successfully accomplish the procedure.
 - a. All attempts to accomplish a procedure during the same patient encounter or operative session are included in the procedure code for the successful procedure.¹²

b. Examples (not all inclusive):

i. IUD placement.

- 1) Procedure note describes: The first two IUDs were placed without difficulty but failed to deploy and were expelled or removed. A different lot number and different size IUD was selected, and the third IUD was placed and deployed normally without issue.
- 2) Claim submitted:

Codes & Units submitted	Comments
58300 x 1 unit	Successful IUD placement. Reimbursement for this line includes all attempts required in this session for a successful IUD placement.
J7301 x 1 unit	Supply for successfully placed IUD.
58300-52 x 2 units	Incorrect use of modifier 52. Reimbursement for unsuccessful attempts is included in the allowance for the successful procedure.
J7301-52 x 2 units	Incorrect use of modifier 52. 1) Modifier 52 may not be used for supply items. 2) See below for additional notes on IUDs.

- 3) Additional notes about IUD supply itself:
 - a) If an IUD is successfully implanted, no more than one unit of an IUD may be billed.
 - b) If the procedure does not result in a successful IUD placement in the patient, the IUD(s) used in the attempt(s) (e.g., J7301) may not be billed on the claim.
 - i) Defective implants or supplies are to be returned to the supplier for replacement or refund.
 - ii) Any dropped or otherwise contaminated implants or supplies may not be reported on the claim. These are a practice expense or cost of doing business and are not eligible for reimbursement.
 - ii. Placement of esophageal stent (e.g., 43212).
 - iii. Placement of biliary duct or pancreatic duct stent (e.g., 43274-43276).
 - iv. Placement of ureteral stent (e.g., 50605, 50693-50695, 50947, 51045, etc.).
 - v. Placement of intracoronary stent(s) (e.g., 92928-92944).

F. Use of Modifier 52 for ASC or Outpatient Hospital Facility Fees

1. Modifiers 73 and 74 are used to report terminated or discontinued services in the Ambulatory Surgery Center (ASC) or outpatient hospital setting.
 - a. However, the use of modifiers 73 and 74 are limited to procedures for which anesthesia is planned.
 - b. When anesthesia is not planned, modifier 52 is used instead when the procedure is terminated, discontinued, or otherwise reduced in an ASC or outpatient hospital.
2. Procedures reported by ASCs or outpatient hospitals with modifier 52 appended will be reimbursed at 50% of the usual applicable fee schedule rate for the facility fee.
3. For full details, see “Modifiers 73 & 74 – Discontinued Procedures For Facilities.” Moda Health Reimbursement Policy Manual, RPM049.

G. Selecting Between Modifier 52 and Modifier 53

1. Use modifier 52 when:
 - a. The service was reduced at the physician’s discretion.

- b. The service was reduced because a portion of the relevant anatomy is absent (either congenitally, traumatically, or surgically).
2. Use modifier 53 when:
- a. The service was discontinued (stopped mid-stream) because the patient experienced a life-threatening condition.
 - b. The procedure was not able to be completed because of anatomical difficulties (e.g. blockage, poor bowel prep), patient anxiety (which may require general anesthesia in a different setting), or equipment problems.
 - c. A repeat procedure is planned later to complete the remainder of the procedure.

Definitions

Acronyms/Abbreviations

Acronym	Definition
AMA	American Medical Association
ASC	Ambulatory Surgery Center
CARC	Claim Adjustment Reason Code
cm	Centimeters
CMS	Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services
CPT	Current Procedural Terminology
E/M E&M E & M	Evaluation and Management (services, visit) (Abbreviated as "E/M" in CPT book guidelines, sometimes also abbreviated as "E&M" or "E & M" in some CPT Assistant articles and by other sources.)
HCPCS	Healthcare Common Procedure Coding System (acronym often pronounced as "hick picks")
HIPAA	Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act
IUD	Intrauterine Device
RARC	Remittance Advice Remark Code
RPM	Reimbursement Policy Manual (e.g., in context of "RPM052" policy number, etc.)

Definition of Terms

Term	Definition
Precipitous Delivery	The patient delivers the baby vaginally prior to admission or prior to the physician/midwife's arrival.

Modifier Definitions

Modifier	Modifier Definition
52	<p>Reduced Services: Under certain circumstances a service or procedure is partially reduced or eliminated at the physician’s discretion. Under these circumstances the service provided can be identified by its usual procedure number and the addition of modifier 52, signifying that the service is reduced. This provides a means of reporting reduced services without disturbing the identification of the basic service.</p> <p>Note: For hospital outpatient reporting of a previously scheduled procedure/service that is partially reduced or cancelled as a result of extenuating circumstances or those that threaten the well-being of the patient prior to or after administration of anesthesia, see modifiers 73 and 74 (see modifiers approved for ASC hospital outpatient use.)</p>

Modifier -52 identifies that the service or procedure has been partially reduced or eliminated at the physician’s discretion. The basic service described by the procedure code has been performed, but not all aspects of the service have been performed.

Related Policies

- A. [“Moda Health Reimbursement Policy Overview.”](#) Moda Health Reimbursement Policy Manual, RPM001.
- B. [“Valid Modifier to Procedure Code Combinations.”](#) Moda Health Reimbursement Policy Manual, RPM019.
- C. [“Maternity Care.”](#) Moda Health Reimbursement Policy Manual, RPM020.
- D. [“Modifiers 73 & 74 – Discontinued Procedures For Facilities.”](#) Moda Health Reimbursement Policy Manual, RPM049.
- E. [“Medical Records Documentation Standards.”](#) Moda Health Reimbursement Policy Manual, RPM039.

Resources

1. American Medical Association. “Appendix A – Modifiers.” *Current Procedural Terminology (CPT)*. Chicago: AMA Press.
2. American Medical Association. “Modifiers”. *CPT Assistant*. Chicago: AMA Press, Spring 1991, p. 7.
3. American Medical Association. “Modifiers Used with Surgical Procedures”. *CPT Assistant*. Chicago: AMA Press, Fall 1992, p. 15.
4. American Medical Association. “Modifiers”. *CPT Assistant*. Chicago: AMA Press, November 1996, p. 19.
5. American Medical Association. “Modifiers, Modifiers, Modifiers: A Comprehensive Review”. *CPT Assistant*. Chicago: AMA Press, May 1997, p. 1.
6. American Medical Association. “Modifiers”. *CPT Assistant*. Chicago: AMA Press, January 2000, p. 5.
7. American Medical Association. “Modifier Update-New and Revised Modifiers for Outpatient Use”. *CPT Assistant*. Chicago: AMA Press, May 2000, p. 1.
8. CMS. *National Correct Coding Initiative Policy Manual*. Chapter 1 General Correct Coding Policies, § E, “Modifiers and Modifier Indicators”, pp I-10 – I-14.
9. CMS, Medicare Claims Processing Manual, pub. 100-04, Chapter 5 – Part B Outpatient Rehabilitation and CORF/OPT Services, §20.2, 20.3, 20.4, & 20.5.
10. Grider, Deborah J. *Coding with Modifiers: A Guide to Correct CPT and HCPCS Level II Modifier Usage*. Chicago: AMA Press, 2004, pp. 105-109.
11. “Choosing between Modifier 53 and 52 (Gastroenterology example).” Next Services. Published: March 29, 2017; Last accessed: March 2, 2021. <https://www.nextservices.com/choosing-between-modifier-53-and-52-gastroenterology-example/#:~:text=By%20definition%2C%20modifier%2053%20is,52%20can%20sometimes%20be%20confusing.>

12. CMS. "More Extensive Procedure." *National Correct Coding Initiative Policy Manual*. Chapter 1 General Correct Coding Policies, § L.6.

Policy History

Reminder: The most current version of our reimbursement policies can be found on our provider website. If you are using a printed or saved electronic version of this policy, please verify the current information by going to: https://www.modahealth.com/medical/policies_reimburse.shtml

Date	Summary of Update
4/9/2025	Acronyms & Related policies updated. Formatting updates. No policy changes.
5/8/2024	Clarified other pricing adjustments also apply to the final line-item allowable amount. No policy changes.
9/20/2023	Appendix added with copy of September 13, 2023 provider notification letter. No policy changes.
8/31/2023	Change from manual review to flat rate reimbursement; approved by upper management & Provider Networking. Removed duplicate information on reduction of time-based codes which is addressed in RPM039 and added to Related Policies.
10/12/2022	Idaho added to Scope. Acronym table updated. No policy changes.
7/6/2011	Policy document initially approved by the Reimbursement Administrative Policy Review Committee & initial publication.
9/13/2007	Original Effective Date (with or without formal documentation). Policy based on CMS manual pricing policy for modifier 52 & our administrative decisions.

Attachment

(This provider letter applies to all states except Texas. For a copy of the Texas letter, please contact our Customer Service Team.)



September 13, 2023

«Prov_Group_Name»
Attn: Billing/Office Manager
«PRAD_ADDR1» «PRAD_ADDR2»
<<City>>, <<State>> <<Zip>>

Dear Billing/Office Manager,

Effective for dates of service November 15, 2023 and following, procedure codes with modifier 52 appended for reduced services will be reimbursed at 50%. Procedure codes with modifier 53 appended will be reimbursed at 25%. Procedure codes with assigned Relative Value Units (RVU) for the modifier 53 combination will be paid per their assigned RVU. For dates of service prior to November 15, 2023, claims will continue to be manually priced on a case-by-case basis based on a review of the claim and/or medical records.

Clinical editing will be implemented to automate these changes. As Moda will no longer require medical records to determine reimbursement, the new process will both reduce the administrative burden to our providers and significantly improve the turnaround time for the processing and payment of these claims. The reimbursement policies below have been updated to reflect these changes:

- [“Modifier 52 – Reduced Services”](#) Moda Health Reimbursement Policy Manual, RPM003.
- [“Modifier 53 – Discontinued Procedure”](#) Moda Health Reimbursement Policy Manual, RPM018.

Questions?

We’re here to help. Just email medical@modahealth.com or call us toll-free at 877-605-3229.

Sincerely,

Moda Health Medical Provider Relations team