

OPTUMIST

Provider Services Department Message

Greetings and welcome to the Summer 2025 edition of the OPTUMIST Newsletter! In this edition we are highlighting several topics including the Timely Access Data Tool (TADT) requirements, Critical Incident Report (CIR), updated fee schedules effective July 1, 2025, emergency department professional services assembly bill 1316 reminder, electronic claims submission, and TERM updates including updated CFWB forms, important CANS update for TERM therapists, and new fee schedules FAQs.

We continue to welcome your questions and feedback on how we can make our Newsletter valuable to you.

Best wishes,

Provider Services Department

Contact Numbers

San Diego Access and Crisis Line	(888) 724-7240
Medi-Cal Provider Line	(800) 798-2254
TERM Provider Line	(877) 824-8376



optumsandiego.com

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Information and Updates for FFS Medi-Cal Providers

Timely Access Data Tool (TADT) Requirements and Provider Engagement



The County of San Diego Behavioral Health Plan (BHP) is required to complete the TADT to document service requests from Medi-Cal beneficiaries seeking new Specialty Mental Health or Drug Medi-Cal – Organized Delivery Services.

This requirement aligns with WIC 14197(d)(1) and Title 28 CCR 1300.67.2.2, which mandates timely access to care and adequate provider network capacity.

Timely Access Standards Mental Health Plan	
Service Type	Standard*
Outpatient Non-Urgent Non-Psychiatric Specialty Mental Health Services	Offered an appointment within 10 business days of request for services
Psychiatric Services	Offered an appointment within 15 business days of request for services
Non-urgent Follow-up Appointments with a Non-Physician ¹	Offered an appointment within 10 business days of the prior appointment for those undergoing a course of treatment for an ongoing mental health or substance use disorder condition
All Urgent SMHS Appointments	<u>Urgent Appointments**</u> 48 hours without prior authorization 96 hours with prior authorization
*The above standards apply unless the waiting time for an appointment is extended pursuant to HCS 1367.03(a)(5)(H) or 28 CCR section 1300.67.2.2(c)(5)(H).	
**An <u>Urgent Appointment</u> means health care is provided to a member when the member's condition is such that the member faces an imminent and serious threat to their health, including, but not limited to, the potential loss of life, limb, or other major bodily function, or the normal timeframe for the decision making process would be detrimental to the member's life or health or could jeopardize their ability to regain maximum function.	
¹ The above standards is applicable, unless as provided in 28 CCR Section 1300.67.2.2(c)(5)(G) and (H).	

To support compliance, Optum has implemented a short-term solution through our utilization management process. We recognize that this introduces additional administrative responsibilities and have worked to align your efforts with the new fee schedule rate increases, which took effect on July 1, 2025.

Optum will be inviting Fee-for-Service (FFS) Network Providers to participate in focus groups to gather feedback and inform long-term solutions. If you have questions or are interested in participating, please contact the Provider Services Department at (800) 798-2254, option #7.

Thank you for your continued partnership!

Information and Updates for FFS Medi-Cal Providers

Contact Us

The Provider Line is available for you from 8am – 5pm Monday through Friday.



(800) 798-2254

Press 2 for Claims/Billing Questions

Press 3, then 3 again for Clinical Questions

Press 3, then 4 for Authorization Questions

Press 7 for Provider Services



This information is also available to you on our website: optumsandiego.com



QI Corner

Serious Incidents Reports are now called Critical Incident Reports (CIR)

To help ensure your success with following County, State, and Federal guidelines, here are the requirements for reporting critical incidents



Why are there changes?

- Improve reporting efficiency
- Minimize administrative burden and redundancies in documentation
- Streamline data collection for better incident management

What has changed?

- Eliminating phone report (fax or email only as indicated on form)
- Eliminating severity tier levels
- Reporting timeline for all incidents within 24 hours of knowledge of incident
- Reporting required for critical incidents involving clients in active treatment

Some examples of Critical Incidents:

- Suicide attempt by client that requires medical attention, or attempt is potentially fatal and/or significantly injurious
- Death of client by suicide
- Death of client by homicide
- Alleged homicide attempt on a client
- Alleged homicide attempt by a client

Have Questions?
Email us at: SDQI@optum.com



Critical Incident Reports can be located [here](#) in the compliance tab .

Information and Updates for FFS Medi-Cal & TERM Providers

Revised Fee Schedules Effective July 1, 2025



We're pleased to announce that the updated fee schedules, effective July 1, 2025, were emailed to all providers earlier this month. These updates include rate increases for several key services, reflecting our continued commitment to supporting high-quality care.

- Psychiatric Diagnostic Procedures
- Psychotherapy
- Care Coordination
- Psychological and Neurological Testing
- Inpatient Services and Consultations
- Home Visit and Office or Other Outpatient Services Evaluation and Management Services

Please review the updated fee schedules sent to you, which are specific to your provider license type. Any additional changes are highlighted in red font for your convenience.

REMINDER: Emergency Department Professional Services Assembly Bill 1316

Dear Psychiatrists, Psychiatric Nurse Practitioners, and Physician Assistants:

Historically, the County of San Diego, through Optum (Administrative Services Organization), has paid for psychiatric professional services associated with emergency department visits.

However, effective January 1, 2025, AB 1316 ([CHA-AB-1316-Fact-Sheet_Final-0228.pdf](#)) sponsored by the California Hospital Association, clarifies that Medi-Cal managed care plans must cover and pay for hospital and professional services claims for emergency department care provided to Medi-Cal beneficiaries experiencing a mental health crisis.

With this clarification, Optum will begin denying emergency department professional services claims for dates of service starting July 1, 2025.

Psychiatrists, psychiatric nurse practitioners, and physician assistants have typically billed Optum for these services using CPT code 90792 (Psychiatric diagnostic evaluation with medical services) and place of service Emergency Department (23).

Providers may begin billing Medi-Cal managed care plans immediately. It is our understanding that these plans are prepared to pay and may already be paying for a subset of these services.

Have Questions? Contact the Provider Services Department
(800) 798-2254, Option 7 or email sdu_providerserviceshelp@optum.com

Information and Updates for FFS Medi-Cal & TERM Providers

Claims Processing Procedures



As a reminder, all claims must be submitted within sixty (60) days from the date of service. All claims will be processed within thirty (30) days of receipt. Processed means paid, denied, or returned for correction.

A denied claim that has been corrected must be resubmitted within sixty (60) days from the date of the Explanation of Benefits (EOB), but no later than four (4) months from the date of service.

All payments will be made based on the approved fee schedule in effect at the time services are rendered.

For additional information regarding claims and billing, please refer to the [Fee-for-Service \(FFS\) Provider Handbook](#) and [TERM Provider Handbook](#) located on the Optum website.

Apply Today to Submit Electronic Claims

Streamline Your Claims Process!



Are you ready to simplify your billing process, reduce paperwork, and get paid faster? Join our network of providers who are already benefiting from submitting electronic claims.

Why submit electronic claims?

- ✓ Faster processing and reimbursement
- ✓ Fewer errors and rejections
- ✓ Secure and HIPAA-compliant
- ✓ Environmentally friendly – go paperless!

Ready to Apply or Have Questions?

Contact the Claims Department at
(800) 798-2254, Option 2

Information and Updates for TERM Providers

Optum TERM At a Glance – Updates

Updated CFWB Forms

- An overview of recent revisions to several CFWB forms is shared. Revised forms include:
 - CFWB Treatment Plan forms for youth and parents
 - CFWB Request for TERM-Appointed Evaluator
 - Child Abuse Group Therapy Intake Assessment and Quarterly Group Progress reporting forms

Important Update on the Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS) for TERM Therapists

- Information on the importance of CANS certification and completion of CANS outcome tools for CFWB client care.

FAQs for Revised TERM Billing Codes and Rates

- Increased rates for TERM providers for Psychiatric Diagnostic Procedures, Psychotherapy, Care Coordination, and Psychological Testing went into effect 07/01/25!
- Answers to questions the TERM department has received regarding the revised fee schedules are included.



QUICK LINKS

- [TERM Provider Handbook](#)
- [TERM Group Report Facesheet](#)
- [TERM Treatment Plan Documentation Resources](#)
- [IPV-V Group Treatment Standards](#)
- [CSA-NPP Treatment Standards](#)
- [Format & Required Elements of a CFWB Psychological Evaluation](#)
- [TERM Therapy Provider FAQ](#)
- [FAQ For CFWB Evaluations](#)
- [Claims Resources for TERM Providers](#)
- [TERM Therapy Provider Telehealth Best Practices](#)
- [Request for Additional CFT Meeting Units](#)
- [Temporary Change of Authorization](#)



UPCOMING TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

- July 31: [Historical Wounds, Present Realities](#) (CEUs available)
- August 7: [Parenting Traumatized Infants and Toddlers: Myths vs. Facts for 0-5](#) (CEUs available)
- August 13-14: [2025 Child and Adolescent Mental Health Conference: Cutting-Edge Interventions for Healing Today's Struggling Youth](#) (CEUs available)
- September 18-19: [2025 ECMH We Can't Wait! The Power of Presence: Building a Supportive Environment](#) (CEUs available)

Listed trainings are for informational purposes only. While topics may be relevant to TERM providers, they are not 'TERM approved/recommended' offerings



TERM Advisory Board Provider Representatives

The TERM Advisory Board meets quarterly to provide professional input regarding the performance of the system and its policies, procedures, and protocols.

Representation on the Board includes San Diego County HHS Behavioral Health Services, Child Welfare Services, Probation Department, Juvenile Court, Public Defender Juvenile Delinquency Branch, District Attorney, County Counsel, Dependency Legal Services, Children's Legal Services, Optum, TERM Provider Panel, Youth and Parent Partners.

Current TERM Provider Representatives on the Board:

Michael Anderson, Psy.D.: drmike6666@gmail.com

Denise VonRotz, LMFT: dvonrotz@msn.com

Please feel free to contact your provider representatives for updates from the Advisory Board meetings, process improvement ideas, or to provide professional or client feedback.

Information and Updates for TERM Providers

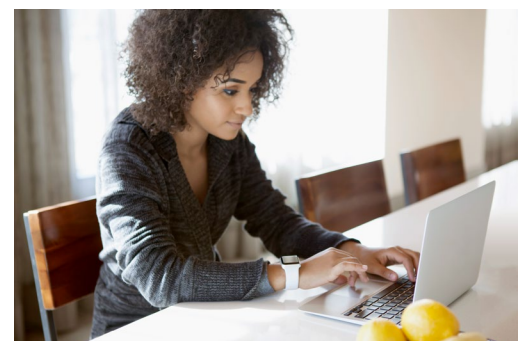
Revised CFWB Treatment Plan Forms for Youth and Parents

Please be advised that the [CFWB Treatment Plan Form for Parents](#) and the [CFWB Treatment Plan Form for Children](#) have been revised as of 06/27/25. The new treatment plan templates were designed in collaboration between CFWB and TERM to ease documentation requirements for TERM providers and include only the minimum level of information regarding a client's treatment and progress that is necessary for case planning purposes. TERM providers should become familiar with the new forms, as there are some significant changes to the documentation requirements. Below is a summary of changes:

- Updated list of background records to endorse documents received from CFWB; inclusion of box to check if no background records have been received, and date they were requested from PSW;
- Updated Risk Assessment section;
- Inclusion of hyperlink to TERM Treatment Plan Documentation Resources for easy reference;
- Added Client Symptom Checklist;
- Removed prompts for Treatment Goals and Interventions. Replaced with drop down menu to identify the applicable Focus of Treatment;
- Updated instructions for documenting progress summaries at intake and quarter. Progress summaries should reflect information pertaining to evidence-informed interventions utilized and client's response to the clinical interventions;
- Updated Client Signature section;
- Removed box to document diagnostic criteria. Diagnosis should be supported in Client Symptom Checklist and progress summaries;
- Removed mental status exam, client strengths, and challenges sections.

The TERM team is in the process of updating the [Treatment Plan Documentation Resources](#) and the [TERM Provider Handbook](#) to reflect guidance on completing the new forms, including sample plans and instructions. The new report templates are now available on the Optum Website, under the [TERM Provider page](#), CFWB Treatment Tab.

TERM Providers should begin using the new forms for all referrals that are authorized after 08/01/25. Providers are not required to transfer existing clients' treatment plans to the new forms. If you have any questions regarding the new templates or documentation requirements, please contact a member of the TERM team.



Information and Updates for TERM Providers

Additional Revised CFWB Forms

CFWB has made revisions to some additional forms as well, including the 04-178 Evaluation Referral and the Child Abuse Group Treatment Reports. Below is a summary of changes:

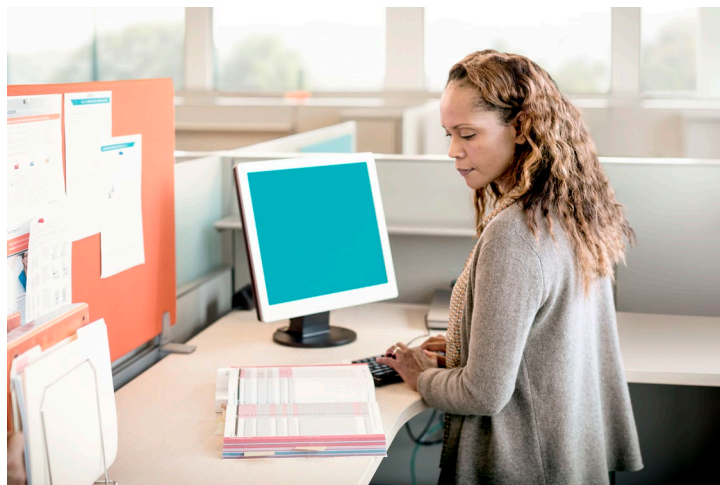
04-178 Evaluation Referral Form:

- Updated Social Worker Information Section and removed requirement for manager signature
- Updated Client Information Section
- Remove managed care plan
- Updated case information section C by removing safety threats and risk factors and keeping reason for CFWB involvement to align with 04-176A

Child Abuse Group Therapy Intake and Quarterly Treatment Report:

- Updated language regarding client taking responsibility for the abuse and replaced with language to align with current CFWB practice and case plan language.

These new forms are available on the [TERM Provider page](#), the Evaluation Referral Form under the CFWB/Probation Evaluation tab and the Child Abuse Group Reports under the Other Group Treatment tab.



Information and Updates for TERM Providers

Important Update on the Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS) for TERM Therapists



California is preparing to implement a Tiered Rate Structure (TRS) for foster care, which will go into effect in July 2027. This new approach will base payment rates on the individual needs and strengths of each child, rather than the type of placement. The IP-CANS (Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths) tool, completed during Child and Family Team (CFT) meetings, will inform the appropriate rate tier for each youth.

As part of this process, collaboration between agencies will be important. Since multiple parties—such as TERM providers and Child and Family Well-Being (CFWB) staff—complete CANS assessments, efforts must be made to share information and ensure alignment across tools. If there are differences in ratings, these should be discussed in a CFT meeting to clarify perspectives and reach agreement. The input from TERM providers through the IP-CANS is especially valuable in developing a shared understanding of each child's needs and supporting the overall implementation of TRS. This collaborative approach ensures that each child's unique needs are accurately reflected, fostering consistency in service planning and supporting a smooth and effective transition to the new Tiered Rate Structure.

In order to support this implementation and to ensure therapist input is considered, it will be even more important for all TERM child therapists to maintain their CANS certification and to ensure that the IP-CANS is completed within the established timeframes. Please reach out if you have any questions about the certification process, CANS requirements, or about provider payment for these services.



If you have any questions, please contact the
Provider Services Department

(800) 798-2254, Option 7

sdu_providerserviceshelp@optum.com

Information and Updates for TERM Providers

Frequently Asked Questions: Revised Optum Public Sector San Diego Billing Codes and Rates for TERM Providers

We are excited about the rate increases that were implemented for TERM panel providers effective 07/01/25, and very grateful for all that TERM providers do to provide excellent care for the clients we serve. We have received a few inquiries about the communication that was sent out with the revised rate sheets, and wanted to share the answers for anyone who may have similar questions:

Q: Do TERM Juvenile Probation evaluation rates align with what is shown on the CFWB fee schedule?

A: Yes, fee increases were also implemented for TERM Juvenile Probation evaluations and match the rates reflected on the CFWB fee schedule.

Q: Is there a fee schedule for TERM Juvenile Probation evaluations?

A: The updated TERM evaluation fees will be reflected in the Court's minute order that is supplied to the appointed TERM evaluator. Minute orders have been updated to reflect the new rates for all referrals received 07/01/25 and after.

Q: For what dates of service do I start billing with the new rates?

A: New rates should be billed for all dates of service completed 07/01/25 and after.

Q: Can TERM CFWB evaluation services be billed with the new rates if the evaluation report is written 07/01/25 or after?

A: To support the CalAIM Behavioral Health Payment Reform initiative that went into effect 07/01/23, all TERM CFWB evaluation codes including primary procedure and dependent codes must be billed together on the last date of service. If the last date of service for report writing occurred 07/01/25 or after, then all evaluation services should be billed with the new rates.

Q: Who do I call if I have questions?

A: Questions can be directed to the TERM-dedicated phone line at (877) 824-8376 as follows:

- For general questions about TERM process, please select option 1.
- For CFWB billing questions, please select option 2.
- For questions about your updated TERM rate sheet, please select option 3.

San Diego Access and Crisis Line

888-724-7240 TDD/TTY Dial 711



Free, confidential support in all languages

- 24 hours a day
- 7 days a week



Online Chat Services are available ;

- Monday through Friday
- 4pm – 10pm



optumsandiego.com

We are here for you

The San Diego Access and Crisis Line (ACL) is an outstretched hand to individuals or people they know, who are overwhelmed, depressed, or searching for answers.

A phone call will connect you with a compassionate counselor who is always standing by to provide hope and encouragement.

We can help you when:

- You need to talk to a professional who cares
- You do not feel you can cope with life
- You are looking for community resources
- You are concerned someone you know might hurt themselves
- You feel you might be in danger of hurting yourself or others



If you or someone you know is in crisis, help is available nationwide. Call or text **988**, or chat at 988lifeline.org



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Funding for services is provided by the County of San Diego Health & Human Services Agency.

We Are Recruiting!

Contracting for Two Networks:



Fee-for-Service (FFS) Medi-Cal Provider Network

Specialty Mental Health Services:

- Advanced Outpatient Services
- Psychiatric Consultations
- Medication Management
- Psychological Testing



Treatment & Evaluation Resource Management (TERM) Provider Network

Child and Family Well-Being & Juvenile Probation Systems Services:

- Specialized Therapy
- Forensic Evaluations

Growing our richly diverse provider networks

Seeking:

- Master's Level Clinicians
- Psychologists
- Psychiatrists
- Psychiatric Nurse Practitioners
- Psychiatric Physician Assistants

Gain Supportive Solutions:

As a Contracted Provider, Optum is with you every step of the way.

We are here for you through personalized:

- Collaboration
- Courtesy Reviews
- Referrals
- Claims Processing & Payments
- And more!

What providers are saying:

"Optum was positive and collaborative."

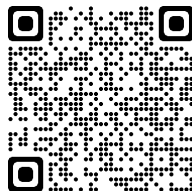
"I never have to wait on hold for long periods of time which is appreciated."

"Provider Services staff is always friendly, responds quickly and offers help with all situations/questions. Thank you."



Optum serves as the Administrative Service Organization for the County of San Diego Behavioral Health Services.

Are You Ready to Be Part of the Solution? Learn More Today!



Tina Garcia, Provider Recruiter
(619) 641-5308

tina.garcia@optum.com

optumsandiego.com