

FLOW CYTOMETRY

Date of origin: Mar. 18, 2025

Review dates: 04/2026

DEFINITION

This policy identifies the payment and documentation requirements associated with flow cytometry. Flow cytometry is a laboratory method that rapidly examines individual cells or particles as they pass in a liquid stream through laser light. It assesses cell size, structural complexity, and fluorescently labeled markers, functioning like a fast microscope that can count and distinguish cell populations in suspension.

FOR MEDICARE

For indications that don't meet criteria of NCD, local LCD or specific medical policy, a Pre-Service Organization Determination (PSOD) will need to be completed. Get more information on PSOD [in our Provider Manual](#).

MEDICAL POLICY

- [Genetics: Counseling, Testing and Screening \(91540\)](#)

POLICY SPECIFIC INFORMATION

The following reimbursement limitations and guidelines apply for flow cytometry services:

- Code 88184 should be used for the first marker, per specimen, and is reimbursable up to a maximum of two units per date of service.
- Code 88185 should be used for each additional marker and is reimbursable up to a maximum of 35 units, per date of service.
- Codes 88187, 88188, and 88189 should not be used together for a single specimen in any combination.
- Codes 88187, 88188, and 88189 are reimbursed at one unit per specimen, up to two specimens, per date of service.
- Codes 88187-88189 should not be used in conjunction with codes 86355, 86356, 86357, 86359, 86360, 86361, 86367.
- Use codes 86355, 86357, 86359, 86360, 86361, or 86367 for cell enumeration. These codes are reimbursable as single units only..

Place of service

Coverage will be considered for services furnished in the appropriate setting to the patient's medical needs and condition. Authorization may be required. Get more information [in our Provider Manual](#).

Documentation requirements

Complete and thorough documentation to substantiate the procedure performed is the responsibility of the provider. In addition, the provider should consult any specific documentation requirements that are necessary of any applicable defined guidelines.

Modifiers

Priority Health follows standard billing and coding guidelines which include CMS NCCI. Modifiers should be applied when applicable based on this guidance and only when supported by documentation.

DISCLAIMER

CMS and/or MDHHS guidelines apply unless otherwise specified in this policy or provider manual. Where such guidance is absent, this policy applies. Priority Health’s billing policies outline our guidelines to assist providers in accurate claim submissions and define reimbursement or coding requirements if the service is covered by a Priority Health member’s benefit plan. The determination of visits, procedures, DME, supplies and other services or items for coverage under a member’s benefit plan or authorization isn’t being determined for reimbursement. Authorization requirements and medical necessity requirements appropriate to procedure, diagnosis and frequency are still required. We use Current Procedural Terminology (CPT), Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS), and other defined medical coding guidelines for coding accuracy.

An authorization isn’t a guarantee of payment when proper billing and coding requirements or adherence to our policies aren’t followed. Proper billing and submission guidelines must be followed. We require industry standard, compliant codes defined by CPT, HCPCS, and revenue codes for all claim submissions. CPT, HCPCS, revenue codes, etc., can be reported only when the service has been performed and fully documented in the medical record to the highest level of specificity. Failure to document services rendered or items supplied will result in a denial. To validate billing and coding accuracy, payment integrity pre- or post-claim reviews may be performed to prevent fraud, waste and abuse. Unless otherwise detailed in the policy, our billing policies apply to both participating and non-participating providers and facilities.

If guidelines detailed in government program regulations, defined in policies and contractual requirements aren’t followed, Priority Health may:

- Reject or deny the claim
- Recover or recoup claim payment

An authorization on file for an item or services doesn’t supersede coding, billing or reimbursement requirements.

These policies may be superseded by mandates defined in provider contracts or state, federal or CMS contracts or requirements. We make every effort to update our policies in a timely manner to align these requirements or contracts. If there’s a delay in implementation of a policy or requirement defined by state or federal law, as well as contract language, we reserve the right to recoup and/or recover claim payments to the effective dates per our policy. We reserve the right to update policies when necessary. Our most current policy will be made available [in our Provider Manual](#).

CHANGE / REVIEW HISTORY

Date	Revisions made
04/2026	Flow cytometry definition added to Definition part of policy