

Pennsylvania Mandate

Autism spectrum disorders coverage

Autism is a complex developmental disability that typically appears during the first three years of life and affects a person's ability to communicate and interact with others. Autism is defined by a certain set of behaviors and is a 'spectrum disorder', meaning it affects individuals differently and to varying degrees. Depending on the service that is being requested, members, or a doctor on their behalf, may be requested to submit a treatment plan to Independence Blue Cross for review and approval prior to receiving treatment. This plan may need to be reviewed and approved by Independence Blue Cross every six months.

Benefit	Autism spectrum disorders coverage
Benefit limit	\$36,000 per benefit period ¹
Benefit period	Members should refer to their medical benefits plan to determine if their benefit period is based on a contract year or calendar year.
Eligibility	Eligible individuals must have a primary diagnosis of Autism and be under 21. Coverage is provided only under policies issued or renewed in Pennsylvania, on or after July 1, 2009, to groups with 51 or more employees.
Covered services (services must be medically necessary and coverage is subject to the copayment, deductible, and coinsurance provisions of your medical benefit plan, as well as any applicable referral or prescription requirements)	evaluations and tests needed to diagnose an autism disorder rehabilitative Care, including applied behavioral analysis blood Level tests psychiatric and psychological services speech/language therapy occupational therapy physical therapy prescription drugs
Visit limits	Visit limits do not apply to the treatment of autism spectrum disorders.
Treatment plan review	Depending on the service that is being requested, members, or a health care provider on their behalf, may be required to submit a treatment plan to Independence Blue Cross prior to receiving treatment. This plan will need to be reviewed and approved by Independence Blue Cross every six months.
Precertification requirements	All standard precertification requirements and penalties under the member's medical benefits plan apply.

¹ Once a member reaches the benefit period maximum for approved services that have a primary diagnosis of autism, additional services may be eligible for coverage through a similar government agency. Expenses not eligible under this plan may also be eligible for coverage through a government agency. Pennsylvania residents should contact the Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare. Members that reside outside of Pennsylvania should contact government agencies in their area. Beginning January 1, 2013, the benefit maximum for autism spectrum disorders coverage will be adjusted annually for inflation.

What is Not Covered?

- Benefits that are normally excluded from coverage under the member's medical plan
- Services provided by an individualized education program and delivered in a school
- Services in excess of the \$36,000 benefit period maximum
- Services that are not medically necessary



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