



www.lsc.ohio.gov

OHIO LEGISLATIVE SERVICE COMMISSION

Office of Research
and Drafting

Legislative Budget
Office

H.B. 453
136th General Assembly

Bill Analysis

Version: As Introduced

Primary Sponsor: Rep. Lorenz

Erika Kramer, Attorney

SUMMARY

- Removes existing age and service restrictions for health insurance coverage of screening, diagnosis, and treatment of autism spectrum disorder.
- Requires third-party payers to reimburse applied behavior analysis service providers for performing adaptive behavior assessment and treatment procedures at a minimum of 100% of the Medicaid fee schedule for those assessments and procedures.
- For fiscal year 2027, sets payment rates for applied behavior analysis therapy services under Medicaid managed care at 100% of the rate for those services under Medicaid fee-for-service.
- Establishes a new professional credential for eligible individuals studying to become certified behavior analysts and permits those individuals to provide applied behavior analysis treatment temporarily while awaiting examination results and be reimbursed by health plan issuers for those services.

DETAILED ANALYSIS

Health insurance coverage of ABA therapy

The bill modifies law requiring health benefit plan coverage of services to treat autism spectrum disorder. Ohio law requires health insurance plans to cover the screening, diagnosis, and treatment of autism spectrum disorder. The coverage must not be subject to dollar limits, deductibles, or coinsurance requirements that are less favorable than those that apply to substantially all medical and surgical benefits under the plan. Current law requires the benefits

to cover, at minimum, children under 14 years of age for a minimum number of treatment hours or sessions.¹

The bill removes the age and hour restrictions described above. Specifically, the bill requires health insuring corporations and sickness and accident insurers to cover all of the following:

- Speech and language therapy or occupational therapy performed by a licensed therapist;
- Clinical therapeutic intervention provided by or under the supervision of a licensed professional in accordance with a health treatment plan;
- Mental or behavioral health outpatient services performed by a licensed psychologist, physician (including a psychiatrist), or certain advanced practice registered nurses.

Current law requires that children under age 14 be covered for a minimum of (1) 20 speech and language therapy visits per year, (2) 20 occupational therapy visits per year, (3) 20 hours of clinical therapeutic intervention per week, and (4) 30 visits for mental or behavioral health outpatient services per year.² The law does not require coverage beyond those ages and hours, but health plan issuers can elect to cover additional enrollees and service hours in their health plans if they choose.

Additionally, the bill requires coverage of adaptive behavior services performed by a certified Ohio behavior analyst or an exam-eligible technician (see “**exam-eligible technicians**” below). Current law does not require coverage of those services.³

The health insuring corporation or sickness and accident insurer must use the industry standards of care set forth in the Applied Behavior Analysis Practice Guidelines for the Treatment of Autism Spectrum Disorder (published by the Council for Autism Service Providers) to inform decision-making regarding the use of applied behavioral analysis as a medically necessary treatment service.⁴

Third-party payer rates

The bill requires third-party payers to reimburse providers of applied behavior analysis services for performing adaptive behavior assessment and treatment procedures. The reimbursement must be at least 100% of the Medicaid fee schedule for those assessments and procedures at the time of the service. This provision expressly states that it does not prohibit a third-party payer from reimbursing a provider of applied behavior analysis services more than that rate.⁵

¹ R.C. 1751.84(A) and 3923.84(A).

² R.C. 1751.84(B) and 3923.84(B).

³ R.C. 1751.84(B)(4) and 3923.84(B)(4).

⁴ R.C. 1751.84(E) and 3923.84(E).

⁵ R.C. 3901.92. The bill does not define third-party payer.

Reimbursement rates for ABA therapy under Medicaid

The bill establishes payment rates for applied behavior analysis therapy services under the Medicaid program. For fiscal year 2027, the Department of Medicaid must establish payment rates for applied behavior analysis therapy services used to treat Medicaid enrollees with a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder under Medicaid managed care. The rates must equal 100% of the Medicaid fee-for-service rate for current procedural terminology codes 97151 through 97158 (that CPT code range applies to applied behavior services).⁶

Exam eligible technicians

The bill establishes a new professional credential for individuals studying to become certified behavior analysts. It permits eligible individuals to provide applied behavior analysis treatment temporarily while awaiting examination results and to be reimbursed by health plan issuers for those services during that time. The bill refers to these individuals as exam-eligible technicians.⁷

To be eligible to practice as an exam-eligible technician, an individual must:

- Be in the process of becoming a registered behavior technician certified by the national Behavior Analyst Certification Board;
- Practice under the supervision of a certified Ohio behavior analyst or a board certified assistant behavior analyst holding a valid certification from the national Behavior Analyst Certification Board;
- Hold a high school diploma or higher degree;
- Have completed any equivalent coursework or training required for registered behavior technicians required by the national Behavior Analyst Certification Board;
- Have successfully passed an initial competency assessment, or otherwise been found eligible to sit for a psychometrically valid examination administered by a nationally accredited credentialing organization.⁸

The bill limits the period under which exam-eligible technicians are permitted to practice and bill for their services. An exam-eligible technician meeting the above requirements may engage in the practice of applied behavior analysis under the supervision of a certified Ohio analyst for 90 days after the date the individual meets those requirements. If the exam-eligible technician does not achieve certification as a certified Ohio behavior analyst by the end of the 90-day period, the individual is no longer eligible to practice as an exam-eligible technician.⁹

⁶ Section 3.

⁷ R.C. 4783.01 and 4783.40(A).

⁸ R.C. 4783.40(B).

⁹ R.C. 4783.40(C).

HISTORY

Action	Date
Introduced	09-15-25
