

# Bariatric surgery program overview

For Molina Healthcare adult members  
Apple Health (Medicaid)



## Program eligibility criteria

Based on Washington Administrative Codes (WAC) 182-531-1600 and HTCC Guidelines 20150515B

- **Must** be enrolled in Molina Medicaid
- **Must** be minimum age of 18
- **Must** have a body mass index (BMI) of  $\geq 35$
- **Must** meet one of the following three criteria:
  1. Must have a minimum body mass index (BMI) of  $> 30$  with a diagnosis of Diabetes Mellitus.
  2. Must have a BMI of  $> 35-39$  and must have at least one of the following conditions:
    - a. Degenerative joint disease of major weight bearing joint(s). The member must be a candidate for joint replacement surgery if weight loss is achieved.
    - b. Other rare chronic conditions (for example, pseudo tumor cerebri) in which there is medical evidence that bariatric surgery is medically necessary and that the benefits of bariatric surgery outweigh the risk of surgical mortality.
  3. Must have a minimum BMI of  $> 40$
- **Cannot have** other medical conditions such as multiple sclerosis that would increase the member's risk of surgical mortality or morbidity from bariatric surgery

## Program requirements – three stages

**Stage I:** PCP must complete the “Molina Medicaid Bariatric Surgery Criteria Pre-Surgical Assessment Form” and fax it to the Molina Utilization Department (UM) at (800) 767-7188. This form can be found on Molina's provider website under *Frequently Used Forms*. Once approved, the PCP must place a referral to a registered dietician (RD).

**Stage II:** Once approved the member **MUST** complete **ALL** of the following:

- Lose 5% of his or her initial body weight within 180 days of the Bariatric Surgery Program authorization and maintain the required weight loss until the time of surgery
- Complete 12 RD visits (two visits per month, per WAC Guidelines). These visits must last at least 6 months and are to be attended routinely without excessive cancellations or no-shows
- Keep a food journal
- Attend monthly PCP visits with PCP or clinic RN for weight monitoring and food journal review
- Complete (and pass) a psychosocial assessment with a psychiatrist, psychiatric ARNP, LICSW, Ph.D. in psychology or Psy.D.

Once the above requirements are met, the PCP must send the following information to a designated bariatric surgical center\*:

- PCP summary of monthly visits indicating the goal weight has been met and member has been compliant with guidance provided
- RD summary and notes of 12 visits including service dates that indicate the member was consistent with food journal entries and was compliant with guidance provided
- A copy of the Bariatric Stage II Letter
- Referral for bariatric surgery

When the bariatric surgical center receives all the required information, the surgical center will call the member to schedule the following:

- Bariatric seminar
- Consultation with a bariatric surgeon\*\*

\*Please email Molina to find the surgical center that is closest to your patient at [MHW\\_Bariatric\\_Program@MolinaHealthcare.com](mailto:MHW_Bariatric_Program@MolinaHealthcare.com).

\*\*NOTE: The bariatric surgeon may require additional testing prior to submitting a request for bariatric surgery (Stage III). For example, it is not uncommon for members to be asked to complete a cardiac stress test, lab work, sleep study, and/or lose additional weight.

**Stage III:** After all the above requirements have been completed and the bariatric surgeon has cleared the member for surgery, the bariatric surgical center will submit all required documents to Molina's UM Department for review.

### Additional information

- 1) Prior to completing the Molina "Medicaid Bariatric Surgery Criteria Pre-Surgical Assessment Form" for enrollment in the Bariatric Program (Stage I), the PCP should review all program requirements with their patient to ensure he or she wants bariatric surgery and fully understands what's involved.
- 2) Patients must be smoke-and-vape-free (including tobacco, marijuana, and e-cigarettes) for a minimum of **6 months prior to surgery** in order to qualify for bariatric surgery; nicotine testing will be required.
- 3) If diagnosed with sleep apnea, patients must be compliant with using their BiPAP or CPAP machine for a minimum of **6 weeks prior to surgery**. A 6-week compliance report will be required to be cleared for surgery.
- 4) Patients may not become pregnant for a minimum of **2 years after surgery**.
- 5) The PCP should NOT send any additional clinic notes to the surgical center other than what is outlined in Stage II.
- 6) The PCP should NOT submit a request for bariatric surgery (Stage III) directly to Molina, as the bariatric surgical center will do this.

If providers have questions, please contact (425) 330-7467 or email [MHW\\_Bariatric\\_Program@MolinaHealthcare.com](mailto:MHW_Bariatric_Program@MolinaHealthcare.com).