

# MHIL Provider Memo

Molina Healthcare of Illinois, Inc. | March 13, 2026

## SUD Coding Criteria Overview

Molina Healthcare of Illinois (Molina) performs routine clinical documentation reviews for substance use disorders (SUD). The goal is to identify potential inconsistencies between the documented findings and the reported diagnoses. Molina's Quality team may ask you to review the record(s) and consider whether a diagnostic clarification is appropriate, with resubmission of a corrected claim if indicated. **Note:** This request is intended to support accurate clinical documentation and coding alignment and does **not** imply inappropriate care delivery.

### Deeper dive

According to DSM-5, substance-related disorders are diagnosed based on the presence of at least two of the eleven specified criteria occurring within a 12-month period. Individuals who do not meet these criteria are not considered to have a substance-related disorder under DSM-5 guidelines and would not receive an abuse or dependence diagnosis.

Similarly, individuals with a history of use, abuse, or dependence that is not currently active should not be classified as having an active abuse or dependence diagnosis. In some cases, it might be appropriate to diagnose the condition as being in remission, abstinent but under observation, still clinically significant due to ongoing monitoring or counseling, or because there remains a risk of relapse.

### Universal DSM-5 criteria

A diagnosis requires  $\geq 2$  of the following **11**:

Domain	Criterion
<b>Impaired Control</b>	1. Larger amounts/longer use than intended
	2. Persistent desire or unsuccessful efforts to cut down
	3. Great deal of time spent obtaining, using, or recovering
	4. Craving or strong desire to use
<b>Social Impairment</b>	5. Failure to fulfill major role obligations
	6. Continued use despite social/interpersonal problems
	7. Important activities given up or reduced
<b>Risky Use</b>	8. Recurrent use in hazardous situations
	9. Continued use despite physical or psychological problems
<b>Pharmacologic</b>	10. Tolerance
	11. Withdrawal

The DSM-5 12-month criterion seeks to identify a consistent pattern of problematic use across 12 consecutive months, rather than relying on observations from a single encounter.

## DSM-5 diagnostic thresholds (severity levels)

Number of Criteria Met	DSM-5 Diagnosis	ICD 10 Verbiage
0–1	No Substance Use Disorder (SUD)	No diagnosis or use
2–3	Mild SUD	Abuse
4–5	Moderate SUD	Dependence
6+	Severe SUD	Dependence

### Key clinical clarifications

- ICD-10 and DSM-5 verbiage do not align
- Use ≠ Disorder
- Assign a substance use code only when the provider documents a relationship between the use and an associated physical, mental, or behavioral disorder.
- Diagnosis requires clinically significant impairment or distress
- A substance abuse disorder (abuse or dependence diagnosis) requires clinically significant impairment or distress.
- If a historical disorder still affects care, counseling, or risk assessment, remission is usually more appropriate.

### Appendix

When documented as an active disorder:

Substance	Use	Abuse	Dependence
Alcohol	F10.9x	F10.1x	F10.2x
Opioid	F11.9x	F11.1x	F11.2x
Cannabis	F12.9x	F12.1x	F12.2x
Sedative, hypnotic or anxiolytic-related	F13.9x	F13.1x	F13.2x
Cocaine	F14.9x	F14.1x	F14.2x
Other Stimulant	F15.9x	F15.1x	F15.2x
Hallucinogen	F16.9x	F16.1x	F16.2x
Inhalant	F18.9x	F18.1x	F18.2x
Other psychoactive substance	F19.9x	F19.1x	F19.2x

x = additional fourth and fifth characters specify intoxication, withdrawal, or substance-induced conditions. Please refer to the full ICD-10 CM code set to assign the appropriate diagnosis code.

When documented as in remission, abstinent but monitored/addressed, still clinically relevant via monitoring, counseling, risk remaining:

Substance	Use In Remission	Abuse In Remission	Dependence In Remission
Alcohol	F10.91	F10.11	F10.21
Opioid	F11.91	F11.11	F11.21
Cannabis	F12.91	F12.11	F12.21
Sedative, hypnotic or anxiolytic-related	F13.91	F13.11	F13.21
Cocaine	F14.91	F14.11	F14.21
Other Stimulant	F15.91	F15.11	F15.21
Hallucinogen	F16.91	F16.11	F16.21
Inhalant	F18.91	F18.11	F18.21
Other psychoactive substance	F19.91	F19.11	F19.21

If the condition is fully historical with no current relevance code:

**Z86.59 Personal history of other mental and behavioral disorders**

**Questions?**

We're here to help! Contact your dedicated provider relations manager or email the Provider Relations team at [MHILProviderNetworkManagement@MolinaHealthcare.com](mailto:MHILProviderNetworkManagement@MolinaHealthcare.com). To help identify your dedicated provider relations manager, visit [Molina's Service Area page](#).

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