

Blue Shield of California Promise Health Plan Maternal Mental Health Program

Effective July 1, 2019, California law includes a mandate that a licensed health care practitioner who provides prenatal or postpartum care for a patient must ensure the patient is offered a screening, or is appropriately screened, for any type of mental health conditions that may be occurring.

In accordance with the law, Blue Shield of California Promise Health Plan (Blue Shield Promise) requires all participating network practitioners, as well as delegated entities that contract with individual practitioners, to comply with the requirement included in Article 6, Section 123640 (September 2018) of California's Health and Safety Code, following approval of the Assembly Bill 2193 (AB2193) approved in September 2018.

Effective January 1, 2025, Assembly Bill 1936 (AB1936) increased the required frequency of maternal mental health screenings.

Blue Shield Promise has developed a Maternal Mental Health Program which assists participating practitioners and delegated entities in implementing the new requirements. The program requirements are outlined below.

Mental health screening tools

1. All practitioners must use an evidence-based screening tool when providing a mental health screening.
 - Blue Shield Promise's preferred screening tool for maternal health screening is the [Edinburgh Perinatal Depression Scale](#) questionnaire, which includes use and scoring instructions.
 - A list of additional approved [depression screening tools questionnaires](#) is also available to practitioners to use.
2. These approved screening questionnaires are self-administered by the member. Practitioners are expected to provide the questionnaire to the member to fill out and return to the practitioner. The form is available in multiple languages and is designed to be very easy for the member to complete.

Required frequency of mental health screenings

1. The screening is required to occur at the following times:
 - At least once during each trimester
 - At least once within 6 weeks following the birth of the child
2. Practitioners must use one of the following common procedural terminology codes (CPT) upon completion of the depression screenings and submit the code to Blue Shield Promise alongside visit encounter data:
 - **G8431** should be applied when the screening for depression is documented as being **positive** and a follow-up plan is documented.
 - **G8510** should be applied when results of the screening for depression are documented as **negative**, and a follow-up plan is not required.

Recommended frequency of mental health screenings

To provide the best possible care, Blue Shield Promise recommends that the screenings take place more often than the minimum requirement, and that they occur as follows:

- Once during the first prenatal visit
- At least once during the second trimester
- At least once during the third trimester
- Once during the 6-week postpartum obstetrical visit
- Following the birth of the child, once during the 3-month pediatric visit, once during the 9-month visit and once during the 12-month visit

After completion of the screening

All members whose screening results indicate a positive identification of potential depression or other mental health conditions may be referred for mental health services. Members may refer directly to the [Find A Doctor](#) function on our website or call:

- Los Angeles County: (855) 765-9701, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.
- San Diego County: (855) 321-2211, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Resources for Blue Shield Promise members

At Blue Shield Promise, we want to support all the care you provide for our members who are either planning pregnancy or are already pregnant and receiving care. To request free brochures on breastfeeding and prenatal care, expectant members may call Blue Shield Promise's Health Education Department at (562) 580-6094, Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.