

WAC 182-531A-1100 Applied behavior analysis (ABA)—Prior authorization and recertification of ABA services. (1) The medicaid agency requires prior authorization (PA) and recertification of the medical necessity of applied behavior analysis (ABA) services.

(2) Requirements for PA requests are described in WAC 182-531A-0700.

(3) The agency may reduce or deny services requested based on medical necessity (refer to subsection (5) of this section) when completing PA or recertification responsibilities.

(4) The following are requirements for recertification of ABA services:

(a) Continued ABA services require the agency's authorization. Authorization is granted in three-month increments, or longer at the agency's discretion;

(b) The lead behavior analysis therapist (LBAT) must request authorization for continuing services 15 calendar days prior to the expiration date of the current authorization. A reevaluation and revised ABA therapy treatment plan documenting the client's progress and showing measurable changes in the frequency, intensity, and duration of the targeted behavior/symptoms addressed in the previously authorized ABA therapy treatment plan must be submitted with this request. Documentation must include:

- (i) Projection of eventual outcome;
- (ii) Assessment instruments;
- (iii) Developmental markers of readiness; and
- (iv) Evidence of coordination with providers.

(c) When completing recertification responsibilities, the agency may request another evaluation from the COE to obtain that provider's review and recommendation. This COE provider must review the ABA therapy treatment plan, conduct a face-to-face visit with the client, facilitate a multidisciplinary record review of the client's progress, hold a family/caregiver conference, or request a second opinion before recommending continued ABA services. Services will continue pending recertification.

(d) When completing recertification responsibilities, the agency may retroactively authorize dates of service. Services will continue pending recertification.

(5) Basis for denial or reduction of services includes, but is not limited to, the following:

(a) Lack of medical necessity, for example:

(i) Failure to respond to ABA services, even after trying different ABA techniques and approaches, if applicable;

(ii) Absence of harmful behaviors (e.g., physical aggression to self or others or property destruction), if applicable; or

(iii) Absence of meaningful, measurable, functional improvement changes or progress has plateaued without documentation of significant interfering events (e.g., serious physical illness, major family/caregiver disruption, change of residence), if applicable. For changes to be meaningful they must be:

(A) Confirmed through data;

(B) Documented in charts and graphs;

(C) Durable over time beyond the end of the actual treatment session; and

(D) Generalizable outside of the treatment setting to the client's residence and the larger community within which the client resides; or

(b) A demonstrated lack of engagement as evidenced by the family/caregiver to:

- (i) Keep appointments;
- (ii) Attend treatment sessions;
- (iii) Attend scheduled family training sessions;
- (iv) Complete homework assignments; and
- (v) Apply training as directed by the therapy assistant or LBAT.

Absences that are reasonably justified (e.g., illness) are not considered a pattern.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 41.05.021, 41.05.160, and Thurston County Superior Court in J.C. and H.S. v. Washington State Health Care Authority, no. 20-2-01813-34. WSR 22-08-035, § 182-531A-1100, filed 3/29/22, effective 4/29/22. Statutory Authority: RCW 41.05.021 and 41.05.160. WSR 14-24-083, § 182-531A-1100, filed 12/1/14, effective 1/1/15.]