

Network Provider Update

To: Medi-Cal network participants

June 2023

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Subject: **Use of filter paper should be discontinued for blood lead screening**

Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) [All Plan Letter 20-016](#), "Blood Lead Screening of Young Children," requires managed care plans such as Blue Shield of California Promise Health Plan to ensure that their network providers who perform periodic health assessments on children between the ages of six months and six years (i.e., 72 months) comply with federal and state laws and industry guidelines related to blood lead anticipatory guidance and screening.

Per advisement from the California Department of Public Health Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Branch (CLPPB), use of filter paper testing should be discontinued for blood lead tests due to well-documented issues of possible contamination.

CLPPB Filter Paper Testing Policy:

"If you are currently using filter paper testing for blood lead tests, please discontinue its use. If you have used filter paper in the past to test children under the age of six, and the test result was less than 3.5 mcg/dL, the test should be repeated with another screening using EITHER capillary blood and an FDA-approved Point of Care testing device OR capillary or venous blood sent to a lab. If the filter paper result was equal to or greater than 3.5 mcg/dL, repeat with a venous test and send the blood sample for analysis to a reference lab that runs inductively coupled plasma mass spectrometry (ICP-MS) or graphite furnace atomic absorption spectrometry (GFAAS)."

[Read the full announcement](#)

If you have questions about applying a benefit to Blue Shield Promise members, please contact Provider Services via Live Chat after logging in at blueshieldca.com/provider or call (800) 468-9935 from 6 a.m. to 6:30 p.m., Monday through Friday.