



Billing the Laboratory Specimen Collection Travel Allowance to the 10th of a Mile

Related CR Release Date: September 11, 2025	MLN Matters Number: MM14130 Revised
Effective Date: April 1, 2026	Related Change Request (CR) Number: CR 14130
Implementation Date: April 6, 2026	Related CR Transmittal Number: R13320CP & R13412CP
Related CR Title: Laboratory Specimen Collection Travel Allowance Billing to the Tenth of a Mile	

What's Changed? We made no substantive changes to the article other than to update the CR release, effective, and implementation dates; transmittal numbers; and transmittal links.

Affected Providers

- Laboratories
- Laboratory technicians
- Other providers billing Medicare Administrative Contractors (MACs) for specimen collection services

Action Needed

Make sure your billing staff knows about these changes effective **April 1, 2026**:

- Allowing you to bill HCPCS code P9603 calculated to the 10th of a mile
- How to properly bill to the 10th of a mile
- When to bill using a whole number of miles

Background

Section 1833(h)(3)(B) of the [Social Security Act](#) authorizes Medicare payment for transportation and personnel expenses incurred by trained personnel traveling to collect specimens from eligible Medicare patients. Specifically, we designed this travel allowance to cover costs associated with specimen collection from homebound or non-hospital inpatients.

Key Updates

To provide more accurate reporting and reimbursement for certain travel distances, MACs will update their claims processing systems to allow billing, acceptance, and adjudication of claims submitted with HCPCS code P9603 calculated to the 10th of a mile for claims with dates of service on or after **April 1, 2026**.

P9603 specifically relates to travel allowance for specimen collection, which reimburses transportation costs when collecting specimens from eligible Medicare patients.

The per-mile travel allowance applies in 2 situations:

- The round-trip travel to 1 location is greater than 20 eligible miles for specimen collection from 1 or more patients (payment for the per-mile travel allowance amount, prorated by the number of patients for whom we pay a specimen collection fee)
- When travel is to more than 1 location, regardless of the number of miles traveled

For trips totaling up to 100 eligible miles, round mileage up to the nearest 10th of a mile. Use the decimal in the appropriate place (99.9).

For trips totaling 100 eligible miles or more, round mileage up to the next whole number mile without using the decimal (report 998.5 miles as 999).

For trips totaling less than a mile, enter a 0 before the decimal (0.9).

More Information

We issued CR 14130 to your MAC as the official instruction for this change. For more information, find your [MAC's website](#).

Document History

Date of Change	Description
September 12, 2025	We made no substantive changes to the article other than to update the CR release, effective, and implementation dates; transmittal numbers; and transmittal links.
July 31, 2025	Initial article released.

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