

# Highmark Reimbursement Policy Bulletin



HISTORY VERSION

**Bulletin Number:** RP-001

**Subject:** Assistant at Surgery Services

**Effective Date:** August 1, 2016

**End Date:**

**Issue Date:** March 3, 2025

**Revised Date:** March 2025

**Date Reviewed:** February 2025

**Source:** Reimbursement Policy

**Applicable Commercial Market**

PA ☒ WV ☒ DE ☒ NY ☒

**Applicable Medicare Advantage Market**

PA ☒ WV ☒ DE ☒ NY ☒

**Applicable Claim Type**

UB ☐ 1500 ☒

➔ A checked box indicates the policy is applicable to that market either entirely, or partially, as indicated within the policy.

Reimbursement Policy designation of Professional or Facility application is based on how the provider is contracted with the Plan. This Policy supersedes direction provided in Bulletins prior to the effective date of this policy.

## REIMBURSEMENT GUIDELINES:

An assistant at surgery is a physician or non-physician (NPP) who meets the Plan eligibility guidelines and actively assists the physician in charge of a case in performing a surgical procedure.

### Commercial

The Plan will reimburse 16 percent of the fee schedule amount otherwise applicable for the global surgery, for assistant at surgery services performed by a physician and 13.6 percent for his/her employed physician assistant (PA), certified registered nurse practitioner (CRNP), nurse practitioner (NP), clinical nurse specialist (CNS) or certified nurse midwife (CNM).

**Note:** Modifier AS must be appended to the claim line when reporting assistant surgery performed by an employed PA, CRNP, NP, CNS and CNM.

### Medicare Advantage

The Plan will reimburse 16 percent of the fee schedule amount otherwise applicable for the global surgery, for assistant at surgery services performed by a physician and 13.6 percent for his/her employed physician assistant (PA), certified registered nurse practitioner (CRNP), nurse practitioner (NP) or clinical nurse specialist (CNS).

**Note:** Modifier AS must be reported when billing assistant at surgery services.

**Note:** Delaware reimbursement references Chapter 12 of the Medicare Claims Processing Manual.

**ADDITIONAL BILLING INFORMATION AND GUIDELINES:**

PAAs, NPs and CNSs must report their assistant at surgery services using their assigned NPI.

**DEFINITIONS:**

Modifier	Definition
AS	Physician assistant, certified registered nurse practitioner, nurse practitioner, clinical nurse specialist or certified nurse midwife services for assistant at surgery
80	Assistant surgery
81	Minimum assistant surgery
82	Assistant, no resident

**RELATED POLICIES:**

Refer to the following Commercial Medical Policies for additional information:

- S-16: Assistant Surgery Eligibility Criteria

Refer to the following Medicare Advantage Medical Policies for additional information:

- N-28: Assistant at Surgery Services

Refer to the following Reimbursement Policies for additional information:

- RP-035: Correct Coding Guidelines

**REFERENCES:**

- CMS online Manual, Pub. 100-04. Chapter 12

**POLICY UPDATE HISTORY INFORMATION:**

6 / 2018	Implementation
7 / 2020	Added 13.6 percent reimbursement for all commercial PA, CRNP, CNM
1 / 2022	Added Delaware Medicare Advantage applicable to the policy
9 / 2023	Added modifier definition section. Administrative review no changes in policy direction
3 / 2025	Administrative review no changes in policy direction

# Highmark Reimbursement Policy Bulletin



HISTORY VERSION

**Bulletin Number:** RP-001

**Subject:** Assistant at Surgery Services

**Effective Date:** August 1, 2016

**End Date:**

**Issue Date:** September 11, 2023

**Revised Date:** September 2023

**Date Reviewed:** August 2023

**Source:** Reimbursement Policy

**Applicable Commercial Market**

PA ☒ WV ☒ DE ☒ NY ☒

**Applicable Medicare Advantage Market**

PA ☒ WV ☒ DE ☒ NY ☒

**Applicable Claim Type**

UB ☒ 1500 ☒

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An assistant at surgery is a physician or non-physician (NPP) who meets the Plan eligibility guidelines and actively assists the physician in charge of a case in performing a surgical procedure.

## REIMBURSEMENT GUIDELINES:

### Commercial

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**Note:** Modifier AS must be appended to the claim line when reporting assistant surgery performed by an employed PA, CRNP and CNM.

### Medicare Advantage

The Plan will reimburse 16 percent of the fee schedule amount otherwise applicable for the global surgery, for assistant at surgery services performed by a physician and 13.6 percent for assistant at surgery services performed by a physician assistant (PA), nurse practitioner (NP) or a clinical nurse specialist (CNS).

**Note:** Modifier AS must be reported when billing assistant at surgery services.

**Note:** PAs, NPs and CNSs must report their assistant at surgery services using their assigned NPI.

**Note:** Delaware reimbursement references Chapter 12 of the Medicare Claims Processing Manual.

**DEFINITIONS:**

Modifier	Definition
AS	Physician assistant, nurse practitioner, or clinical nurse specialist services for assistant at surgery
80	Assistant surgery
81	Minimum assistant surgery
82	Assistant, no resident

**RELATED POLICIES:**

Refer to the following Highmark Commercial Medical Policies for applicable clinical information:

- S-16: Assistant Surgery Eligibility Criteria
- Z-10: Services of Physician Assistants

Refer to the following Highmark Commercial Medical Policies for applicable clinical information:

- N-28: Assistant at Surgery Services
- N-116: Services of Physician Assistants
- N-115: Clinical Nurse Specialist Services
- N-113: Nurse Practitioner Services

**ADDITIONAL BILLING INFORMATION AND GUIDELINES:**

- CMS online Manual, Pub. 100-04. Chapter 12

**POLICY UPDATE HISTORY INFORMATION:**

6 / 2018	Implementation
7 / 2020	Added 13.6 percent reimbursement for all commercial PA, CRNP, CNM
1 / 2022	Added Delaware Medicare Advantage applicable to the policy
9 / 2023	Added modifier definition section. Administrative review no changes in policy direction

# Highmark Reimbursement Policy Bulletin



HISTORY VERSION

**Bulletin Number:** RP-001

**Subject:** Assistant at Surgery Services

**Effective Date:** August 1, 2016

**End Date:**

**Issue Date:** January 3, 2022

**Revised Date:** January 2022

**Date Reviewed:** October 2021

**Source:** Reimbursement Policy

**Applicable Commercial Market**

PA ☒ WV ☒ DE ☒ NY ☒

**Applicable Medicare Advantage Market**

PA ☒ WV ☒ DE ☒ NY ☒

**Applicable Claim Type**

UB ☒ 1500 ☒

➔ A checked box indicates the policy is applicable to that market either entirely, or partially, as indicated within the policy.

Reimbursement Policy designation of Professional or Facility application is based on how the provider is contracted with the Plan. This Policy supersedes direction provided in Bulletins prior to the effective date of this policy.

An assistant at surgery is a physician or non-physician (NPP) who meets the Plan eligibility guidelines and actively assists the physician in charge of a case in performing a surgical procedure.

## REIMBURSEMENT GUIDELINES:

### Commercial

The Plan will reimburse 16 percent of the fee schedule amount otherwise applicable for the global surgery, for assistant at surgery services performed by a physician and 13.6 percent for his/her employed physician assistant (PA), certified registered nurse practitioner (CRNP) or certified nurse midwife (CNM).

**Note:** Modifier AS must be appended to the claim line when reporting assistant surgery performed by an employed PA, CRNP and CNM.

### Medicare Advantage

The Plan will reimburse 16 percent of the fee schedule amount otherwise applicable for the global surgery, for assistant at surgery services performed by a physician and 13.6 percent for assistant at surgery services performed by a physician assistant (PA), nurse practitioner (NP) or a clinical nurse specialist (CNS).

**Note:** Modifier AS must be reported when billing assistant at surgery services.

**Note:** PAs, NPs and CNSs must report their assistant at surgery services using their assigned NPI.

**Note:** Delaware reimbursement references Chapter 12 of the Medicare Claims Processing Manual.

**RELATED POLICIES:**

Refer to the following Highmark Commercial Medical Policies for applicable clinical information:

- S-16: Assistant Surgery Eligibility Criteria
- Z-10: Services of Physician Assistants

Refer to the following Highmark Commercial Medical Policies for applicable clinical information:

- N-28: Assistant at Surgery Services
- N-116: Services of Physician Assistants
- N-115: Clinical Nurse Specialist Services
- N-113: Nurse Practitioner Services

**ADDITIONAL BILLING INFORMATION AND GUIDELINES:**

- CMS online Manual, Pub. 100-04. Chapter 12

**POLICY UPDATE HISTORY INFORMATION:**

6 / 2018	Implementation
7 / 2020	Added 13.6 percent reimbursement for all commercial PA, CRNP, CNM
1 / 2022	Added Delaware Medicare Advantage applicable to the policy

# Highmark Reimbursement Policy Bulletin



HISTORY VERSION

**Bulletin Number:** RP- 001  
**Subject:** Assistant at Surgery Services  
**Effective Date:** August 1, 2016  
**Issue Date:** October 1, 2021  
**Date Reviewed:** July 2021  
**Source:** Reimbursement Policy

**End Date:**

**Revised Date:** July 2021

**Applicable Commercial Market**

**Applicable Medicare Advantage Market**

**Applicable Claim Type**

PA	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	WV	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	DE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
PA	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	WV	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	DE	<input type="checkbox"/>	NY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
UB	<input type="checkbox"/>	1500	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				

Reimbursement Policy designation of Professional or Facility application is based on how the provider is contracted with the Plan. This Policy supersedes direction provided in Bulletins prior to the effective date of this Policy.

## PURPOSE:

The purpose of this policy to provide direction on assistant at surgery services. An assistant at surgery is a physician or non-physician (NPP) who meets the Plan eligibility guidelines and actively assists the physician in charge of a case in performing a surgical procedure.

## COMMERCIAL REIMBURSEMENT GUIDELINES:

The Plan will reimburse 16 percent of the fee schedule amount otherwise applicable for the global surgery, for assistant at surgery services performed by a physician and 13.6 percent for his/her employed physician assistant (PA), certified registered nurse practitioner (CRNP) or certified nurse midwife (CNM).

**Note:** Modifier AS must be appended to the claim line when reporting assistant surgery performed by an employed PA, CRNP and CNM.

## MEDICARE ADVANTAGE REIMBURSEMENT GUIDELINES:

The Plan will reimburse 16 percent of the fee schedule amount otherwise applicable for the global surgery, for assistant at surgery services performed by a physician and 13.6 percent for assistant at surgery services performed by a physician assistant (PA), nurse practitioner (NP) or a clinical nurse specialist (CNS).

**Note:** Modifier AS must be reported when billing assistant at surgery services.

**Note:** PAs, NPs and CNSs must report their assistant at surgery services using their assigned NPI.

**Note:** Delaware reimbursement references Chapter 12 of the Medicare Claims Processing Manual.

#### **RELATED HIGHMARK POLICIES:**

Refer to the following Commercial Medical Policies for additional information:

- S-16: Assistant Surgery Eligibility Criteria
- Z-10: Services of Physician Assistants

Refer to the following Medicare Advantage Medical Policies for additional information:

- N-28: Assistant at Surgery Services
- N-116: Services of Physician Assistants
- N-115: Clinical Nurse Specialist Services
- N-113: Nurse Practitioner Services

#### **ADDITIONAL BILLING INFORMATION, REFERENCES, AND GUIDELINES:**

- CMS online Manual, Pub. 100-04. Chapter 12

#### **POLICY UPDATE HISTORY INFORMATION:**

6 / 2018	Implementation
7 / 2020	Added 13.6 percent reimbursement for all commercial PA, CRNP, CNM
10 / 2021	Added NY region applicable to the policy



# Highmark Reimbursement Policy Bulletin



HISTORY VERSION

**Bulletin Number:** RP-001  
**Subject:** Assistant at Surgery Services  
**Effective Date:** August 1, 2016  
**Issue Date:** July 1, 2020  
**Date Reviewed:** January 2020  
**Source:** Reimbursement Policy

**End Date:**  
**Revised Date:** April 2020

**Applicable Commercial Market**

**Applicable Medicare Advantage Market**

**Applicable Claim Type**

PA	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	WV	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	DE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
PA	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	WV	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
UB	<input type="checkbox"/>	1500	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		

Reimbursement Policy designation of Professional or Facility application is respective to how the provider is contracted with The Plan. Provider contractual agreement terms in direct conflict with this Reimbursement Policy may supersede this Policy's direction and regional applicability.

An assistant at surgery is a physician or non-physician (NPP) who meets the Plan eligibility guidelines and actively assists the physician in charge of a case in performing a surgical procedure.

## REIMBURSEMENT GUIDELINES:

### Commercial

The Plan will reimburse 16 percent of the fee schedule amount otherwise applicable for the global surgery, for assistant at surgery services performed by a physician and 13.6 percent for his/her employed physician assistant (PA), certified registered nurse practitioner (CRNP) or certified nurse midwife (CNM).

**Note:** Modifier AS must be appended to the claim line when reporting assistant surgery performed by an employed PA, CRNP and CNM.

### Medicare Advantage

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**Note:** Modifier AS must be reported when billing assistant at surgery services.

**Note:** PAs, NPs and CNSs must report their assistant at surgery services using their assigned NPI.

**Note:** Delaware reimbursement references Chapter 12 of the Medicare Claims Processing Manual.

## RELATED POLICIES:

Refer to the following Highmark Medical Policies for applicable clinical information:

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- Medicare Advantage Policy N-116: Services of Physician Assistants
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- Commercial Policy S-16: Assistant Surgery Eligibility Criteria
- Commercial Policy Z-10: Services of Physician Assistants

## ADDITIONAL BILLING INFORMATION AND GUIDELINES:

- CMS online Manual, Pub. 100-04. Chapter 12

## POLICY UPDATE HISTORY INFORMATION:

06/2018	Implementation
07/2020	Added 13.6 percent reimbursement for all commercial PA, CRNP, CNM

# Highmark Reimbursement Policy Bulletin



**Bulletin Number:** RP-001  
**Subject:** Assistant at Surgery Services  
**Effective Date:** August 1, 2016  
**Issue Date:** June 11, 2018  
**Source:** Reimbursement Policy

**End Date:**

**Applicable Commercial Market**

PA ☒

WV ☒

DE ☒

**Applicable Medicare Advantage Market**

PA ☒

WV ☒

**Applicable Claim Type**

UB ☐

1500 ☒

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## REIMBURSEMENT GUIDELINES:

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**ADDITIONAL BILLING INFORMATION AND GUIDELINES:**

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**Date Reviewed:** January 2020  
**Source:** Reimbursement Policy

**End Date:**  
**Revised Date:** April 2020

**Applicable Commercial Market**

**Applicable Medicare Advantage Market**

**Applicable Claim Type**

PA	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	WV	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	DE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
PA	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	WV	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
UB	<input type="checkbox"/>	1500	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		

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- Commercial Policy S-16: Assistant Surgery Eligibility Criteria
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## ADDITIONAL BILLING INFORMATION AND GUIDELINES:

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## POLICY UPDATE HISTORY INFORMATION:

06/2018	Implementation
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**Issue Date:** June 11, 2018  
**Source:** Reimbursement Policy

**End Date:**

**Applicable Commercial Market**

PA ☒

WV ☒

DE ☒

**Applicable Medicare Advantage Market**

PA ☒

WV ☒

**Applicable Claim Type**

UB ☐

1500 ☒

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