

Genetic Testing Program FAQ

What is the PacificSource Genetic Testing Program?

The PacificSource Genetic Testing Program addresses the complexities of genetic testing by supporting evidence-based testing at in-network laboratories.

Your participation is required when recommending genetic testing for our members, including those covered by PacificSource Health Plans, PacificSource Medicare, and PacificSource Community Solutions, effective July 1, 2019. Claims submitted for genetic tests performed on or after the effective date will not be paid if prior authorization was not obtained through the PacificSource Genetic Testing Program.

How is the program administered?

The program is administered by Carelon Medical Benefits Management. Your participation in the program is most easily managed using the Carelon **ProviderPortal**SM (ProviderPortal.com), which is available 24/7. You can also call Carelon directly at **(877) 291-0510**, Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Pacific Time.

Carelon will review each test you request along with the clinical information submitted to ensure the request aligns with our evidence-based clinical appropriateness guidelines. These guidelines are the basis of PacificSource's medical policy. If clinical criteria are met, and you selected an in-network laboratory, your request will be approved in real time. If a request cannot be approved at intake, program personnel, including genetic analysts and physicians, are available to support rapid resolution of your request.

What testing is included in the program?

The program includes, but is not limited to, tier one and tier two molecular pathology CPT codes. Below, please find a partial list of testing scenarios managed to support high-value, high-quality genetic testing for PacificSource members of all age groups.

- Genetic testing for hereditary cardiac disease
- Genetic testing for hereditary cancer susceptibility
- Genetic testing for single-gene and multifactorial conditions
- Pharmacogenetic testing and genetic testing for thrombotic disorders
- Reproductive carrier screening and prenatal diagnosis
- Molecular testing of solid and hematologic tumors and malignancies
- Whole exome and whole genome sequencing

What is clinical appropriateness review?

Clinical appropriateness review is the process by which PacificSource coverage prior authorization is determined.

What are the benefits of the program to my practice?

- 24/7 online access to the **ProviderPortal**, a proven technology platform to process and review requests in real time
- Synchronization with health plan medical policy
- Access to a list of providers available to perform genetic counseling when required, including local providers and providers of telephonic counseling services
- Assurance that your practice is providing evidence-based care
- Protection from unnecessary out-of-pocket costs for your patients
- Same user-friendly platform currently used to process advanced imaging authorizations



Who can submit review requests?

Only ordering providers and their staff members may submit review requests. Servicing/rendering providers cannot submit requests, but are encouraged to verify that prior authorization has been obtained before performing a test for a PacificSource member. Servicing/rendering providers can verify prior authorization using **ProviderPortal**.

How do I know if tests for my patient must be reviewed?

Genetic tests for patients covered by PacificSource must be reviewed. If in doubt, or if you attempt a review request but do not find the patient in the **ProviderPortal**, contact Carelon or PacificSource for assistance.

How do I submit a test request for review?

- Order request – Submit a review request through the **ProviderPortal** ([ProviderPortal.com](https://www.providerportal.com)), or by calling Carelon directly at **(877) 291-0510**, Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Pacific Time. The system is designed to help guide your test and laboratory selection, and alert you to any genetic counseling requirements.
- Review – We evaluate your request with regard to:
 - Alignment with Carelon evidence-based clinical appropriateness guidelines that are the basis of PacificSource medical policy
 - Satisfaction of genetic counseling requirements, when required
 - Utilization of an in-network laboratory
- Determination – When your request aligns with applicable criteria, you will receive an immediate approval. Approved/authorized requests will be issued an order number.

If your request does not meet criteria for approval, you will have the option of discussing your case with one of our clinical genetics experts. Sometimes, testing can be approved when additional clinical information is provided. Other times, a test aligned with criteria can be suggested for your consideration. A peer-to-peer discussion with one of our physician reviewers is always offered before any adverse determination is made.

We recognize that every patient in your practice is unique. While the program is designed to identify the most appropriate test for an individual patient, you may have specific reasons to order another test. The program is designed to have the flexibility to approve such requests through outreach by genetic analysts and, ultimately, peer-to-peer review.

Once a review request has been submitted, how long will it take to receive a response from Carelon?

Requests that meet criteria are authorized in real time. Most requests are closed within a one business day after you supply all requested information.

After a review is completed, is a letter sent to the provider?

Yes. Determination letters, including order numbers for authorized tests, are mailed to the ordering provider, servicing provider, and the patient. Order numbers for authorized tests are available through **ProviderPortal** as soon as a test request is authorized, whether the request was submitted online or by phone.

Important note about order dates:

When requesting an authorization for genetic testing, please complete the date of service field with the date that the laboratory likely will begin the testing process.

Do *not* use the date the sample is collected unless the test is being performed by the laboratory on that same day.

If you do not know the exact test date, please enter an estimated date that is one (1) to three (3) days after the sample is scheduled to arrive at the laboratory; doing so will facilitate approvals in the vast majority of situations.

PacificSource requires that requests are submitted prior to testing; therefore, requests submitted after testing may be denied.

How long is an order number valid?

An order summary is provided for each test review requested. Although the summary will note the valid timeframe for an authorized test, authorizations are typically valid for 90 days.

What if I do not submit a test for review?

Claims submitted for genetic tests performed will not be paid if prior authorization was not obtained through the PacificSource Genetic Testing Program.

How are the guidelines developed?

Carelon clinical appropriateness guidelines are developed by board-certified genetic counselors and medical geneticists through systematic reviews of peer-reviewed resources, medical society guidelines, and practice bulletins. The process for assessing the clinical appropriateness of testing is consistent with the CDC ACCE Model Process for Evaluating Genetic Tests. Guidelines are reviewed and updated at least twice annually—more frequently if necessitated by new evidence.

What is genetic counseling?

For more information about genetic counseling and its role in ensuring appropriate genetic testing, please visit [AboutGeneticCounselors.com](https://www.aboutgeneticcounselors.com).

Is genetic counseling required for a test request to be authorized?

Genetic counseling may be required before some, but not all, test requests can be authorized. If genetic counseling is required for a test you request and has already been performed, you will be required to identify the genetic counseling provider.

If genetic counseling is required for a test you request but has not yet been performed, a list of genetic counseling providers, including local providers and providers of telephonic counseling services, will be supplied for your consideration. Verification of a genetic counseling provider's network eligibility is encouraged.

Need more information?

The provider [website](#) offers you all the tools and information you need to get started. Visit the site to view a step-by-step tutorial on registering for and using the *ProviderPortal* and to find worksheets to help you gather information you'll need for each test request.

For assistance using the *ProviderPortal*, [email us](#) or call us at **(800) 252-2021**, Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Pacific Time.

Where can I find the Carelon clinical appropriateness guidelines for genetic testing?

Guidelines are available online [here](#).

What is genetic counseling?

For more information about genetic counseling and its role in ensuring appropriate genetic testing, please visit: [AboutGeneticCounselors.com](https://www.aboutgeneticcounselors.com)