

As Thermo Fisher Scientific continues to support our customers in delivering critical COVID-19 testing solutions, we want to share an important update regarding Medicare reimbursement in the United States for Thermo Fisher Scientific's TaqPath™ COVID-19 RT-PCR Combo Kit.

On April 14, 2020, the U.S. Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) released a ruling that increases reimbursement for tests conducted to detect SARS-CoV-2 that use "high throughput technologies"¹. This includes Thermo Fisher's TaqPath™ COVID-19 RT-PCR Combo Kit, which is a single, high-throughput, 1,000 reactions kit recommended for use with Applied Biosystems 7500 Fast Dx Real-Time PCR System².

Thermo Fisher's test can be used by clinical and public health laboratories to quickly evaluate up to 94 patient specimens in under 2 hours³. CMS criteria for a high throughput test was the ability to process more than 200 specimens in an 8-hour shift. The TaqPath assay clearly falls within that requirement. The reimbursement under Medicare Part B will be raised for this test from ~\$51 per test to \$100 per test.

Please see below, for informational purposes only, additional details that may be helpful in submitting reimbursement claims:

Medicare Claims

For Medicare claims, the following Healthcare Common Procedure Coding System (HCPCS)⁴ code should be used to report the Thermo Fisher Scientific Applied Biosystems TaqPath™ COVID-19 Combo Kit Test:

- **U0003:** *Infectious agent detection by nucleic acid (DNA or RNA); severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) (Coronavirus disease [COVID-19]), amplified probe technique, making use of high throughput technologies as described by [CMS-2020-01-R](#).*
- Medicare reimbursement for HCPCS code U0003 is \$100 for tests performed on or after March 18, 2020, and end when the national emergency is over.

Commercial Payers (i.e. non-Medicare)

Effective for reporting beginning March 13, 2020, the appropriate CPT^{®5} code for SARs-CoV-2 testing is:

- **CPT[®] code 87635** *Infectious agent detection by nucleic acid (DNA or RNA); severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) (Coronavirus disease [COVID-19]), amplified probe technique.*
- The 2020 payment rate for CPT code 87635 is \$51.00.

Some commercial payers may also accept HCPCS code U0002 which was established by CMS to describe non-CDC tests:

- **U0002** *2019-nCoV Coronavirus, SARS-CoV-2/2019-nCoV (COVID-19), any technique, multiple types or subtypes (includes all targets), non-CDC can also be used by laboratories and healthcare facilities.*
- The payment rate for HCPCS code U0002 is \$51.00.

Contact your third-party payer to determine their guidelines regarding applicability for retroactive billing and reimbursement.

As always, we greatly value our partnership with you and are committed to supporting your important work. If you have any questions, please refer to your normal point of contact.

Note: This information is provided as a courtesy for informational purposes only and is not intended to be, and should not be interpreted as, reimbursement or billing advice or a legal representation by Thermo Fisher Scientific of reimbursement eligibility.

Health care professionals are responsible for determining appropriate reimbursement policies, including applicable CPT® code assignment. Thermo Fisher Scientific does not guarantee third-party coverage or payment for Thermo Fisher products or provide remuneration to customers for claims that are denied by third-party payers.

1: CMS defines “high throughput technology” as tests utilizing a platform that “employs automated processing of more than two hundred specimens a day.”

2: <https://www.thermofisher.com/ch/en/home/clinical/clinical-genomics/pathogen-detection-solutions/coronavirus-2019-ncov/genetic-analysis/taqpath-rt-pcr-covid-19-kit.html>

3: The kit can be used by clinical and public health laboratories to quickly evaluate up to 94 patient specimens in under 2 hours. <https://www.thermofisher.com/ch/en/home/clinical/clinical-genomics/pathogen-detection-solutions/coronavirus-2019-ncov/genetic-analysis/taqpath-rt-pcr-covid-19-kit.html>.

4: https://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Coding/MedHCPCSGenInfo/HCPCS_Coding_Questions.

5: *Current Procedural Terminology* (CPT®) is copyright 2019 by the American Medical Association. All rights reserved.