

American Dental Association

Current Dental Terminology

The American Dental Association (ADA) owns all rights, title, and interest in the Current Dental Terminology (CDT). The ADA has granted the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS or the agency) and its agents a license to use CDT in CMS publications, print and electronic media, as needed to fulfill agency requirements.

- CMS may incorporate CDT in CMS HCPCS
- CMS may install within CMS software systems the current copy of the CDT, as well as the most recent updates, for purposes of processing Medicaid dental claims

Table of Contents

Restrictions	1
Copyright Notice.....	2
Copyright Year Guideline.....	2
ADA Guidelines for CDT usage	2
Definitions.....	2
CDT Terms and Conditions.....	3

Restrictions

Web posting of CDT requires ADA pre-approval. View the [ADA Exhibit 6 – ADA Approved CDT Web Postings](#). ADA prohibits CMS posting of HCPCS CDT codes on the web. CDT license restricts CMS use of CDT to Medicare, Medicaid, and other CMS administered programs. Any use not authorized within this CMS-ADA CDT license is prohibited.

Required Notice

Before the first appearance of CDT in a product or web posting, affix the copyright notice specified below.

Copyright Notice

For CDT

Current Dental Terminology © (insert appropriate year) American Dental Association. All rights reserved.

For all other editions, including updates

Current Dental Terminology, © (insert appropriate year) American Dental Association. All rights reserved.

Copyright Year Guideline

The ADA copyright year is 1 year earlier than the year of the CDT code set.

See [Copyright Notices](#) for specific year information.

ADA Guidelines for CDT usage

Hardcopy Publications: The ADA Copyright Notice shall appear on products and publications referencing CDT codes.

Web Publications: The ADA Copyright Notice must appear before the first appearance of the CDT codes in a product or publication.

Definitions

CDT: The textual, graphic and other editorial content included in the ADA developed publication, Current Dental Terminology ("CDT") and all updates as defined below

CMS User: CMS staff and or CMS authorized agent

CMS End-User: The person using CMS developed electronic media and publications

Code: The Code on Dental Procedures and Nomenclature, whether delivered in print or machine- readable format. Each individual dental procedure code has these 2 components:

- A five-character alphanumeric "code" that identifies a specific dental procedure
- A short, written literal definition of the procedure code called the "nomenclature"

Some but not all individual dental procedures have a third component, namely, a written narrative that provides a more detailed definition and the intended use of the procedure code called the "descriptor."

Documents that are printed, displayed on the web, or included in electronic media are defined as:

- Local Medical Review Policies (LMRPs)

- Bulletins and Newsletters
- Program Memoranda and Billing Instructions
- Coverage and Coding Policies
- Program Integrity Bulletins and Correspondence
- Educational and Training Materials
- Special mailings requiring expedited handling
- Fee Schedules
- Program and policy handbooks or manual
- Computer Based Training manuals

Entities: Those participating in programs administered by CMS, including but not limited to the CMS contractors, state Medicaid agencies, State Children's Health Insurance Programs (CHIP) and their respective agents, Medicare Administrative Contractors (MAC) and Title XVII Medicare Contractors.

Output: Any electronic or printed copy of the CDT including any complete or partial listings of the CDT codes, nomenclature or descriptors created by CMS.

Territory: The United States, including the 50 states, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealths of Puerto Rico and the Northern Mariana Islands, Guam, U.S. Virgin Islands, American Samoa, and any territory of the United States.

Updates: Any modified or updated versions or new editions of the CDT that ADA issues during this Agreement. All "updates" are part of the CDT once delivered to CMS and governed by this licensing agreement.

As defined in the CDT manual

- **Codes:** The Dental Procedure Codes, each of which is a five-character alphanumeric code beginning with the letter "D" that identifies a specific dental procedure
- **Nomenclature:** A written, literal definition of a code which is printed in boldface type in the CDT manual
- **Descriptors:** Written narratives that provide further definitions and intended uses for various "codes" or series of "codes"
- **Point-and-Click license:** An agreement that appears on a computer screen or webpage that requires the End-User to accept the licensing terms before getting access to CDT data
- **Training Costs:** The costs of reproducing training materials

CDT Terms and Conditions

1. CDT Copyright Notice

CDT usage must display all copyright notices below:

Current Dental Terminology © (insert appropriate year) American Dental Association. All rights reserved. The copyright notice shall appear on the webpage, or immediately before the initial appearance of CDT, including downloads that include any CDT. View the [ADA Exhibit 1 - CDT Copyright Notice and Copyright Guidance](#).

2. CDT Coding Advice

Publications and websites referencing CDT codes shall convey Medicare, Medicaid, or State CHIP specific information and not CDT coding advice. The CMS user shall not design publication substitutes for the CDT Book with respect to procedure codes, nomenclature, notes, or guidelines.

3. CDT Usage Related to CMS Programs

This agreement authorizes the use of CDT only for purposes related to participating in CMS programs. The CMS user acknowledges unrelated usage containing CDT codes and descriptions requires a separate license agreement with the ADA.

4. CMS Web Postings of CDT Requires AD approval

CMS may not reproduce or distribute CDT codes on the web unless approved by the ADA.

5. Notice of Full Version of CDT

If a CMS website includes CDT procedure codes and nomenclature, the website must include a statement that the full version of the CDT contains descriptors instructing how the codes are intended to be used.

6. Use of CDT without Modification

The CMS user is limited to the use of CDT without modification or change. The CMS user may not authorize anyone else to later, amend, change or modify CDT, including the codes, description or output of CDT.

7. Request for Documents containing CDT codes and nomenclature

- CMS may provide copies of documents containing codes and nomenclature in electronic media to comply with Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request(s).
- CMS may provide copies of documents containing codes and nomenclature in electronic media to comply with Department of Health & Human Services (HHS) Office of Inspector General (OIG), General Accounting Office (GAO), other federal, and state agencies investigative or information requests. The federal investigative requests include congressional investigations or inquiries.

8. Use of CDT Procedure Codes and Nomenclature

- Use of the codes is permitted wherever use of CDT "nomenclature" is permitted.
- Use of both the codes and nomenclature is permitted wherever use of CDT "descriptors" is permitted.

9. 15% Descriptor Limitation Rule

Within a document, CDT descriptors may not exceed 15% of a category of service – for example, Restorative.

10. Waiver of 15% Descriptor Limitation Rule for CDT categories of service of less than 15 CDT codes

The 15% CDT Descriptors Limitation Rule doesn't apply if a category of service of CDT has less than 15 CDT codes.

11. Waiver of the 15% Descriptor Limitation Rule

The ADA may waive the 15% Descriptor Limitation Rule. The ADA will review waiver requests on a case-by-case basis. The CMS user acknowledges the ADA requires a written waiver request for the 15% Descriptor Limitation Rule where the CMS user's desired usage of the CDT codes extends beyond the terms and conditions listed within this licensing agreement.

12. Calculating the 15% CDT Descriptor Limitation Rule

For purposes of calculating the amount of "use" of CDT descriptor, the CMS user shall evaluate each individual document separately. On an annual basis, the ADA agrees to provide counts (total and 15 percent) of the number of CDT codes included in the CDT Book Category of Services sections to assist CMS with its compliance with this licensing agreement.

13. Use of CDT Codes in Fee Schedules

Fee schedules may include CDT codes and nomenclature. Fee schedules may not include CDT descriptors. The CDT Descriptor Prohibition applies to, but isn't limited to the following list of Fee Schedules:

- Fee Schedules with listings of CDT codes or descriptors with or without associated fees
- The Annual New Codes and descriptors included in the CDT book unless the Categories of Service have less than 15 codes

The CMS user shall abide by the above fee schedule conditions and shall not create a Fee Schedule designed to replace the CDT Book.

14. Sample Formats

Access to sample guides displaying approved CDT usage and formatting of CDT codes appear as a link on the right navigational panel of the Medical Codes webpage. These sample formats include the requirement of copyright notices, separation of CDT and non-CDT via distinct sections, by typography or text where practical, and separate listings of CDT when permitted. The CMS user may view the [ADA CDT Exhibits Directory](#).

15. Fees

CMS may not charge fees for the distribution of any publications posted on the internet or electronic media that contain CDT.

Exception: CMS may distribute publications that include 15% of a section or subsection of CDT through electronic media or the internet at no more than the training cost.

16. Point-and-Click License Agreement

The CMS user must use a Point-and-Click License on any website or electronic media distributed to outside organizations, if the website or electronic media contains CDT. View the [ADA Exhibit 3 – Sample CDT Nomenclature in a Fee Schedule](#). Exception: Any email containing a limited reference to CDT codes need not contain the copyright notice.

17. Placement of the Point-and-Click License Agreement

The Point-and-Click License must appear before:

- Initial access is granted to any group of webpages containing CDT
- Any document that contains CDT
- Each file download containing all or any portion of CDT
- Computer-based training modules with CDT codes, descriptions, notes, or guidelines

18. Additional Terms in a Point-and-Click License Agreement

Additional terms may be included in a Point-and-Click License Agreement, provided they don't conflict with the terms of this agreement or expose the ADA to liability or jeopardize the ADA's rights in CDT copyright and trademark.

19. CDT New Use Application

- The distribution of publications containing CDT codes, nomenclature, and descriptors that are unrelated to CMS programs requires a separate license agreement with the ADA
- If your code usage is outside of an existing agreement, contact the association to discuss a new use agreement

20. CMS User's Acceptance of the ADA Terms and Conditions

If you're reviewing the above terms and conditions as a part of the ADA Point-and-Click Acceptance Agreement, use the close button to return to acceptance agreement. Next, select the accept button to generate an email with the hyperlink to the CDT electronic files.