



DEPARTMENT OF REHABILITATION PROVIDER REFERENCE GUIDE FOR HEARING AID SERVICES AND DEVICES

Introduction

The Department of Rehabilitation (DOR) is the state department charged with the vocational rehabilitation of adults and transitioning high school students with significant disabilities (collectively known as consumers). The DOR's mission is to assist consumers to achieve their employment goals, maintain successful employment, and live independently. Assisting consumers to reach these goals may include purchasing hearing aids, accessories, and professional services. The DOR highly values and appreciates all of the health care providers on the panel.

The DOR's Payment Rates

The DOR payment rates are comparable to the Medi-Cal rate schedules. However, the DOR may also purchase additional services and devices not covered by Medi-Cal in order to meet a DOR consumer's vocational rehabilitation needs.

Hearing aids are paid at the one-unit wholesale cost of the make and model of hearing aid from the manufacturer.

Ear molds are paid at the wholesale cost plus \$37.81 per pair of ear molds or singular ear mold if only one is purchased, based on wholesale documentation from the manufacturer. Split purchasing is not allowed.

Hearing aid accessories are allowed up to a 20% markup based on wholesale cost documentation from the manufacturer.

Taxes and shipping are reimbursed for the actual costs paid according to the manufacturer's wholesale invoice. Taxes and shipping charges are subject to DOR adjustment if the wholesale manufacturer's invoice is not enclosed with the provider's invoice.

Professional service fees are paid to accompany a hearing aid purchase as follows:

- \$500 for monaural / CROS
- \$800 for binaural / BiCROS

The payment fee for the professional services includes:

- 45-day hearing aid trial period
- 8 premium batteries per hearing aid
- Manufacturer's warranty
- 6 follow up visits after completion of the trial period including, but not limited to: training, hearing therapy, adjustments to hearing aids and accessories, re-programming, and cleaning.

Rates for the various evaluations and individual hearing tests performed prior to hearing aid recommendations are available upon request.

Prompt Payment Commitment

The DOR follows the California Prompt Payment Act, which requires state agencies to make payments not more than 45 days after the receipt of a properly submitted and undisputed invoice.

Pre-Purchase Professional Services

Some pre-purchase services may be performed by an audiologist or a medical doctor. Some services can be performed concurrently in the same office visit; others may need to be performed by different providers or at different office visits.

The pre-purchase professional services include, but are not limited to:

- Otological/ENT evaluation
- Audiological evaluation
- Hearing aid evaluation/assessment
- Ear Impression
- Electroacoustic analysis
- Impedance audiometry
- Tympanometry

The DOR requires a written evaluation report with a specific recommendation for devices or services. The report should be submitted within 10 business days from the date the evaluation was completed.

Evaluation reports should include:

- Narrative report on hearing disability or a completed Medical Report on Hearing Disability (DR 223D)
- Results of otological/ENT evaluation, audiological evaluation, and/or hearing aid evaluation/assessment report*
- Justification for the recommended hearing aid/device(s) based on the consumer's medical and vocational needs

*Reports may be submitted separately or as combined reports, depending on if they were conducted by the same provider or by different providers.

Hearing Aid Device Recommendation form (DR 358H)

The Hearing Aid/Device Recommendation form (DR 358H) should be submitted with the evaluation report. This form itemizes the costs for the hearing aids, accessories, ear molds, and at-purchase professional services. This form has been revised as of January, 2014.

If you have or receive any DR 358H forms in your office with a revision date prior to 01/2014, please discard.

The provider submitting the recommendation for the hearing aids, accessories, ear molds, and professional services can submit a catalog list sheet for each tangible item listed on the DR 358H as supporting cost documentation for the initial DOR authorization.

Single Authorization¹

No services may be provided or paid for without a DOR authorization document. Only those services authorized on an official DOR authorization will be honored at the time of invoice.

Once the evaluation report, DR 358H Hearing Aid/Device Recommendation form (and its accompanying cost documentation, if applicable) are received, the DOR reviews and determines the appropriateness of the purchase in alignment with the consumer's employment goal and plan.

When the DOR is ready to purchase the device(s) for the consumer, the DOR will send the provider a single written purchase order authorization (DR

¹ Does not include Bone Anchored Hearing Aids (BAHA) or Cochlear Implants (CI)

297D) itemizing all services and devices based on cost documentation from the DR 358H Hearing Aid/Device Recommendation form, including the hearing aids, ear molds, accessories, and professional services. The DOR will also include a blank Medical Device/Appliance Dispensing form (DR 363) for the provider to complete at the time of dispensing.

Dispensing the Hearing Aid and Accessories

At the end of the dispensing appointment, the provider scans / faxes / mails the Medical Device/Appliance Dispensing form (DR 363) to the DOR counselor. The date entered as the “Dispense Date” is the day the consumer takes possession of the hearing aid/device and marks the beginning of the 45-day trial period and the warranty period.

The consumer is legally entitled to a 45-day trial period for the hearing aid(s)². The DOR will be in communication with the consumer and provider during this time period. Within this timeframe, if the hearing aids are not meeting the needs of the consumer or the consumer indicates dissatisfaction, please contact the DOR counselor immediately.

Billing the DOR for Hearing Aids, Ear Molds, Accessories, and Professional Services

DOR invoicing guidelines can be found online at this website: <http://dor.ca.gov/Public/Invoicing-Guidelines-for-Vendors.html>. Along with general information for all vendors, the website includes a link to more specific information for health care providers.

- The provider’s invoice for the hearing aid(s) must include the make, model, date of purchase, and consumer’s name.
- The provider can invoice for hearing aids, ear molds, accessories, and professional fees immediately following dispensing hearing aids and accessories to the consumer.
- The DOR is required to verify with the consumer that goods and services were received prior to paying the invoice.
- Providers are paid at the rates listed in this document in the section entitled “The DOR’s Payment Rates.”
- Attach any comparable benefits documentation and manufacturer’s wholesale invoice when billing the DOR.

² California Civil Code, Article 3, Section 1793.02

Step-by-Step In-Depth Guide

This section provides a description of each step in the hearing aid purchase process. See the sections above for more detailed information on policies, processes, and documentation.

Step	Purchase Phase	Action	Standard Actor
1	Pre-Purchase	Obtain prescription, recommendation, or medical clearance for a hearing aid device from physician.	DOR Office
2	Pre-Purchase	Authorize audiological and hearing aid evaluations.	DOR Office
3	Pre-Purchase	Complete an audiological report and / or hearing aid evaluation report.	Provider
4	Hearing Aid Device Recommendation (DR 358H)	Recommend a specific hearing aid device and any related accessories, itemizing the costs for the hearing aids, accessories, ear molds, and professional services.	Provider
5	Billing for evaluation	Invoice the consumer's insurance if coverage is available for the evaluations.	Provider
6	Hearing Aid Device Recommendation (DR 358H)	Submit the completed report and recommendation to DOR. If the consumer does not have insurance coverage for the audiological and hearing aid evaluation, submit the evaluation service invoice to DOR, along with any denial letters received from the insurance carrier (if applicable).	Provider
7	Hearing aid authorization	Send the provider a written purchase order for the hearing aid(s), ear mold(s), accessories, and professional services.	DOR Office
8	Dispensing the hearing aid	Dispense the hearing aid and accessories to the consumer, including any necessary fitting and programming.	Provider

Step	Purchase Phase	Action	Standard Actor
9	Billing for the hearing aid package	<p>Invoice the consumer's insurance if coverage is available for the hearing aids, ear molds, accessories, and professional service fees.</p> <p>If the consumer's insurance does not cover any items in the hearing aid package, submit the itemized invoice to DOR, along with any denial letters received from insurance carrier (if applicable).</p> <p>If the consumer does not have insurance, bill DOR directly.</p> <p>Include all required paperwork listed in the section above entitled "Billing the DOR for Hearing Aids, Ear Molds, Accessories, and Professional Services."</p>	Provider
10	Verification of goods and services	Verify with consumer that goods and services were received prior to payment of invoice.	DOR Office
11	Trial period	<p>The consumer goes through a trial period, up to the legally mandated 45 days. Consumer decides if he/she is satisfied with the hearing aid device and communicates with DOR.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. If the consumer is satisfied, DOR documents the satisfaction and audiologist/dispenser allows up to 6 follow up visits as needed. b. If the consumer is not satisfied, consumer returns to audiologist/dispenser to try on a new hearing aid. No new professional service fees are paid. 	Consumer/ DOR Office/ Provider