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July 27, 2022

To All Oregon Newborn Bloodspot Screening Providers,

In June 2022, the Oregon Newborn Bloodspot Screening (NBS) Program notified interested parties of a proposed fee increase for program services. The program received thoughtful comments of both support and concern during the public comment period.

This message provides an update on the fee increase and the steps taken by the program to support providers.

Fee Increase Timeline

The proposed fee increase for newborn bloodspot screening (NBS) kits will go into effect on August 1, 2022. The fee for kits ordered on or after this date will be as follows:

- \$100 per one-specimen NBS kit.¹
- \$175 per two-specimen NBS kit.
- \$175 per three-specimen NBS kit.

Short-term provider support for the fee increase

The Oregon Newborn Bloodspot Screening (NBS) Program offers a fee waiver for families who do not have insurance and have a qualifying income for the waiver. As a result of feedback during this rulemaking, the NBS program will allow a fee waiver to be submitted with a kit order form, rather than requiring payment and providing reimbursement. The forms for NBS collection kit fee exemption can be found at: <https://bit.ly/nbs-exception>.

The NBS program parents' education brochure is being updated to include new disorders on the screening panel, fee waiver qualifications, and guidelines for screening exemptions. In addition, website revisions are underway to make it more user-friendly and to help families locate forms more easily.

The NBS program is also working to enable credit card payments for NBS kits. This will provide an additional payment option for medical providers.

For community birth providers and freestanding birth centers, Oregon Health Plan has increased the fee-for-service reimbursement rates for newborn bloodspot screening kits. Complete details and contact information can be found in their [June 14, 2022 provider bulletin](#). OHP intends to align reimbursement with the NBS Program fee change and will distribute a revised provider bulletin at that time.

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Long-term NBS program funding

The Northwest Regional Newborn Bloodspot Screening Program Advisory Board has formed a subcommittee to explore models for long-term program funding. It is anticipated that the subcommittee will develop recommendations for a sustainable NBS Program in Oregon. Their first meeting will be August 1, 2022. The agenda and login details for the public meeting are posted on the [NWRNBS Advisory Board website](#).

As a reminder, the Oregon Administrative Rule (OAR) 333-024-1030 states that a facility or individual responsible for collecting newborn bloodspot screening specimens must do so for every infant born in Oregon. An exemption for newborn bloodspot screening may be permitted if the parent(s) adhere to a religion opposed to such testing (ORS 433.285; OAR 333-024-1050). **This is the only reason exemption is currently permitted.**

Thank you for your continued collaboration with and support of the life-saving testing and follow-up services provided by your newborn bloodspot screening program. The NBS program looks forward to continued open dialog around the sustainable future for this important work. Please send questions to the NBS Program shared email box: NWRRegional.NBS@odhsoha.oregon.gov.

Sincerely,

John L. Fontana, PhD, (HCLD) ABB
OSPHL Director

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NW Regional NBS Program Manager

ⁱ Single kits are for use when the original second specimen collection kit has been lost or damaged, the infant was born out of state, or when the laboratory requests a new specimen. Oregon requires each newborn be screened at least twice. Single kits should not be used to screen infants only one time.