

AMA/Specialty Society Relative Value Update Committee (RUC)

Final Vote Release – Office Visits

[Every year, the RUC holds three meetings](#) to review CPT codes that are either new, revised or considered potentially misvalued by either the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) or the RUC's own process of identification performed by the Relativity Assessment Workgroup (RAW). In April 2012, the RUC approved a measure to release the final total RUC voting counts for each code reviewed during the most recently completed cycle. The release of these voting records will occur each year following CMS publication.

The Office Visit Codes (99202-99205; 99211-99215; 99417) were reviewed at the April 24-27, 2019 RUC meeting and the Committee's final recommendations were submitted to CMS on May 14, 2019. CMS has published the RUC recommendations for Office Visits in the Medicare Physician Payment Schedule Proposed Rule.

Further information about the RUC and its processes can be found at:

www.ama-assn.org/about-us/ruc

Below is a list of definitions and descriptions of RUC processes to help in the understanding the voting information published on the following pages:

- **CPT Code and Long Descriptor:** These first two columns simply state each individual CPT codes and Long Descriptor.
- **Pre-Facilitation (Yes/No):** Prior to each meeting, RUC members undergo a rigorous review of each CPT code's recommendation as submitted by the specialty society(ies). If significant concerns are raised by either the reviewing RUC members or the specialty society(ies) a request for pre-facilitation may occur. Pre-facilitation meetings are assigned to a specific subset of RUC members and Advisors called a facilitation committee (*described below*) and can occur either by phone or on site, prior to the presentation of the code(s) during the RUC meeting. During the pre-facilitation meetings, issues are discussed and the specialty society(ies) have the opportunity (but have no obligation) to revise their recommendations.
- **Specialty Work RVU modified prior to or during Presentation (Yes/No):** This field indicates whether or not the specialty society(ies) involved in surveying a specific code have revised their work RVU recommendation prior to or during the presentation of the code to the RUC. These modifications are typically made after review of pre-facilitation committee discussion (see above) or after consideration of RUC reviewer comments.
- **Specialty Work RVU passed by RUC (Yes/No):** This field indicates whether or not the initially presented work RVU recommendation, as presented to the RUC by the specialty society(ies), was approved.
- **Specialty Work RVU facilitated by RUC (Yes/No):** Each meeting, three facilitation committees are established. Each committee consists of a subset of RUC members, specialty society Advisors and a member of the non-MD/DO Health Care Professional Advisory Committee (HCPAC) who, when a code does not meet the required two-third vote for approval, meet with the appropriate specialty

society(ies) to reach consensus on a revised work RVU and direct practice expense. At the conclusion of a facilitation committee meeting, a report is written providing a rationale for the revised recommendations and the RUC again votes to either approve or disapprove these work RVU recommendations.

- **Specialty Work RVU modified by RUC process (Yes/No):** This field indicates if, for any reason, the specialty society(ies) RVU recommendations from initial submissions were modified by the RUC process. Modifications can happen for any number of reasons: 1) a pre-facilitation committee meeting could offer alternative suggestions that the specialties include; 2) comments made during the review process or at the table during the presentation of the code could result in modifications; 3) a facilitation committee meeting can reach consensus on revised work RVUs.
- **Final RUC Vote- work RVU:** This field indicates the final RUC vote total for each code. These vote totals represent the final RUC determinations on each code. CPT code RVU recommendations could have changed substantially from the original specialty societies' recommendation through any of the mechanisms laid out in the fields listed in the table and described above. [There are 28 voting members on the RUC.](#) A vote total may not add up to 28 for two reasons: 1) a voting member can abstain and/or 2) a voting member may not be present at the table during the vote. The RUC requires that at least 2/3 of the member voting must approve the recommendation in order for it to be submitted to CMS. A quorum, consisting of 16 member of the RUC, must be present to conduct any business.
- **Final RUC Vote- Direct Practice Expense:** This field indicates the final RUC vote total for each code's direct practice expense inputs (clinical labor, supplies and equipment) as recommended by the Practice Expense (PE) Subcommittee. As with the work RVU recommendations, direct PE input recommendations could have changed substantially from the original specialty societies' recommendation. The PE subcommittee meets for a full day prior to the RUC proceeding and reviews specialty society submissions for direct PE inputs and makes recommendations directly to the RUC. Following each vote on work RVUs, the RUC holds a separate vote to accept the direct PE inputs as modified and/or approved by the PE Subcommittee. The same voting protocol for work RVUs apply to direct PE inputs.

RUC Vote Totals – Office Visits

CPT Code	CPT Long Descriptor	Pre Facilitation	Specialty work RVU modified prior to or during presentation	Initially presented Specialty work RVU passed by RUC	Specialty work RVU facilitated by RUC	Specialty work RVU modified by RUC process	Final RUC Vote: Work RVU	Final RUC Vote: PE Direct Costs
99211	Office or other outpatient visit for the evaluation and management of an established patient, that may not require the presence of a physician or other qualified health care professional. Usually, the presenting problem(s) are minimal.	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	27-1	27-1
99212	Office or other outpatient visit for the evaluation and management of an established patient, which requires a medically appropriate history and/or examination and straightforward medical decision making. When using time for code selection, 10-19 minutes of total time is spent on the date of the encounter.	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	23-5	27-1
99213	Office or other outpatient visit for the evaluation and management of an established patient, which requires a medically appropriate history and/or examination and low level of medical decision making. When using time for code selection, 20-29 minutes of total time is spent on the date of the encounter.	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	25-3	27-1
99214	Office or other outpatient visit for the evaluation and management of an established patient, which requires a medically appropriate history and/or examination and moderate level of medical decision making. When using time for code selection, 30-39 minutes of total time is spent on the date of the encounter.	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	25-3	27-1
99215	Office or other outpatient visit for the evaluation and management of an established patient, which requires a medically appropriate history and/or examination and high level of medical decision making. When using time for code selection, 40-54 minutes of total time is spent on the date of the encounter.	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	25-3	27-1

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CPT Code	CPT Long Descriptor	Pre Facilitation	Specialty work RVU modified prior to or during presentation	Initially presented Specialty work RVU passed by RUC	Specialty work RVU facilitated by RUC	Specialty work RVU modified by RUC process	Final RUC Vote: Work RVU	Final RUC Vote: PE Direct Costs
99202	Office or other outpatient visit for the evaluation and management of a new patient, which requires a medically appropriate history and/or examination and straightforward medical decision making. When using time for code selection, 15-29 minutes of total time is spent on the date of the encounter.	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	28-0	27-1
99203	Office or other outpatient visit for the evaluation and management of a new patient, which requires a medically appropriate history and/or examination and low level of medical decision making. When using time for code selection, 30-44 minutes of total time is spent on the date of the encounter.	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	22-6	27-1
99204	Office or other outpatient visit for the evaluation and management of a new patient, which requires a medically appropriate history and/or examination and moderate level of medical decision making. When using time for code selection, 45-59 minutes of total time is spent on the date of the encounter.	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	20-8	27-1
99205	Office or other outpatient visit for the evaluation and management of a new patient, which requires a medically appropriate history and/or examination and high level of medical decision making. When using time for code selection, 60-74 minutes of total time is spent on the date of the encounter.	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	20-8	27-1
99417	Prolonged office or other outpatient evaluation and management service(s) (beyond the total time of the primary procedure which has been selected using total time), requiring total time with or without direct patient contact beyond the usual service, on the date of the primary service; each 15 minutes (List separately in addition to codes 99205, 99215 for office or other outpatient Evaluation and Management services)	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	25-3	27-1

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	Compelling Evidence Vote	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	25-3	N/A
	Global Surgery Period - RUC recommendation that the full increase of work and physician time for office visits be incorporated into the surgical global periods for each CPT code with a global of 010-day, 090-day and MMM (maternity) codes.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	27-1	N/A