

A blurred background image showing several medical professionals in blue scrubs. Their hands are clasped together in a supportive gesture, suggesting teamwork and care. The text is overlaid on this image.

Designated Doctor and MMI/IR Fees Training

Quick Reference Guide

Disclaimer

This presentation is updated as of **March 19, 2026**, and is for educational purposes only and provides general information. It is not a substitute for a full review of statutes and rules.

System participants are responsible for knowing and complying with the applicable sections of the Texas Insurance Code (Insurance Code), Texas Labor Code (Labor Code), and TAC.

Any opinions expressed by the speakers are personal and do not constitute or reflect any statement of policy by the Texas Department of Insurance, Division of Workers' Compensation (DWC).

Acronyms

- AMA - American Medical Association
- AMA Guides - *AMA Guides to the Evaluation of Permanent Impairment, 4th Edition*
- DD - Designated doctor
- DRE - Diagnosis related estimate
- DWC - Division of Workers' Compensation
- EOI - Extent of injury
- HCP - Health care provider
- IR - Impairment rating
- MAR - Maximum allowable reimbursement

Acronyms

- MEI - Medicare Economic Index
- MMI - Maximum medical improvement
- MSK - Musculoskeletal
- RD - Referred doctor
- RME - Required medical exam
- ROM - Range of motion
- RTW – Return to work
- Sec. - Sections
- TAC - Texas Administrative Code (Rules)
- TD - Treating doctor

Maximum Medical Improvement

MMI date that is the earliest of:

Clinical: The earliest date after which, based on reasonable medical probability, further material recovery from or lasting improvement to an injury can no longer reasonably be anticipated;
or



Maximum Medical Improvement

Statutory: The expiration of 104 weeks from the date on which income benefits begin to accrue. However, by commissioner's order, the MMI date may be extended due to spinal surgery or approved spinal surgery.

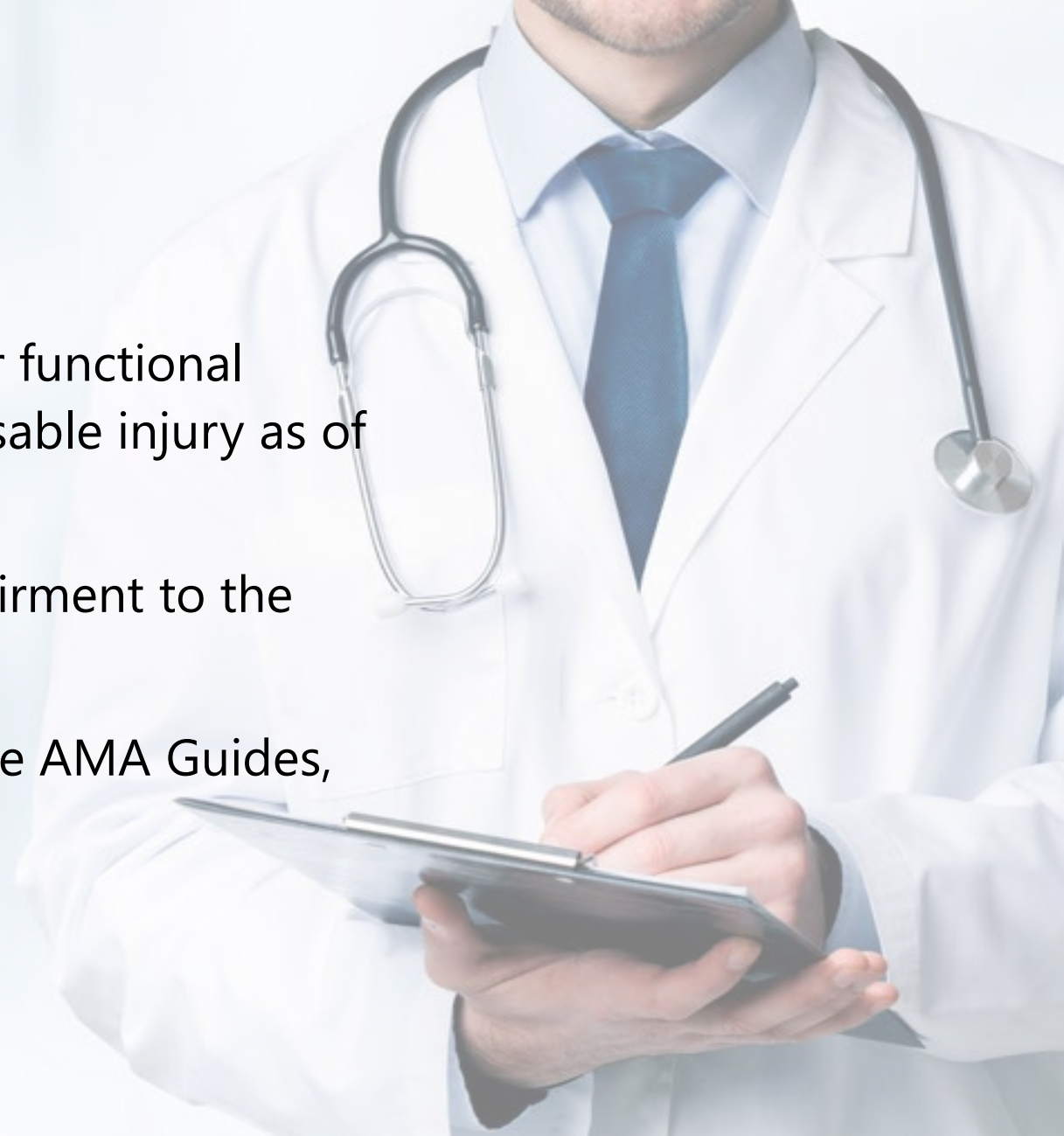


Impairment Rating

IR is a percentage that:

- Reflects the extent of permanent anatomic or functional abnormality or loss resulting from a compensable injury as of the date of MMI.
- Is shown as a percentage of permanent impairment to the whole body.
- Is based on the rating criteria contained in the *AMA Guides*, 1st, 2nd, 3rd, or 4th printing.

Only authorized doctors may assign an IR.



January 1, 2026, to December 31, 2026 DD MMI, IR, and Other Similar Exams DD Billing Instructions (28 TAC Sec. 134.240)

DD Type of Exam/Service	CPT Code	Modifier	2026 Reimbursement (MAR)
Not at MMI exam	99456	W5 NM	\$478
At MMI exam	99456	W5	\$478
IR exam first MSK body area	99456	W5	\$409
IR exam additional MSK body area (max of 3)	99456	W5	\$204
IR exam each non-MSK body area	99456	W5	\$204
Multiple IRs (DD only, each additional IR)	99456	W5 MI	\$68
Specialty exam fee (DD only, Rule 127.130)	99456	25	\$319
EOI exam	99456	W6	\$682
Disability exam	99456	W7	\$682
RTW exam	99456	W8	\$682
Other similar issues exam	99456	W9	\$682
Missed appointment (DD only)	99456	52	\$107

Rule 127.130(b)9(B)-(I) contains body areas and conditions that can be billed with the new specialty exam fee (for DDs only).

They are also on the **DWC-032**, Request for DD Exam, on pg. 2

They are the body areas and conditions from Traumatic brain injury, through Heart or cardiovascular condition

30. Check all body areas and diagnoses that apply.	Examples (not a full list)
<input type="checkbox"/> Spine and musculoskeletal structures of torso <i>*See below for spinal cord injuries, hernia</i>	cervical, thoracic or lumbar regions; herniated disc; rib cage, chest wall, abdominal wall, sprains, or strains
<input type="checkbox"/> Upper extremities <i>*See below for a fracture with vascular injury or a rib fracture.</i>	shoulder, forearm, arm, elbow, wrist, hand, finger regions, rotator cuff tear, sprains, or strains
<input type="checkbox"/> Lower extremities (excluding feet) <i>*See below for a fracture with vascular injury or a pelvis fracture.</i>	buttock, thigh, leg, knee regions, anterior cruciate ligament (ACL) tear, meniscus tear, sprains, or strains
<input type="checkbox"/> Feet	toes, heel
<input type="checkbox"/> Teeth and jaw	temporomandibular joint (TMJ)
<input type="checkbox"/> Eyes	eyelid, foreign body, corneal abrasion
<input type="checkbox"/> Other body areas or systems	ear, nose, and throat; head and face; skin; cuts to skin involving underlying structures; non-musculoskeletal structures of the torso; hernia; respiratory; endocrine; hematopoietic; urologic
<input type="checkbox"/> Traumatic brain injury	concussion, post-concussion syndrome
<input type="checkbox"/> Spinal cord injury	spinal fracture with documented neurological injury deficit, more than one spinal fracture, cauda equina syndrome
<input type="checkbox"/> Severe burns (including chemical burns)	2nd, 3rd, or 4th degree; deep partial or full thickness burns
<input type="checkbox"/> Joint dislocation, fractures with vascular injury, pelvis fractures, or multiple rib fractures	not applicable
<input type="checkbox"/> Infectious diseases (complicated)	infection requiring hospitalization or prolonged intravenous antibiotics, including blood borne pathogens
<input type="checkbox"/> Complex regional pain syndrome	not applicable
<input type="checkbox"/> Chemical exposure	not applicable
<input type="checkbox"/> Heart or cardiovascular condition	not applicable
<input type="checkbox"/> Mental and behavioral disorders	post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)

January 1, 2026, to December 31, 2026
RME MMI, IR, and Other Similar Exams
RME Billing Instructions (28 TAC Sec. 134.235)

RME Type of Exam/Service	CPT Code	Modifier	2026 Reimbursement (MAR)
Not at MMI exam	99456	NM	\$478
At MMI exam	99456	n/a	\$478
IR exam first MSK area	99456	n/a	\$409
IR exam each additional MSK body area (max of 3)	99456	n/a	\$204
IR each non-MSK area exam	99456	n/a	\$204
EOI exam	99456	n/a	\$682
Disability exam	99456	n/a	\$682
RTW exam	99456	n/a	\$682
Other similar issues exam	99456	n/a	\$682
Appropriateness of health care (RME only)	99456	n/a	\$682

January 1, 2026, to December 31, 2026
TD MMI and IR Exams
TD Billing Instructions (28 TAC Sec. 134.250)

TD Type of Exam/Service	CPT Code	Modifier	2026 Reimbursement (MAR)
Not at MMI exam	99455	V3, V4, or V5	134.203
At MMI exam	99455	V3, V4, or V5	134.203
IR exam first MSK body area	99455	n/a	\$409
IR each additional MSK body area (max of 3)	99455	n/a	\$204
IR each non-MSK body area	99455	n/a	\$204
Review of MMI and IR by another doctor (TD only)	99455	VR	\$68

January 1, 2026, to December 31, 2026
RD MMI and IR Exams
RD Billing Instructions (28 TAC Sec. 134.260)

RD Type of Exam/Service	CPT Code	Modifier	2026 Reimbursement (MAR)
Not at MMI exam	99456	NM	\$478
At MMI exam	99456	n/a	\$478
IR exam first MSK body area	99456	n/a	\$409
IR exam additional MSK body area (max of 3)	99456	n/a	\$204
IR exam each non-MSK body area	99456	n/a	\$204