



**BlueCross BlueShield  
of Texas**

# The BlueCard<sup>®</sup> Program Provider Manual

**May 2020**

This manual is designed to offer you, as a Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois (BCBSTX) independently contracted provider, information about the BlueCard Program. BlueCard is a program that allows members of one Blue Plan to obtain health care service benefits while traveling or living in another Blue Plan's service area.

Please review and become familiar with the procedures and guidelines outlined in this manual, so that you can properly provide service to members that belong to other Blue Plans.

This information does not constitute and is not intended as legal or financial advice.

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# 1. Introduction: BlueCard Program Makes Filing Claims Easy

As a participating provider of BCBSTX you may render services to patients who are National Account members of other Blue Cross and Blue Shield Plans, and who travel or live in Texas.

This manual describes the advantages of the program, and provides information to make filing claims easy. This manual offers helpful information about:

- Identifying members
- Verifying eligibility
- Obtaining pre-certifications/pre-authorizations
- Filing claims
- Who to contact with questions

## 2. What is the BlueCard Program?

### 2.1 Definition

BlueCard is a national program that enables members of one BCBS Plan to obtain healthcare service benefits while traveling or living in another BCBS Plan's service area. The program links participating healthcare providers with the independent BCBS Plans across the country and in more than 200 countries and territories worldwide through a single electronic network for claims processing and reimbursement.

The program lets you submit claims for patients from other BCBS Plans, domestic and international, to your local BCBS Plan.

Your local BCBS Plan is your sole contact for claims payment, adjustments and issue resolution.

### 2.2 BlueCard Program Advantages to Providers

The BlueCard Program lets you conveniently submit claims for members from other BCBS Plans, including international BCBS Plans, directly to BCBSTX. BCBSTX will be your only point of contact for all of your claims-related questions.

BCBSTX continues to experience growth in out-of-area membership because of our partnership with you. That is why we are committed to meeting your needs and expectations.

Working together, we can ensure your patients will have a positive experience at each visit.

## 2.3 Products included in BlueCard

A variety of products and claim types are eligible for delivery via BlueCard, however not all BCBS Plans offer all of these products to their members. Currently BCBSTX offers products indicated by the asterisk below, however you may see members from other BCBS Plans who are enrolled in the other products:

- Traditional\* (indemnity insurance)
- PPO\* (Preferred Provider Organization)
- EPO\* (Exclusive Provider Organization), including Blue High Performance Network (Blue HPN)
- POS (Point of Service)
- HMO\* (Health Maintenance Organization)
- Blue Cross Blue Shield Global® Core claims
- GeoBlue Expat claims
- Standalone vision
- Standalone prescription drugs

## 2.4 Products Excluded from the BlueCard Program

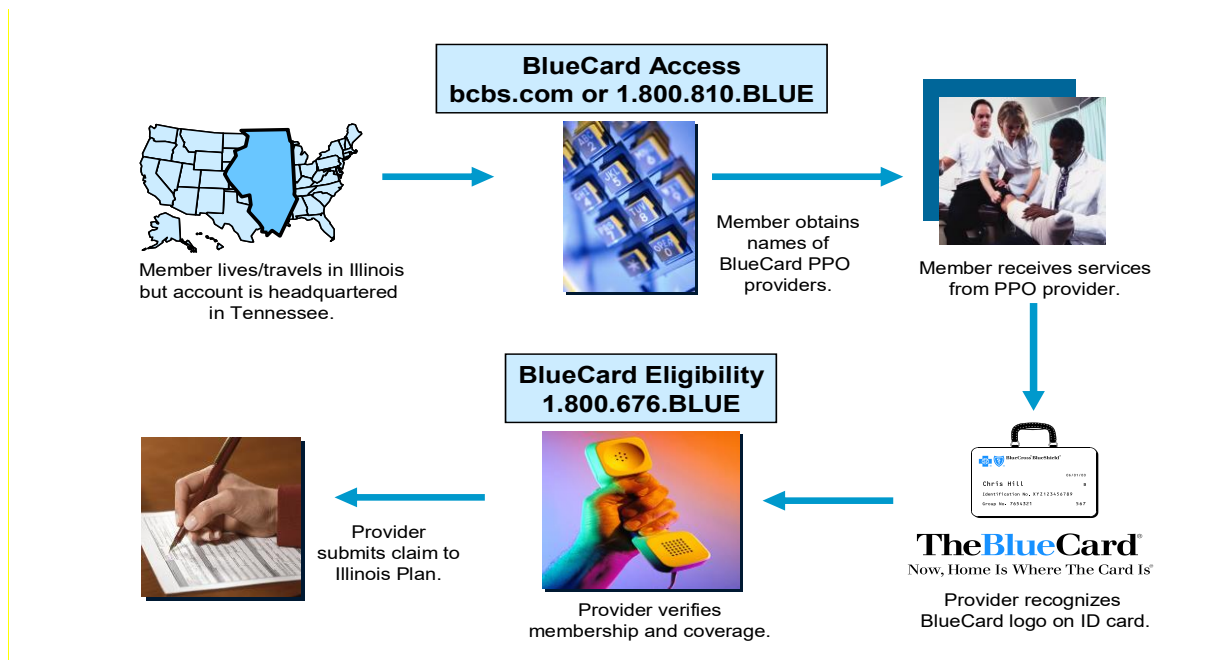
The following claims are excluded from the BlueCard Program:

- Stand-alone dental
- Vision products delivered through an intermediary model (using a vendor)
- Self-administered prescription drug products delivered through an intermediary model (using a vendor)
- Medicaid and SCHIP products that are part of a state's Medicaid program
- Medicare Advantage\*
- The Federal Employee Program (FEP)

Please follow BCBSTX billing guidelines.

\*Medicare Advantage is a separate program from BlueCard. However since you might see members of other BCBS Plans who have Medicare Advantage coverage, there is a section on Medicare Advantage claims processing in this manual.

### 3. How the BlueCard Program Works



In the example above, suppose a member has PPO coverage through BlueCross BlueShield of Tennessee. There are two scenarios where that member might need to see a provider in another Plan's service area, in this example, Illinois:

- 1) If the member was traveling in Illinois, or
- 2) If the member resided in Illinois and had employer-provided coverage through BlueCross BlueShield of Tennessee.

In either scenario, the member can obtain the names and contact information for BlueCard PPO providers in Illinois by calling the BlueCard Access® Line at 1.800.810.BLUE (2583). The member also can obtain information on the Internet, using the National Doctor and Hospital Finder available at [www.bcbs.com](http://www.bcbs.com).

*NOTE: MEMBERS ARE NOT OBLIGATED TO IDENTIFY PARTICIPATING PROVIDERS THROUGH EITHER OF THESE METHODS BUT IT IS THEIR RESPONSIBILITY TO GO TO A PPO PROVIDER IF THEY WANT TO ACCESS PPO IN-NETWORK BENEFITS.*

When the member makes an appointment and/or sees an Illinois BlueCard PPO provider, the provider may verify the member's eligibility and coverage information via the BlueCard Eligibility® Line at 1.800.676.BLUE (2583). The provider also may obtain this information via a HIPAA electronic eligibility transaction if the provider has established electronic connections for such transactions with the local Plan, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois.

After rendering services, the provider in Illinois files a claim locally with Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois. Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois forwards the claim to BlueCross BlueShield of Tennessee that adjudicates the claim according to the member's benefits and the provider's arrangement with the Illinois Plan. When the claim is finalized, the Tennessee Plan issues an explanation of benefit (EOB) to the member, and the Illinois Plan issues the explanation of payment, or remittance advice, to its provider and pays the provider.

## 3.1 How to Identify Members

### 3.1.1 Member ID Cards

When members of BCBS Plans arrive at your office or facility, be sure to ask them for their current BCBS Plan membership identification card.

The main identifier for out-of-area members is the three-character prefix. The ID cards may also have:

- PPO in a suitcase logo, for eligible EPO/PPO members
- PPOB in a suitcase logo, for PPO members with access to the BlueCard PPO Basic network
- Blank suitcase logo
- An HPN in a suitcase logo with the Blue High Performance Network (HPN) name in the upper right or lower left corner, for Blue HPN EPO members.

Important facts concerning member IDs:

- A correct member ID number includes the three-character prefix (first three positions) and all subsequent characters, up to 17 positions total. This means that you may see cards with ID numbers between 6 and 14 numbers/letters following the three-character prefix.
  - Examples of three-character prefix ID numbers:
    - ABC 1234567
    - ABC 1234H567
    - ABC 12345678901234
- Do not add/delete characters or numbers within the member ID.
- Do not change the sequence of the characters following the three-character prefix.
- The prefix is critical for the electronic routing of specific HIPAA transactions to the appropriate BCBS Plan.
- Members who are part of the FEP will have the letter "R" in front of their member ID number.

As a provider servicing out-of-area members, you may find the following tips helpful:

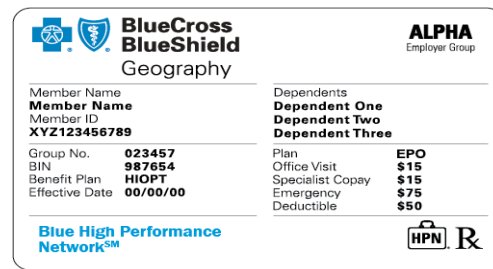
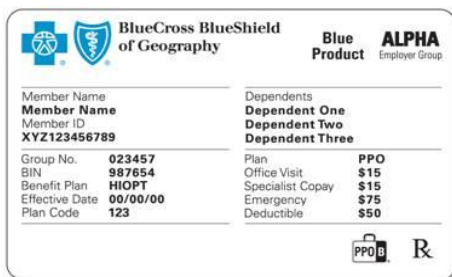
- Ask the member for the most current ID card at every visit. Since new ID cards may be issued to members throughout the year, this will ensure you have the most up-to-date information in the member's file.
- Make copies of the front and back of the member's ID card and pass this key information on to your billing staff.
- Remember that member ID numbers must be reported exactly as shown on the ID card and must not be changed or altered. Do not add or omit any characters from the member ID numbers.

The three-character prefix at the beginning of the member’s identification number is the key element used to identify and correctly route claims between BCBS Plans. The three-character prefix identifies the BCBS Plan or National Account to which the member belongs. It is critical for confirming a patient’s membership and coverage.

To ensure accurate claim processing, it is critical to capture all ID card data. If the information is not captured correctly, you may experience a delay with claim processing.

- Do not make up prefixes.
- Do not assume that the member’s ID number is the social security number. All BCBS Plans replaced Social Security numbers on member ID cards with an alternate, unique identifier.

*Sample ID Cards*



BlueCard ID cards have a suitcase logo, it may be an empty suitcase, a PPO in a suitcase or an HPN in a suitcase.

The PPO in a suitcase logo indicates that the member is enrolled in either a PPO product or an EPO product. In either case, you will be reimbursed according to BCBSTX PPO provider contract. Please note that EPO products may have limited benefits out-of-area. The potential for such benefit limitations are indicated on the reverse side of an EPO ID card.

The PPOB in a suitcase logo indicates that the member has selected a PPO or EPO product, from a BCBS Plan, and the member has access to a new PPO network, referred to as BlueCard PPO Basic.

Providers will be reimbursed for covered services in accordance with your PPO or traditional contract with BCBSTX.

The Blue HPN EPO product includes an HPN in a suitcase logo on the ID card. Members must obtain services from Blue HPN providers to receive full benefits. If you are a Blue HPN provider, you will be reimbursed for covered services in accordance with your Blue HPN contract with BCBSTX. If you are not a Blue HPN provider, it’s important to note that benefits for services incurred with non-Blue HPN providers are limited to emergent care within Blue HPN product areas, and to urgent and emergent care outside of Blue HPN product areas.

The empty suitcase logo indicates that the member is enrolled in one of the following products: Traditional or HMO.

Some BCBS ID cards don’t have any suitcase logo on them. ID cards for Medicaid, State Children’s Health Insurance Programs (SCHIP) if administered as part of the state’s Medicaid program, and Medicare Complementary and Supplemental products, also known as Medigap. Government-determined reimbursement levels apply to these products. While BCBSTX routes all



of these claims for out-of-area members to the member’s BCBS Plan, most of the Medicare Complementary or Medigap claims are sent directly from the Medicare intermediary to the member’s BCBS Plan via the established electronic crossover process.

### 3.2 How to Identify BlueCard Blue HPN Members





Blue High Performance Network (Blue HPN) is a narrow network that is available to members that live in key metropolitan areas. Blue HPN members must access Blue HPN providers in order to receive full benefits. If you are a Blue HPN provider, you will be reimbursed for services provided to Blue HPN members according to the Blue HPN contract with the BCBSTX. If you are not a Blue HPN provider, it’s important to note that benefits for services incurred with non-Blue HPN providers are limited to emergent care within Blue HPN product areas, and to urgent and emergent care outside of Blue HPN product areas.

You can recognize Blue HPN members by the following:

- The Blue High Performance Network name on the front of the member ID card
- The HPN in a suitcase logo in the bottom right hand corner of the member ID card

Language regarding benefit limitations is also included on the back of the Blue HPN EPO member ID card. For these limited benefits, if you not a Blue HPN provider but are a PPO provider, you will be reimbursed according to BCBSTX PPO provider contract, just like you are for other EPO products.

Sample ID Card:

 <b>BlueCross BlueShield</b> Geography		 Blue High Performance Network <sup>SM</sup>	
Member Name <b>Member Name</b> Member ID <b>XYZ123456789</b>		Dependents <b>Dependent One</b> <b>Dependent Two</b> <b>Dependent Three</b>	
Group No.	<b>023457</b>	Plan	<b>EPO</b>
BIN	<b>987654</b>	Office Visit	<b>\$15</b>
Benefit Plan	<b>HIOPT</b>	Specialist Copay	<b>\$15</b>
Effective Date	<b>00/00/00</b>	Emergency	<b>\$75</b>
		Deductible	<b>\$50</b>
			
 <b>BlueCross BlueShield</b> Geography		www.BluePlan.com Customer Service: <b>1-800-234-5678</b> Outside of Area: <b>1-800-810-2583</b> Eligibility: <b>1-800-676-2583</b> Pharmacy Benefits: <b>1-800-123-4567</b> Gamma Vision*: 1-800-987-6543 *ALPHA contracts directly with Gamma Vision.	
Members: See your benefit booklet for covered services. Possession of this card does not guarantee eligibility for benefits.		Hospital or physicians: file claims with local BlueCross and/or BlueShield Plan.	
BlueCross and BlueShield of Geography provides administrative services only and does not assume any financial risk for claims.		<b>BlueCross and BlueShield of Geography</b> P.O. Box 01234 City, State 01234-1234 An independent licensee of the BlueCross and BlueShield Association.	
PPO benefits limited to emergent care at non-Blue HPN providers within Blue HPN product areas. PPO benefits limited to urgent and emergent care at non-Blue HPN providers outside of Blue HPN product areas.		Pharmacy benefits administrator	

### 3.3 How to Identify BlueCard Managed Care/POS Members

The BlueCard Managed Care/POS program is for members who reside outside of their BCBS Plan’s service area. Unlike the BlueCard PPO Program, in the BlueCard Managed Care/POS program, members are enrolled in BCBSTX network and have a primary care physician (PCP). You can recognize BlueCard Managed Care/POS members who are enrolled in BCBSTX network through the member ID card as you do for all other BlueCard members. The ID cards will include:

- The three-character prefix at the beginning the member’s ID number.
- A local network identifier.
- The blank suitcase logo.

Sample ID Card:

		<b>Blue Product</b> <b>ALPHA</b> Employer Group	
Member Name		Dependents	
<b>Member Name</b>		<b>Dependent One</b>	
Member ID		<b>Dependent Two</b>	
<b>XYZ123456789</b>		<b>Dependent Three</b>	
Group No.	<b>023457</b>	Plan	<b>POS</b>
BIN	<b>987654</b>	Office Visit	<b>\$15</b>
Benefit Plan	<b>HIOPT</b>	Specialist Copay	<b>\$15</b>
Effective Date	<b>00/00/00</b>	Emergency	<b>\$75</b>
		Deductible	<b>\$50</b>
		<b>Rx</b>	

Annotations:

- Local POS Network Identifier: Blue Product
- Office visit co-pay: \$15
- Blank suitcase identifier: Blank suitcase logo

### 3.4 How to Identify and File Claims for International Members

Occasionally, you may see identification cards that are from members of International Licensees or that are for international-based products. Currently, those Licensees include Blue Cross Blue Shield of the U.S. Virgin Islands, BlueCross & BlueShield of Uruguay, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Panama, and Blue Cross Blue Shield of Costa Rica, and those products include those provided through GeoBlue and the Blue Cross Blue Shield Global™ portfolio; however, if in doubt, always check with BCBSTX as the list of International Licensees and products may change. ID cards from these Licensees and for these products will also contain three-character prefixes and may or may not have one of the benefit product logos referenced in the following sections. Please treat these members the same as you would domestic BCBS Plan members (e.g., do not collect any payment from the member beyond cost-sharing amounts such as deductible, coinsurance and co-payment) and file their claims to BCBSTX. See below for sample ID cards for international members and products.

**Example of an ID card from an International Licensee:**




**BlueCross & BlueShield de Uruguay**

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MEMBER NAME	Plan
<b>Member Name</b>	<b>1400</b>
MEMBER ID	<b>RPA PREMIUM</b>
<b>XYZ 0123456789</b>	Expiration Date: May. 31, 2011
Plan	PPO
GROUP	URU038
BC/BS Plan Codes: <b>154/654</b>	

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CREENCIAL PARA USO EXCLUSIVO FUERA DE URUGUAY 



**BlueCross & BlueShield de Uruguay** [www.bcbsu.com.uy](http://www.bcbsu.com.uy)

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**Uruguay**  
Atención al Cliente: (598-2) 707-7575


**United States (E.E.U.U.)**  
Customer Service: (598-2) 707-7575  
Provider Finder: 1-800-810-2583  
Eligibility: 1-800-676-2583

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**BlueCross & BlueShield de Uruguay**  
Lord Ponsonby 2456  
11600 Montevideo, Uruguay  
An Independent Licensee of the BlueCross and BlueShield Association.

**Examples of ID cards for International Products**

Illustration A - GeoBlue:



**Xplorer Premier**

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XP-5000-NRX

Jane E  
Demo  
QHF999999999H

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Group No.	99990483	Copay in Network, Inside U.S.	<b>\$30</b>
BIN	610020	Copay in Network, Outside U.S.	<b>\$0</b>
Coverage Dates	15-Apr-2016 - 14-Apr-2017	Copay Out of Network, Outside U.S.	<b>\$10</b>

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[www.geobluetravelinsurance.com](http://www.geobluetravelinsurance.com)

**24/7 Member Services**  
Outside the U.S. **+1.610.254.5850**  
Toll Free Within the U.S. **1.855.481.6647**  
customerservice@geo-blue.com

**24/7 Medical Assistance Including Evacuation**  
Collect Calls Accepted **+1.610.254.8771**  
globalhealth@geo-blue.com





**Prescription/Pharmacy Information**  
Pharmacy Help Desk **1.800.788.2910**

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GeoBlue is the trade name of Worldwide Insurance Services, LLC (Worldwide Services Insurance Agency, LLC in California and New York), an independent licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association.





Pharmacy benefits administrator. 

**Illustration B – Blue Cross Blue Shield Global portfolio:**

			
Member Name:	Employer Group Name:	<a href="http://www.bupaglobalaccess.com">www.bupaglobalaccess.com</a>	
Member ID:	Employer Group No.	U.S. Customer Service	<b>+1 786-257-4741</b>
Rx Group No.		U.S. Customer Service Toll Free	<b>+1 844-369-3797</b>
BIN		Providers Inquiries & Precertification	<b>+1 844-369-3099</b>
PCN:		Evacuation/Repatriation (if included):	<b>+44 1273 333911</b>
		Prescription/Pharmacy Information and Pharmacy Help Desk	<b>+1 855-767-1864</b>
<p>Members: See benefit booklet for services covered by your plan. Possession of this card does not guarantee eligibility for benefits.</p> <p>Underwritten and/or administered by Bupa or its Designated Affiliate, independent licensees of the Blue Cross Blue Shield Association.</p> <p>Blue Cross Blue Shield Global is a brand owned by the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association.</p>		Process claims through Pharmacy Data Management (PDMI)	
		U.S. Service Center Palmetto Bay Village Center 17901 Old Cutler Road, Suite#400 Palmetto Bay, FL 33157 Email: <a href="mailto:info@bupaglobalaccess.com">info@bupaglobalaccess.com</a>	
		 Pharmacy benefits administrator.	

**Illustration C – Shield-only ID Card:**

Please note that in certain territories, including Hong Kong and the United Arab Emirates, Blue Cross branded products are not available. The ID cards of members in these territories will display the Blue Shield Global logo (see example below):

			
Member Name:	Employer Group Name:	<a href="http://www.bupaglobalaccess.com">www.bupaglobalaccess.com</a>	
Member ID:	Employer Group No.	U.S. Customer Service	<b>+1 786-257-4741</b>
Rx Group No.		U.S. Customer Service Toll Free	<b>+1 844-369-3797</b>
BIN		Providers Inquiries & Precertification	<b>+1 844-369-3099</b>
PCN:		Evacuation/Repatriation (if included):	<b>+44 1273 333911</b>
		Prescription/Pharmacy Information and Pharmacy Help Desk	<b>+1 855-767-1864</b>
<p>Members: See benefit booklet for services covered by your plan. Possession of this card does not guarantee eligibility for benefits.</p> <p>Underwritten by Bupa or its Designated Affiliate, independent licensees of the Blue Cross Blue Shield Association.</p> <p>Blue Shield Global is a brand owned by BCBSA.</p>		Process claims through Pharmacy Data Management (PDMI)	
		U.S. Service Center Palmetto Bay Village Center 17901 Old Cutler Road, Suite#400 Palmetto Bay, FL 33157 Email: <a href="mailto:info@bupaglobalaccess.com">info@bupaglobalaccess.com</a>	
		 Pharmacy benefits administrator.	

**Canadian ID Cards**

Please note that the Canadian Association of Blue Cross plans and its member plans are separate and distinct from the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association (BCBSA) and its member Plans in the United States.

You may occasionally see ID cards for people who are covered by a Canadian Blue Cross plan. Claims for Canadian Blue Cross plan members are not processed through the BlueCard® Program.

Please follow the instructions of the Blue Cross plans in Canada and those, if any, on the ID cards for servicing their members. The Blue Cross plans in Canada are:

- |                     |                    |                         |
|---------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|
| Alberta Blue Cross  | Ontario Blue Cross | Quebec Blue Cross       |
| Manitoba Blue Cross | Pacific Blue Cross | Saskatchewan Blue Cross |
| Medavie Blue Cross  |                    |                         |

Source: <http://www.bluecross.ca/en/contact.html>

### 3.5 Consumer Directed Healthcare and Healthcare Debit Cards

Consumer Directed Healthcare (CDHC) is a term that refers to a movement in the healthcare industry to empower Members, reduce employer costs and change consumer healthcare purchasing behavior.

Health plans that offer CDHC provide the member with additional information to make an informed and appropriate healthcare decision through the use of member support tools, provider and network information and financial incentives.

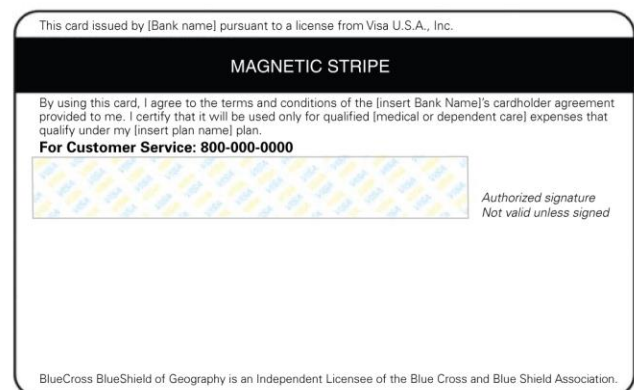
Members who have Consumer-Directed Healthcare (CDHC) plans often have healthcare debit cards that allow them to pay for out-of-pocket costs using funds from their Health Reimbursement Arrangement (HRA), Health Savings Account (HSA) or Flexible Spending Account (FSA). All three are types of tax favored accounts offered by the member's employer to pay for eligible expenses not covered by the health plan.

Some cards are "standalone" debit cards that cover eligible out-of-pocket costs, while others also serve as a health plan member ID card. These debit cards can help you simplify your administration process and can potentially help:

1. Reduce bad debt
2. Reduce paperwork for billing statements
3. Minimize bookkeeping and patient account functions for handling cash and checks
4. Avoid unnecessary claim payment delays

In some cases, the card will display the Blue Cross and Blue Shield trademarks, along with the logo from a major debit card such as MasterCard® or Visa®.

Below is a sample stand-alone healthcare debit card:



Below is a sample combined healthcare debit card and member ID card:

		<b>Blue Product</b> <b>ALPHA</b> Employer Group
Member ID <b>XYZ123456789</b>	Group No. <b>023457</b> BIN <b>987654</b> Benefit Plan <b>HIOPT</b> Effective Date <b>00/00/00</b>	Plan <b>PPO</b> Office Visit <b>\$15</b> Specialist Copay <b>\$15</b> Emergency <b>\$75</b>
4000 1234 5678 9010 4000		
VALID FROM 01/99 GOOD THRU 12/12		DEBIT 
CARDHOLDER NAME		

<a href="http://www.BluePlan.com">www.BluePlan.com</a>	
By using this card, I agree to the terms and conditions of (Bank's name)'s cardholder agreement provided to me. I certify that it will be used only for qualified medical or dependent care expenses.	
	Authorized signature Not valid unless signed
Hospital or physicians: file claims with local BlueCross and/or BlueShield Plan. BlueCross and BlueShield of Geography provides administrative services only and does not assume any financial risk for claims. An independent licensee of the BlueCross and BlueShield Association.	Customer Service: <b>1-800-234-5678</b> Outside of Area: <b>1-800-810-2583</b> Eligibility: <b>1-800-676-2583</b> Pharmacy Benefits*: <b>1-800-123-4567</b>
* <b>BETA</b> Pharmacy Management Pharmacy benefits administrator; ALPHA contracts directly with BETA	

The cards include a magnetic strip allowing providers to swipe the card to collect the member's cost-sharing amount (i.e., copayment). With healthcare debit cards, members can pay for copayments and other out-of-pocket expenses by swiping the card through any debit card swipe terminal. The funds will be deducted automatically from the member's appropriate HRA, HSA or FSA account.

#### Helpful Tips:

- Using the member's current member ID number, including prefix, carefully determine the member's financial responsibility before processing payment. Check eligibility and benefits electronically through **BCBSTX** or by calling 1.800.676.BLUE (2583).
- All services, regardless of whether or not you've collected the member responsibility at the time of service, must be billed to **BCBSTX** for proper benefit determination, and to update the member's claim history.
- Please do not use the card to process full payment up front. If you have any questions about the member's benefits, please contact 1.800.676.BLUE (2583) or, for questions about the healthcare debit card processing instructions or payment issues, please contact the toll-free debit card administrator's number on the back of the card.

### 3.6 Limited Benefits Products

Verifying BCBS patients' benefits and eligibility is important, now more than ever since new products and benefit types entered the market. Patients who have traditional, PPO, HMO, POS or other coverage, typically with high lifetime coverage limits i.e. (\$1 million or more), may have annual benefits limited to \$50,000 or less.

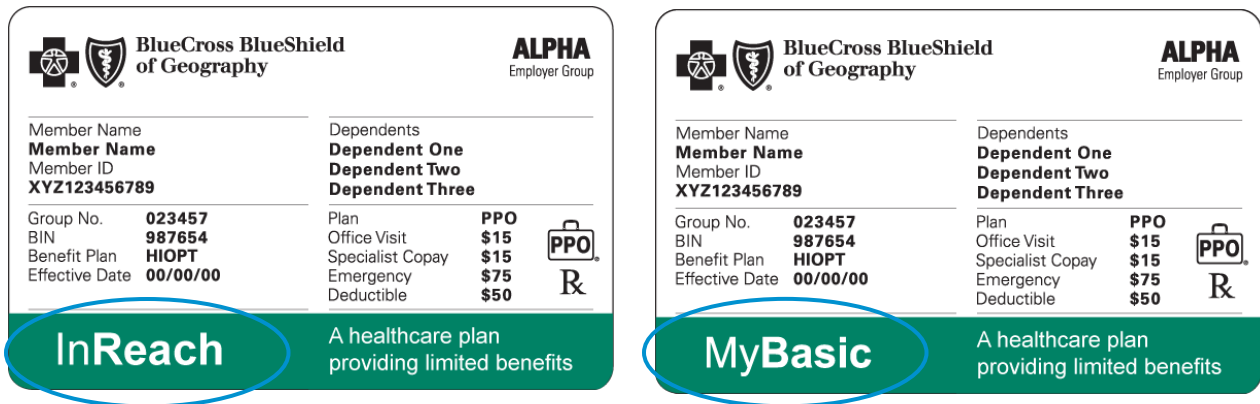
Currently BCBSTX doesn't offer such limited benefit plans to our members, however you may see patients with limited benefits who are covered by another BCBS Plan.

#### How to recognize members with limited benefits products?

Members with limited benefits coverage (that is, annual benefits limited to \$50,000 or less) carry ID cards that may have one or more of the following indicators:

- Product name will be listed such as **InReach** or **MyBasic**
- A **green stripe** at the bottom of the card
- A statement either on the front or the back of the ID card stating this is a limited benefits product
- A **black cross and/or shield** to help differentiate it from other identification cards

These ID cards may look like this:



#### How to find out if the patient has limited benefit coverage?

In addition to obtaining a copy of the patient's ID card, and regardless of the benefit product type, we recommend that you verify patient's benefits and eligibility and collect any patient liability or copayment onl..

You may do so electronically by submitting HIPAA 270 eligibility inquiry to BCBSTX via Availity or your preferred web vendor. You may do so electronically by submitting HIPAA 270 eligibility inquiry to BCBSTX via an Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) transaction, or you may call 1.800.676.BLUE (2583) eligibility line.

- *Tips: In addition to obtaining a copy of the member's ID card, regardless of the benefit product type, always verify eligibility and benefits electronically with **BCBSTX** or by calling 1.800.676.BLUE (2583). You will receive the member's accumulated benefits to help you understand his/her remaining benefits.*
- *If the cost of service extends beyond the member's benefit coverage limit, please inform your patient of any additional liability he/she might have.*
- *If you have questions regarding a BCBS Plan's limited benefits ID card/product, please contact BCBSTX.*

If the cost of services extends beyond the patient's benefit coverage limit, inform the patient of any additional liability they might have.

### **What should I do if the patient's benefits are exhausted before the end of their treatment?**

Annual benefit limits should be handled in the same manner as any other limits on the medical coverage. Any services beyond the covered amounts or the number of treatment are member's liability. In the event the member's benefits are exhausted, the provider may continue to provide treatment; however the member must agree in writing to pay for those services and the charge must not be more than the allowable amount. It is the provider's responsibility to inform the patient of any potential liability they might have as soon as possible.

### **Who do I contact if I have additional questions about Limited Benefit Plans?**

If you have any questions regarding BCBSTX or any other BCBS Plans' Limited Benefits products, contact BCBSTX at **1.800.451.0287**.

## **3.6.1 Reference Based Benefits**

With health care costs increasing, employers are considering alternative approaches to control health care expenses by placing a greater emphasis on employee accountability by encouraging members to take a more active role while making health care decisions. Plans have begun to introduce Reference Based Benefits, which limit certain (or specific) benefits to a dollar amount that incents members to actively shop for health care for those services.

The goal of Reference Based Benefits is to have members engage in their health choices by giving them an incentive to shop for cost effective providers and facilities. Reference Based Benefit designs hold the member responsible for any expenses above a calculated "reference cost" ceiling for a single episode of service. Due to the possibility of increased member cost sharing, Reference Based Benefits will incite members to use Plan transparency tools, such as the National Consumer Cost Tool (NCCT), to search for and identify services that can be performed at cost effective providers and/or facilities that charge at or below the reference cost ceiling.

### **How does Reference Based Benefits work?**



Reference Based Benefits are a new benefit feature where the Plan will pay up to a pre-determined amount for specific procedures called a “Reference Cost.” If the allowed amount exceeds the reference cost, that excess amount becomes the members’ responsibility.

### **How are Reference Costs Established?**

The reference costs are established for an episode of care based on claims data received by BCBSTX from providers in your area.

### **How will I get paid?**

Reference Based Benefits will not modify the current contracting amount agreed on between you and BCBSTX. Providers can expect to receive their contract rate on all procedures where Reference Based Benefits apply.

Example 1: If a member has a reference cost of \$500 for an MRI of the spine and the allowable amount is \$700, then BCBSTX will pay up to the \$500 for the procedure and the member is responsible for the \$200.

Example 2: If a member has a reference cost ceiling of \$600 for a CT scan of the Head/Brain and allowable amount is \$400, then BCBSTX will pay up to the \$400 for the procedure.

### **How much will the member be responsible for out-of-pocket?**

When Reference Based Benefits are applied and the cost of the services rendered is less than the reference cost ceiling, then BCBSTX will pay eligible benefits as it has in the past; while the member continues to pay their standard cost sharing amounts in the forms of: co-insurance, co-pay, or deductible as normal.

If the cost of the services rendered exceeds the reference cost ceiling, then BCBSTX will pay benefits up to that reference cost ceiling, while the member continues to pay their standard cost sharing amounts in the forms of: co-insurance, co-pay, or deductible; as well as any amount above the reference cost ceiling up to the contractual amount.

### **How will I be able to identify if a member is covered under Reference Based Benefits?**

When you receive a response from a benefits and eligibility inquiry, you will be notified if a member is covered under Reference Based Benefits.

Additionally, you can call the BlueCard Eligibility number 1.800.676.BLUE (2583) to verify if a member is covered under Reference Based Benefits.

### **Do I need to do anything different if a member is covered under Reference Based Benefits?**

While there are no additional steps that you need to take, you may want to verify the reference cost maximum prior to performing a procedure covered under Reference Based Benefits. You can check if Reference Based Benefits apply to professional and facility charges for the member, by submitting an electronic a benefits and eligibility inquiry to your local BCBS Plan. Alternatively, you can contact the member’s Plan by calling the Blue Eligibility number 1.800.676.BLUE (2583).

### **Do Reference Based Benefits apply to emergency services?**

No. Reference Based Benefits are not applicable to any service that is urgent or emergent.

**Do Reference Based Benefits apply to benefits under the Affordable Care Act essential health benefits?**

Yes. Health plans must offer products at the same actuarial value to comply with the Affordable Care Act legislative rules.

**How does the member identify services at or below the reference cost?**

Members with Reference-Based Benefits use consumer transparency tools to determine if a provider will deliver the service for less than the reference cost.

**How will the Reference Based Benefits cost apply to professional and facility charges?**

For more information on how Reference Based Benefits will apply costs to the professional and facility charges please submit an electronic benefits and eligibility inquiry to the members local BCBS Plan. If you have additional questions, you can contact the Blue Eligibility number 1.800.676.BLUE (2583) for the member you are seeing. *For Electronic Provider Access, see section 3.9.*

**What if a member covered under Reference Based Benefits asks for additional information about their benefits?**

Since members are subject to any charges above the reference cost up to the contractual amount for particular services, members may ask you to estimate how much a service will cost.

You can also direct members to view their BCBS Plan's transparency tools to learn more about the cost established for an episode of care.

**What procedures are covered under Reference Based Benefits?**

The following procedures will be covered under Reference Based Benefits:

\* Applicable services may vary by employer group. **Where do I submit the claim?**

You should submit the claim to BCBSTX under your current billing practices.

**How will Reference Based Benefits be shown on a payment remittance?**

When you receive payment for services the claim will pay per the member's benefits with any amount over the reference cost being applied to the Benefit Maximum.

**Is there anything different that I need to submit with member claims?**

No. You should continue to submit your claims as you previously have to BCBSTX.

**Who do I contact if I have a question?**

If you have any questions regarding the Reference Based Benefits, please contact BCBSTX at 1.800.451.0287.

## 3.7 Coverage and Eligibility Verification

For BCBSTX members, contact **1.800.451-0287**.

For other BCBS Plans' members, submit an electronic inquiry to BCBSTX or call BlueCard Eligibility 1.800.676.BLUE (2583) to verify the patient's eligibility and coverage:

- Electronic—Submit a HIPAA 270 transaction (eligibility) to BCBSTX.

You can receive real-time responses to your eligibility requests for out-of-area members between 6:00 a.m. and Midnight, Central Time, Monday through Saturday.

NOTE: PROVIDERS ARE ENCOURAGED TO VERIFY ELIGIBILITY ELECTRONICALLY VIA THE HIPAA 270 TRANSACTION.

- Phone—Call BlueCard Eligibility 1.800.676.BLUE (2583)
  - English and Spanish speaking phone operators are available to assist you.
  - BCBS Plans are located throughout the country and may operate on a different time schedule than BCBSTX. You may be transferred to a voice response system linked to customer enrollment and benefits outside that Plan's regular business hours.
  - The BlueCard Eligibility line is for eligibility, benefit and pre-certification/referral authorization inquiries only. It should not be used for claim status. *See the Claim Filing section for claim filing information.*

Eligibility and Benefits for Blue HPN EPO Members:



Blue HPN EPO members will be identified as such on the HIPAA 271 transaction from BCBSTX. If you are a Blue HPN provider, you should look for the in-network cost share on the HIPAA 271 response. If you are not a Blue HPN provider, you should be aware that the only services that are covered for Blue HPN EPO members are emergent care within Blue HPN product areas and urgent and emergent care outside of Blue HPN product areas. All other services are considered out-of-network, which will be indicated with a 100% member cost share on the HIPAA 271 transaction.

Most Blue HPN members will have the *HPN without Tiers* version of the Blue HPN product and this will be indicated on the HIPAA 271 transaction. Some members will have the *HPN with Tiers* version of the Blue HPN product and these members will have an in-network benefit and a Tier 2 benefit. For these members, Tier 2 benefits only apply to Blue HPN providers in the New Jersey and Philadelphia Blue HPN product areas. If you are a Blue HPN provider that is not located in either the New Jersey or Philadelphia Blue HPN product area, you should ignore the Tier 2 benefit on the HIPAA 271 transaction.

Electronic Health ID Cards

- Some local BCBS Plans have implemented electronic health ID cards to facilitate a seamless coverage and eligibility verification process.

- Electronic health ID cards enable electronic transfer of core subscriber/member data from the ID card to the provider's system.
- An electronic health ID card has a magnetic stripe on the back of the ID card, similar to what you can find on the back of a credit or debit card. The subscriber/member electronic data is embedded on the third track of the three-track magnetic stripe.
- Core subscriber/member data elements embedded on the third track of the magnetic stripe include: subscriber/member name, subscriber/member ID, subscriber/member date of birth and PlanID.
- The PlanID data element identifies the health plan that issued the ID card. PlanID will help providers facilitate health transactions among various payers in the market place.
- Providers will need a track 3 card reader in order for the data on track 3 of the magnetic stripe to be read (the majority of card readers in provider offices only read tracks 1 & 2 of the magnetic stripe; tracks 1 & 2 are proprietary to the financial industry).
- Sample of electronic health ID card:

 <b>BlueCross BlueShield of Geography</b>		<b>Blue Product</b> <b>ALPHA</b> Employer Group	
Member Name <b>Member Name</b> Member ID <b>XYZ123456789</b>		Dependents <b>Dependent One</b> <b>Dependent Two</b> <b>Dependent Three</b>	
Plan	<b>PPO</b>	Office Visit	<b>\$15</b>
Plan Code	<b>123</b>	Specialist Copay	<b>\$15</b>
		Emergency	<b>\$75</b>
		Deductible	<b>\$50</b>
		 <b>Rx</b>	

<a href="http://www.BluePlan.com">www.BluePlan.com</a>	
 <b>BlueCross BlueShield of Geography</b>	
Members: See your benefit booklet for covered services. Possession of this card does not guarantee eligibility for benefits.  Hospitals or physicians: file claims with your local BlueCross and/or BlueShield Plan.  BlueCross and BlueShield of Geography provides administrative services and does not assume any financial risk for claims.	
<b>* BETA</b> Pharmacy Management	
<b>Customer Service: 1-800-234-5678 x1234</b> <b>Behavioral Health: 1-800-987-6543 x1234</b> <b>Outside of Area: 1-800-810-2583 x1234</b> <b>Eligibility: 1-800-676-2583 x1234</b> <b>Pharmacy Benefits*: 1-800-888-1234</b>	
<b>BlueCross and BlueShield of Geography</b> P.O. Box 01234 City, State 01234-1234 An independent licensee of the BlueCross and BlueShield Association.	
Pharmacy benefits administrator— not a BlueCross BlueShield product.	

## 3.8 Utilization Review

You should remind patients that they are responsible for obtaining pre-certification/prior authorization for out-patient services from their BCBS Plan. Participating providers are responsible for obtaining pre-service review for inpatient facility services when the services are required by the account or member contract (Provider Financial Responsibility, see section 3.10). In addition, members are held harmless when pre-service review is required and not received for inpatient facility services (unless an account receives an approved exception).

Providers must also follow specified timeframes for pre-service review notifications:

1. 48 hours to notify the member's Plan of change in pre-service review; and
2. 72 hours for emergency/urgent pre-service review notification.

General information on pre-certification/prior authorization information can be found on the out-of-area member Medical Policy and Pre-Authorization/Pre-Certification Router at [bcbstx.com/provider](http://bcbstx.com/provider) utilizing the three-character prefix found on the member ID card.

You may also contact the member's Plan on the member's behalf. You can do so by:

- For BCBSTX members, contact **1.800.451.0287**.
- For other BCBS Plans members:
  - Call BlueCard Eligibility 1.800.676.BLUE (2583)—ask to be transferred to the utilization review area.
    - When pre-certification/prior authorization for a specific member is handled separately from eligibility verifications at the member's BCBS Plan, your call will be routed directly to the area that handles pre-certification/pre-authorization. You will choose from four options depending on the type of service for which you are calling:
      - Medical/Surgical
      - Behavioral Health
      - Diagnostic Imaging/Radiology
      - Durable/Home Medical Equipment (D/HME)

If you are inquiring about both, eligibility and pre-certification/prior authorization, through 1.800.676.BLUE (2583), your eligibility inquiry will be addressed first. Then you will be transferred, as appropriate, to the pre-certification/prior authorization area.

- Submit an electronic HIPAA 278 transaction (referral/authorization) to BCBSTX.
- The member's BCBS Plan may contact you directly regarding clinical information and medical records prior to treatment or for concurrent review or disease management for a specific member.

When obtaining pre-certification/prior authorization, please provide as much information as possible, to minimize potential claims issues. Providers are encouraged to follow-up immediately with a member's BCBS Plan to communicate any changes in treatment or setting to ensure existing authorization is modified or a new one is obtained, if needed. Failure to obtain approval for the additional days may result in claims processing delays and potential payment denials.

## 3.9 Electronic Provider Access

Electronic Provider Access (EPA) gives providers the ability to access an out-of-area member's BCBS Plan provider portals to conduct electronic pre-service review. The term pre-service review is used to refer to prior authorization, prenotification, precertification, preauthorization and prior approval, amongst other pre-claim processes. EPA enables providers to use their local BCBS Plan's provider portal to gain access to an out-of-area member's BCBS Plan provider portal, through a secure routing mechanism. Once in the member's BCBS Plan provider portal, the out-of-area provider has the same access to electronic pre-service review capabilities as the Plan's local providers.

The availability of EPA varies depending on the capabilities of each BCBS Plan. Some Plans have electronic pre-service review for many services, while others do not. The following describes how to use EPA and what to expect when attempting to contact BCBS Plans.

### Using the EPA Tool

BCBSTX contracted providers must be registered with Availity to gain access to EPA. If you not a registered Availity portal user, please visit [availity.com](http://availity.com) to sign up quickly and easily. There is no registration fee.

The basic steps for initiating online pre-service reviews for out-of-area Blue plan members\* are include below.

1. Log in to [Availity](#)
2. Select Patient Registration menu option, choose Authorizations & Referrals, then Authorizations
3. Select Payer BCBSTX, then choose your organization
4. Select a Request Type and start request
5. Enter patient information (including the three-character prefix), requesting provider information and select Next
6. You will be securely routed to the EPA landing page on the member's Home Blue Plan portal. The EPA landing page will look similar across Blue Plans but will be customized to the particular Home Plan based on the electronic pre-service review services they offer.

For additional details, refer to the [Availity Authorizations User Guide](#) and [Availity Referrals User Guide](#).

### Quick Tips:

If you need to access pre-certification/prior authorization information for the member's Home Plan, use this link to the [medical policy router tool](#) on the BCBSTX provider website.

### 3.10 Provider Financial Responsibility for Pre-Service Review for BlueCard Members

BCBSTX participating providers are responsible for obtaining pre-service review for inpatient facility services for BlueCard members and holding the member harmless when pre-service review is required by the account or member contract and not received for inpatient services. Participating providers must also:

- Notify the member's BCBS Plan within 48 hours when a change or modifications to the original pre-service review occurs.
- Obtain pre-service review for emergency and/or urgent admissions within 72 hours.

The BlueCard member must be held harmless and cannot be balance-billed if pre-service review has not occurred.\*

Pre-service review contact information for a member's BCBS Plan is provided on the member's identification card. Pre-service review requirements can also be determined by:

- Using the Electronic Provider Access (EPA) tool (see section 3.9 *Electronic Provider Access*, for details). Note that the availability of EPA will vary depending on the capabilities of each member's BCBS Plan.
- Submitting an ANSI 278 electronic transaction to BCBSTX or calling 1.800.676.BLUE (2583) and ask to be transferred to utilization management area.

Services that deny as not medically necessary remain member liability.

*\*Unless the member signed a written consent to be billed prior to rendering the service.*

#### **Who do I contact if I have additional questions about Provider Financial Responsibility for Pre-Service Review?**

If you have any questions on Provider Financial Responsibility or general questions, please call BCBSTX at **1.800.451.0287**.

#### **Who do I contact if I have additional questions about Electronic Provider Access?**

If you have any questions on how to use the EPA tool, please BCBSTX at **1.800.451.0287**.

### 3.11 Updating Your Provider Information

Maintaining accurate provider information is critically important to ensure that consumers have timely access to care. Updated information helps us maintain accurate provider directories and also ensures that providers are more easily accessible to members. Additionally, Plans are required by Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) to include accurate information in provider directories for certain key provider data elements and accuracy of directories are routinely reviewed/audited by CMS.

Since it is the responsibility of each provider to inform Plans when there are changes, providers are reminded to notify BCBSTX of any changes to their demographic information or other key pieces of information, such as a change in their ability to accept new patients, street address, phone number or any other change that affects patient access to care. For BCBSTX to remain compliant with federal and state requirements, changes must be communicated within 30 days or so that members have access to the most current information in the Provider Directory.

#### Key Data Elements

The data elements required by CMS and crucial for member access to care are as follows:

- Physician Name
- Location (i.e. Address, Suite, City/State, Zip Code)
- Phone Number
- Accepting New Patient Status
- Hospital Affiliations
- Medical Group Affiliations

Plans are also encouraged (and in some cases required by certain regulatory/accrediting entities) to include accurate information for the following provider data elements:

- Physician Gender
- Languages Spoken
- Office Hours
- Specialties
- Physical Disabilities Accommodations (e.g., wide entry, wheelchair access, accessible exam rooms and tables, lifts, scales, bathrooms and stalls, grab bars, other accessible equipment)
- Indian Health Service Status
- Licensing information (i.e. Medical License Number, License State, National Provider Identifier NPI)
- Provider Credentials (i.e. Board Certification, Place of Residency, Internship, Medical School, Year of Graduation)
- Email and website address



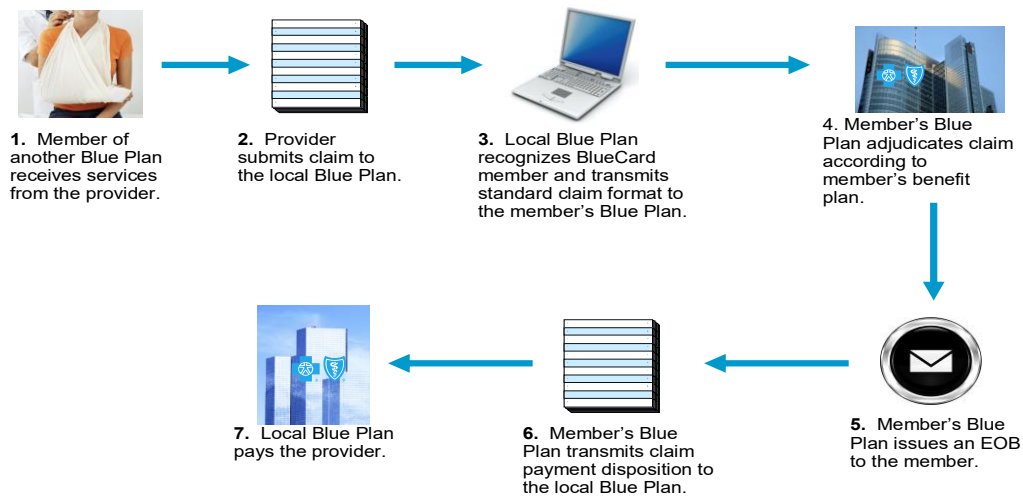
- Hospital has an emergency department, if applicable

## How to Update Your Information

You should routinely check your current practice information by going to [Provider Finder®](#). If your information is not correct and updates are needed, please provide the correct information as soon as possible by visiting the [Update your Information](#) page and completing the [Demographic Change Form](#).

## 4. Claim Filing

### 4.1



After the member of another BCBS Plan receives services from you, you should file the claim with BCBSTX. We will work with the member's Plan to process the claim and the member's Plan will send an explanation of benefit, or EOB, to the member. We will send you an explanation of payment or the remittance advice and issue the payment to you under the terms of our contract with you and based on the members benefits and coverage.

You should always submit claims to BCBSTX electronically to help expedite processing.

Following these helpful tips will improve your claim experience:

- Ask members for their current member ID card and regularly obtain new photocopies of it (front and back). Having the current card enables you to submit claims with the appropriate member information (including prefix) and avoid unnecessary claims payment delays.
- Check eligibility and benefits electronically via Availity or your preferred web vendor or by calling 1.800.676.BLUE (2583). Be sure to provide the member's prefix.
- Verify the member's cost sharing amount before processing payment. Please do not process full payment upfront.
- Indicate any payment you collected from the patient on the claim. (On the 837 electronic claim submission form, check field AMT01=**F5** patient paid amount; on the CMS1500 locator **29** amount paid; on UB92 locator **54** prior payment; on UB04 locator **53** prior payment.)

- Submit all BlueCard claims to BCBSTX. Be sure to include the member's complete identification number when you submit the claim. This includes the three-character prefix. Submit claims with only valid prefixes; claims with incorrect or missing prefixes and member identification numbers cannot be processed.
- In cases where there is more than one payer and a BCBS Plan is a primary payer, submit Other Party Liability (OPL) information with the BCBS claim. Upon receipt, BCBSTX will electronically route the claim to the member's BCBS Plan. The member's Plan then processes the claim and approves payment; BCBSTX will reimburse you for services.
- Do not send duplicate claims. Sending another claim, or having your billing agency resubmit claims automatically, actually slows down the claims payment process and creates confusion for the member.
- Check claims status by submitting an electronic HIPAA 276 transaction (claim status request) to BCBSTX.

## 4.2 Medicare Advantage Claims

### 4.2.1 Medicare Advantage Overview

Medicare Advantage (MA) is the program alternative to standard Medicare Part A and Part B fee-for-service coverage; generally referred to as “traditional Medicare”.

MA offers Medicare beneficiaries several product options (similar to those available in the commercial market), including health maintenance organization (HMO), preferred provider organization (PPO), point-of-service (POS) and private fee-for-service (PFFS) plans.

All Medicare Advantage plans must offer beneficiaries at least the standard Medicare Part A and B benefits, but many offer additional covered services as well (e.g., enhanced vision and dental benefits).

In addition to these products, Medicare Advantage Organizations may also offer a Special Needs Plan (SNP), which can limit enrollment to subgroups of the Medicare population in order to focus on ensuring that their special needs are met as effectively as possible.

Medicare Advantage plans may allow in and out-of-network benefits, depending on the type of product selected. Providers should confirm the level of coverage by calling 1.800.676.BLUE (2583) or submitting an electronic inquiry, for all Medicare Advantage members prior to providing service since the level of benefits, and coverage rules, may vary depending on the Medicare Advantage plan.

### Types of Medicare Advantage Plans

#### Medicare Advantage HMO

A Medicare Advantage HMO is a Medicare managed care option in which members typically receive a set of predetermined and prepaid services provided by a network of physicians and hospitals. Generally (except in urgent or emergency care situations), medical services are only covered when provided by in-network providers. The level of benefits, and the coverage rules, may vary by Medicare Advantage plan.

#### Medicare Advantage POS

A Medicare Advantage POS program is an option available through some Medicare HMO programs. It allows members to determine — at the point of service — whether they want to receive certain designated services within the HMO system, or seek such services outside the HMO’s provider network (usually at greater cost to the member). The Medicare Advantage POS plan may specify which services will be available outside of the HMO’s provider network.

#### Medicare Advantage PPO

A Medicare Advantage PPO is a plan that has a network of providers, but unlike traditional HMO products, it allows members who enroll access to services provided outside the contracted network of providers. Required member cost-sharing may be greater when covered services are obtained out-of-network. Medicare Advantage PPO plans may be offered on a local or regional (frequently multi-state) basis. Special payment and other rules apply to regional PPOs.

Blue Medicare Advantage PPO members have in-network access to Blue MA PPO providers.

### **Medicare Advantage PFFS**

A Medicare Advantage PFFS plan is a plan in which the member may go to any Medicare-approved doctor or hospital that accepts the plan's terms and conditions of participation. Acceptance is "deemed" to occur where the provider is aware, in advance of furnishing services, that the member is enrolled in a PFFS product and where the provider has reasonable access to the terms and conditions of participation.

The Medicare Advantage Organization, rather than the Medicare program, pays for services rendered to such members. Members are responsible for cost-sharing, as specified in the plan, and balance billing may be permitted in limited instance where the provider is a network provider and the plan expressly allows for balance billing.

Medicare Advantage PFFS varies from the other Blue products you might currently participate in:

- You can see and treat any Medicare Advantage PFFS member without having a contract with BCBSTX.
- If you do provide services, you will do so under the Terms and Conditions of that member's Blue Plan.
- MA PFFS Terms and Conditions might vary for each Blue Plan and we advise that you review them before servicing MA PFFS members.
- Please refer to the back of the member's ID card for information on accessing the Plan's Terms and Conditions. You may choose to render services to a MA PFFS member on an episode of care (claim-by-claim) basis.
- Submit your MA PFFS claims to BCBSTX.

### **Medicare Advantage Medical Savings Account (MSA)**

Medicare Advantage Medical Savings Account (MSA) is a Medicare health plan option made up of two parts. One part is a Medicare MSA Health Insurance Policy with a high deductible. The other part is a special savings account where Medicare deposits money to help members pay their medical bills.

## **4.2.2 Medicare Advantage PPO Network Sharing**

### **What is BCBS Medicare Advantage PPO Network Sharing?**

All BCBS MA PPO Plans participate in reciprocal network sharing. This network sharing allows all BCBS MA PPO members to obtain in-network benefits when traveling or living in the service area of any other BCBS MA PPO Plan as long as the member sees a contracted MA PPO provider.

### **What does the BCBS Medicare Advantage (MA) PPO Network Sharing mean to me?**

If you are a contracted MA PPO provider with BCBSTX and you see MA PPO members from other BCBS Plans, these members will be extended the same contractual access to care and will be reimbursed in accordance with your negotiated rate with your BCBSTX contract. These members will receive in-network benefits in accordance with their member contract.

If you are not a contracted MA PPO provider with BCBSTX and you provide services for any BCBS MA members, you will receive the Medicare allowed amount for covered services. For urgent or

emergency care, you will be reimbursed at the member's in-network benefit level. Other services will be reimbursed at the out-of-network benefit level.

### **How do I recognize an out-of-area member from one of these Plans participating in the BCBS MA PPO network sharing?**

You can recognize a MA PPO member when their member ID card has the following logo.



The “MA” in the suitcase indicates a member who is covered under the MA PPO network sharing program. Members have been asked not to show their standard Medicare ID card when receiving services; instead, members should provide their Blue Cross and/or Blue Shield member ID.

### **Do I have to provide services to Medicare Advantage PPO members from other Blue Cross Blue Shield Plans?**

If you are a contracted Medicare Advantage PPO provider with BCBSTX, you must provide the same access to care as you do for BCBSTX BCBS MA PPO members. You can expect to receive the same contracted rates for such services.

If you are not a Medicare Advantage PPO contracted provider, you may see Medicare Advantage members from other BCBS Plans but you are not required to do so. Should you decide to provide services to BCBS Medicare Advantage members, you will be reimbursed for covered services at the Medicare allowed amount based on where the services were rendered and under the member's out-of-network benefits. For urgent or emergency care, you will be reimbursed at the in-network benefit level.

### **What if my practice is closed to new local Blue Cross Blue Shield Medicare Advantage PPO members?**

If your practice is closed to new local BCBS MA PPO members, you do not have to provide care for BCBS MA PPO out-of-area members. The same contractual arrangements apply to these out-of-area network sharing members as your local MA PPO members.

### **What will I be paid for providing services to these out-of-area Medicare Advantage PPO network sharing members?**

If you are a MA PPO contracted provider with BCBSTX, benefits will be based on your contracted MA PPO rate for providing covered services to MA PPO members from any MA PPO Plan. Once you submit the MA claim, BCBSTX will work with the other Plan to determine benefits and send you the payment.

### **What will I be paid for providing services to Medicare Advantage out-of-area members not participating in the Medicare Advantage PPO Network Sharing?**

When you provide covered services to other BCBS MA out-of-area members', benefits will be based on the Medicare allowed amount. Once you submit the claim, BCBSTX will send you the payment. However, these services will be paid under the member's out-of-network benefits unless for urgent or emergency care.

**May I request payment upfront?**

Generally, once the member receives care, you should not ask for full payment up front other than out-of-pocket expenses (deductible, co-payment, coinsurance and non-covered services).

Under certain circumstances when the member has been notified in advance that a service will not be covered, you may request payment from the member before services are rendered or billed to the member. The member should sign an Advance Benefit Notification (ABN) form before services are rendered in these situations.

**What is the member cost sharing level and co-payments?**

Member cost sharing level and co-payment is based on the member's health plan.

You may collect the co-payment amounts from the member at the time of service. To determine the cost sharing and/or co-payment amounts, you should call the Eligibility Line at 1.800.676.BLUE (2583).

**May I balance bill the member the difference in my charge and the allowance?**

No, you may not balance bill the member for this difference. Members may be billed for any deductibles, co-insurance, and/or co-pays.

**What if I disagree with the reimbursement amount I received?**

If there is a question concerning the reimbursement amount, contact your local BCBSTX Network Management location.

**Who do I contact if I have a question about MA PPO network sharing?**

If you have any questions regarding the MA program or products, contact local BCBSTX Network Management location.

**What is BCBS Medicare Advantage PPO Network Sharing?**

Network sharing allows MA PPO members from MA PPO BCBS Plans to obtain in-network benefits when traveling or living in the service areas of the MA PPO Plans as long as the member sees a contracted MA PPO provider. MA PPO shared networks are available in 39 states and one territory:

Alabama	Kentucky	Nebraska	Puerto Rico
California	Kansas	Nevada	Rhode Island
Colorado	Louisiana	New Hampshire	South Carolina
Connecticut	Maine	New Jersey	Tennessee
Florida	Massachusetts	New Mexico	Texas
Georgia	Michigan	New York	Utah
Hawaii	Minnesota	Ohio	Virginia
Idaho	Missouri	Oklahoma	Washington
Illinois	Montana	Oregon	Wisconsin
Indiana	North Carolina	Pennsylvania	West Virginia

**4.2.3 Eligibility Verification**

- You can verify eligibility by contacting the BlueCard Eligibility Line at 1.800.676.BLUE (2583) and provide the member's three-digit prefix located on the ID card. Be sure to ask if Medicare Advantage benefits apply.

If you experience difficulty obtaining eligibility information, please record the prefix and report it to **1.877.774.8592**.

#### 4.2.4 Medicare Advantage Claims Submission

- Submit all Medicare Advantage claims to BCBSTX
- Do not bill Medicare directly for any services rendered to a Medicare Advantage member.
- Payment will be made directly by a Blue Cross Blue Shield Plan.

#### 4.2.5 Reimbursement for Medicare Advantage PPO, HMO, POS, PFFS

*Note to Provider: The reimbursement information below applies when a provider treats a Blue Cross Blue Shield Medicare Advantage member to whom the provider's contract does not apply.*

Examples:

- A provider that is contracted for Medicare Advantage PPO business treats a Medicare Advantage HMO member.
- A provider that is contracted for commercial business only treats a MA PPO member.
- A provider that is contracted for Medicare Advantage HMO business treats any MA PPO member.
- A provider that is contracted for local Medicare Advantage HMO business treats an out-of-area MA HMO member.
- A provider that is not contracted with the local Plan treats a MA HMO member.

Based upon the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) regulations, if you are a provider who accepts Medicare assignment and you render services to a Medicare Advantage member for whom you have no obligation to provide services under your contract with a Blue Cross Blue Shield Plan, you will generally be considered a non-contracted provider and be reimbursed the equivalent of the current Medicare allowed amount for all covered services (i.e., the amount you would collect if the beneficiary were enrolled in traditional Medicare).

Special payment rules apply to hospitals and certain other entities (e.g., skilled nursing facilities) that are non-contracted providers.

Providers should make sure they understand the applicable Medicare Advantage reimbursement rules.

Providers that are paid on a reasonable cost basis under Original Medicare should send their CMS Interim Payment Rate letter with their Medicare Advantage claim. This letter will be needed by the Plan to calculate the Medicare Allowed amount.

Other than the applicable member cost sharing amounts, reimbursement is made directly by a Blue Cross Blue Shield Plan or its branded affiliate. In general, you may collect only the applicable cost sharing (e.g., co-payment) amounts from the member at the time of service, and may not otherwise charge or balance bill the member.

*NOTE: Enrollee payment responsibilities can include more than copayments (e.g., deductibles).*



Please review the remittance notice concerning Medicare Advantage plan payment, member's payment responsibility, and balance billing limitations

### **Medicare Advantage Private-Fee-For-Service (PFFS) Claim Reimbursement**

If you have rendered services for a Blue out-of-area Medicare Advantage PFFS member, but are not obligated to provide services to such member under a contract with a Blue Cross Blue Shield Plan, you will generally be reimbursed the Medicare allowed amount for all covered services (i.e., the amount you would collect if the beneficiary were enrolled in traditional Medicare). Providers should make sure they understand the applicable Medicare Advantage reimbursement rules by reviewing the Terms & Conditions under the member's Blue Plan. Other than the applicable member cost sharing amounts, reimbursement is made directly by a Blue Cross Blue Shield Plan. In general, you may collect only the applicable cost sharing (e.g., co-payment) amounts from the member at the time of service, and may not otherwise charge or balance bill the member.

Please review the remittance notice concerning Medicare Advantage plan payment, member's payment responsibility and balance billing limitations

*NOTE TO PROVIDER: The reimbursement information below applies when a provider treats a Blue Cross Blue Shield Medicare Advantage member to whom the provider's contract applies.*

Examples:

- A provider that is contracted for Medicare Advantage PPO business treats an out-of-area Medicare Advantage PPO member.
- A provider that is contracted for Medicare Advantage HMO business treats an MA HMO member from the local Plan.

If you are a provider who accepts Medicare assignment and you render services to any Blue Cross Blue Shield Medicare Advantage member for whom you have an obligation to provide services under your contract with a Blue Cross Blue Shield Plan, you will be considered a contracted provider and be reimbursed per the contractual agreement

Providers should make sure they understand the applicable Medicare Advantage reimbursement rules and their individual Plan contractual arrangements.

Other than the applicable member cost sharing amounts, reimbursement is made directly by a Blue Cross Blue Shield Plan. In general, you may collect only the applicable cost sharing (e.g., co-payment) amounts from the member at the time of service, and may not otherwise charge or balance bill the member.

Please review the remittance notice concerning Medicare Advantage plan payment, member's payment responsibility and balance billing limitations

## **4.2.6 Medicare Advantage Coordination of Care Program**

A new national Coordination of Care program to support Blue MA members was launched on January 1, 2020. The program aims to increase the quality of members' care by enabling Blue MA PPO group members to receive appropriate care, wherever they access care.

To better support all Blue MA PPO group members residing in Texas, BCBSTX is working with providers to improve these members' care through:

- Supporting providers with additional information about open gaps in care
- Requesting medical records to give Plans a complete understanding of member health status

MA PPO group members participating into this program can be identified as having a member address in Texas and based on the following logo included on their Blue Cross and/or Blue Shield ID Cards:



### **What does this new program to support Blue Medicare Advantage members mean to me?**

This program will result in some changes, including a number that will be beneficial to you, your practice and your patients. The program serves all MA PPO group members that reside in BCBSTX's service area, and some of the benefits that you may see include:

- You will receive consolidated information on gaps in care and risk adjustment gaps, as well as medical record requests for all Blue MA PPO members enrolled with BCBSTX and other Blue Plans and residing in Texas through local communication practices.
- The MA PPO group members that you see may come into your practice setting more frequently for care due to BCBSTX's requesting care gap closures, allowing for greater continuity in care.

**Reminder:** As outlined in your contract with BCBSTX, you are required to respond to requests in support of risk adjustment, HEDIS and other government required activities within the requested timeframe. This includes requests from BCBSTX related to this program.

### **What are some of the changes that I should expect as a result of this program?**

#### *Medical Record Requests*

Providers will receive medical records requests from BCBSTX related to your patients that are MA PPO group members residing in Texas and enrolled with another Blue Plan. Per the program structure, these members' Plans request medical records through BCBSTX. You do not need to be in contact with any Blue Plan that you are not contracted with for the purposes of medical record retrieval.

#### *Gap Closure Requests*

You may receive an increase in Stars and Risk Adjustment gap closure requests from BCBSTX for your patients that are MA PPO group members residing in Texas and enrolled with another Blue Plan. Per the program structure, Stars or risk adjustment gaps for these members are communicated through the local process administered by BCBSTX. You do not need to be in contact with any Blue Plan that you are not contracted with for the purposes of gap closure.

In addition, this program change may result in greater contact with these members—whether it is through onsite visits or via phone outreach, and may engender better care continuity.

## **HIPAA/Privacy**

Consistent with HIPAA and any other applicable laws and regulations, BCBSTX is contractually bound to preserve the confidentiality of health plan members' protected health information (PHI) obtained from medical records and provider engagement on Stars and/or risk adjustment gaps. You will only receive requests from the BCBSTX that are permissible under applicable law and, consistent with your current practices, patient-authorized information releases are not required in order for you to fulfill medical records requests and support closure of Stars and/or risk adjustment gaps received pursuant to this care coordination program.

If you have any questions regarding the applicability of HIPAA or any other privacy law or regulation to this program, please contact **1.800.451.0287**.

## **Member Care & Administrative Reminders**

### **Annual Wellness Visits**

Wellness visits provide opportunities to screen for new problems and manage chronic ones. Depending on your contract, completion of a wellness visit may result in an incentive payment.

### **Documentation Required for Care Gap Closure**

HEDIS care gaps should be closed following HEDIS guidelines, submitting claims and/or encounters accordingly.

Providers may also provide the member's medical record as evidence, which BCBSTX will send to the corresponding Home plan through an encrypted platform

### **Vendor Outreach Supporting Provider Engagement**

As part of the Coordination of Care Program, BCBSTX has partner with Change Health as our vendor for medical record retrieval.

Providers may be contacted either by Change Health or a BCBSTX employee to request evidence of gaps in care closure.

### **Medicare Risk Adjustment**

Risk adjustment allows CMS to pay plans for the risk of the beneficiaries they enroll, instead of an average amount for Medicare beneficiaries. By risk adjusting plan payments, CMS is able to make appropriate and accurate payments for enrollees with differences in expected costs. Risk adjustment is used to adjust bidding and payment based on the health status and demographic characteristics of an enrollee. Risk scores measure individual beneficiaries' relative risk and risk scores are used to adjust payments for each beneficiary's expected expenditures. By risk adjusting plan bids, CMS is able to use standardized bids as base payments to plans

### **Importance of Coding Accuracy**

Accuracy and completeness in ICD-10-CM diagnosis code assignment ensures that all member conditions addressed at a face to face encounter are accounted for. Diagnosis codes describe the member's medical condition, not the service performed. Diagnosis codes drive the risk scores, which drive the risk adjusted reimbursement from CMS to MA organizations.

## 4.3 Health Insurance Marketplaces (*aka Exchanges*)

### 4.3.1 Health Insurance Marketplaces Overview

The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA) of 2010 provides for the establishment of Health Insurance Marketplaces (i.e., Exchanges), in each state, where individuals and small businesses can purchase qualified insurance coverage. The intent of the Marketplace is to:

- Create a competitive health insurance marketplace by offering consumers a choice of health insurance plans,
- Establish common rules regarding insurance plan offerings and pricing,
- Provide information to help consumers better understand the options available to them and,
- Allow individual and small businesses to have the purchasing power comparable to that of large businesses.

The Marketplaces makes it easier for consumers to compare health insurance plans by providing transparent information about health insurance plan provisions such as product information, premium costs, and covered benefits, as well as a plan's performance in encouraging wellness, managing chronic illnesses, and improving consumer satisfaction.

All states have health insurance marketplaces where consumers can compare health insurance product features, coverage, and costs. Some states have set up their own, state-based Marketplace. In other states, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) has established a federally-facilitated Marketplace, federally-supported Marketplace, or a state-partnership Marketplace in the state.

Blue Plans that offer products on the Marketplaces collaborate with the state and federal governments for eligibility, enrollment, reconciliation, and other operations to ensure that consumers can seamlessly enroll in individual and small business health insurance products.

#### **Exchange Individual Grace Period**

The ACA mandates a three month grace period for individual members who receive a premium subsidy from the government and are delinquent in paying their portion of premiums. The grace period applies as long as the individual has previously paid at least one month's premium within the benefit year. The health insurance plan is only obligated to pay claims for services rendered during the first month of the grace period. The ACA clarifies that the health insurance plan may pend claims during the second and third months of the grace period.

Blue Plans are required to either pay or pend claims for services rendered during the second and third month of the grace period. Consequently, if a member is within the last two months of the federally mandated individual grace period, providers may receive a notification from BCBSTX indicating that the member is in the grace period.

#### **Exchange Individual Grace Period – Post Service Notification Letter to Provider**

Communication to providers will include the following information:

**1. Notice-unique identification number (claim includes member information):**

Claim #: \_\_\_\_\_

**2. Name of the QHP and affiliated issuer (Home Plan name)****3. Explanation of the three month grace period:**

Under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA), there is a three month grace period under Exchange-purchased individual insurance policies, when a premium due is not received for members eligible for premium subsidies. During this grace period, carriers may not dis-enroll members and, during the second and third months of the grace period, are required to notify providers about the possibility that claims may be denied in the event that the premium is not paid.

**4. Purpose of the notice, applicable dates of whether the enrollee is in the second or third month of the grace period & individuals affected under the policy and possibly under care of the provider:**

Please be advised that a premium due has not been received for this subsidy eligible member and that the member and any eligible dependents are and at the time that your care was provided, were in the second or third month of the Exchange individual health insurance grace period. The above-referenced claim thus was pended due to non-payment of premium, and will be denied if the premium is not paid by the end of the grace period.

**5. Consequences:**

If the premium is paid in full by the end of the grace period, any pended claims will be processed in accordance with the terms of the contract. If the premium is not paid in full by the end of the grace period, any claims incurred in the second and third months may be denied.

**6. QHP customer service telephone number:**

Please feel free to contact [Host Plan Name] Monday through Friday, at [enter number] if you have any questions regarding this claim.

**4.3.2 SHOP Grace Period**

Federally-facilitated SHOP requires a 31 day grace period for employers to make their full monthly payment, unless a state's regulation requires a longer period. Similar to the individual grace period, upon receipt of a claim filed during the SHOP grace period, Blue Plans may pay the claim or may pend the claim, then adjudicate the claim to pay or deny once the grace period ends or the employer pays the premium.

### 4.3.3 Health Insurance Marketplaces Claims

#### What else do I need to know?

The products offered on the Marketplaces will follow local business practices for processing and servicing claims. Providers should continue to follow current practices with BCBSTX for claims processing and handling such as outlined below.

- Eligibility and Benefits
- Care Management
  - Pre-Service Review
  - Medical Policy
- Claim Pricing and Processing
  - Contracting
  - Claim Filing
  - Pricing
  - Claim Processing
  - Medical Records
  - Payment
  - Customer Service

#### Who do I contact if I have a question about Health Insurance Marketplaces (Exchanges)?

If you have any questions regarding the Health Insurance Marketplaces, please contact BCBSTX at **1.800.451.0287**.

## 4.4 Medicaid Claims

Blue Plans currently administer Medicaid programs in various states across the U.S. as Managed Care Organizations (MCO), providing comprehensive Medicaid benefits to the eligible population. Because Medicaid is a state-run program, requirements vary for each state, and thus each BCBS Plan. Medicaid members have limited out-of-state benefits, generally covering only emergent situations. In some cases, such as continuity of care, children attending college out-of-state, or a lack of specialists in the member's home state, a Medicaid member may receive care in another state, and generally the care requires prior authorization.

### 4.4.1 Identifying Medicaid Members to Determine Eligibility and Benefits

BCBS ID cards do not always indicate that a member has a Medicaid product. ID cards for Medicaid members do not include the suitcase logo that you may have seen on most ID cards, but they do include a disclaimer on the back providing information on benefit limitations. For members with such ID cards, you should obtain eligibility and benefit information and prior authorization for services using the same tools as you would for other BCBS members.

- Submit an eligibility inquiry by calling the BlueCard Eligibility Line at 1.800.676.BLUE (2583)
- Submit an eligibility inquiry using BlueExchange.
- Obtain preservice review using the Electronic Provider Access (EPA) tool

### 4.4.2 Medicaid Reimbursement and Billing

Claims for all BCBS Medicaid members should be submitted to your local BCBS Plan. If you are contracted with your local BCBS Plan for Medicaid, your local Medicaid rates will only apply for Texas members; they do not apply to out-of-state Medicaid members. When you see a Medicaid member from another state and submit the claim, you must accept the Medicaid fee schedule that applies in the member's home state.

Please remember that billing out-of-state Medicaid members for the amount between the Medicaid-allowed amount and charges for Medicaid-covered services is prohibited by Federal regulations ([42 CFR 447.15](#)).

If you provide services that are not covered by Medicaid to a Medicaid member, you will not be reimbursed. You may only bill a Medicaid member for services not covered by Medicaid if you have obtained written approval from the member in advance of the services being rendered.

In some circumstances, a state Medicaid program will have an applicable copayment, deductible or coinsurance applied to the member's plan. You may collect this amount from the member as applicable. Note that the coinsurance amount is based on the Medicaid fee schedule for that service.

### 4.4.3 Medicaid Billing Data Requirements

When billing for a Medicaid member, please remember to check the Medicaid website of the state where the member resides for information on Medicaid billing requirements.

Providers should always include their National Provider Identifier (NPI) on Medicaid claims, unless the provider is considered atypical. Providers should also bill using National Drug Codes (NDC) on applicable claims. These data elements and other data elements that are important to submit, when applicable, on Medicaid claims are included below.

*Applicable Medicaid claims submitted without these data elements will be denied:*

- National Drug Code
- Rendering Provider Identifier (NPI)
- Billing Provider Identifier (NPI)

*Applicable Medicaid claims submitted without these data elements may be pended or denied until the required information is received:*

- Billing Provider (Second) Address Line
- Billing Provider Middle Name or Initial
- (Billing) Provider Taxonomy Code
- (Rendering) Provider Taxonomy Code
- (Service) Laboratory or Facility Postal Zone or Zip Code
- (Ambulance) Transport Distance
- (Service) Laboratory Facility Name
- (Service) Laboratory or Facility State or Province Code
- Value Code Amount
- Value Code
- Condition Code
- Occurrence Codes and Date
- Occurrence Span Codes and Dates
- Referring Provider Identifier and Identification Code Qualifier
- Ordering Provider Identifier and Identification Code Qualifier
- Attending Provider NPI
- Operating Physician NPI
- Claim or Line Note Text
- Certification Condition Applies Indicator and Condition Indicator (Early and Periodic screening diagnosis and treatment (EPSDT))
- Service Facility Name and Location Information
- Ambulance Transport Information



- Patient Weight
- Ambulance Transport Reason Code
- Round Trip Purpose Description
- Stretcher Purpose Description

#### 4.4.4 Medicaid Encounter Data Reporting

The data elements mentioned above need to be included on Medicaid claims, so that BCBS MCOs are able to comply with encounter data reporting requirements applicable in their respective state.

#### 4.4.5 Provider Enrollment Requirements

Some states require that out-of-state providers enroll in their state's Medicaid program in order to be reimbursed. Some of these states may accept a provider's Medicaid enrollment in the state where they practice to fulfill this requirement.

If you are required to enroll in another state's Medicaid program, you should receive notification upon submitting an eligibility or benefit inquiry. You should enroll in that state's Medicaid program before submitting the claim. To view provider enrollment requirements for BCBS Medicaid states, please visit <https://www.tmhp.com/topics/provider-enrollment>.

If you submit a claim without enrolling, your Medicaid claims will be denied and you will receive the following message from Texas regarding the Medicaid provider enrollment requirements, "The state where the member is enrolled in Medicaid requires that providers enroll in their Medicaid program before the Plan can pay the provider. To view provider enrollment requirements for the state where the member is enrolled, please visit <https://www.tmhp.com/topics/provider-enrollment>."

You will be required to enroll before the Medicaid claim can be processed and before you receive reimbursement.

#### 4.4.6 Medicaid Questions

##### **How do I submit Medicaid claims?**

Medicaid claims should be submitted to your local BCBS Plan in the same manner as you submit claims for other BCBS members. You will also receive your payment in the same manner, although the payment amount will likely be different from your contracted rate, or different from the Medicaid rate in the state in which you practice.

##### **How do I know that I am seeing a Medicaid member?**

Members enrolled in a BCBS Medicaid product are issued BCBS ID cards. Medicaid ID cards do not always indicate that a member is enrolled in a Medicaid product. Medicaid ID cards:

- Will not include a suitcase logo.

- Will contain disclaimer language on the back of the ID card indicating benefit limitations for provider awareness, for example, “This member has limited benefits outside of Texas. Providers should request eligibility/benefit information.

Providers should always submit an eligibility inquiry if the ID card has no suitcase logo and includes a disclaimer with benefit limitations, using the same tools available for BlueCard:

- BlueCard Eligibility Line
- BlueExchange

Because ID cards will not always indicate that the member is enrolled in a Medicaid product, you should always obtain eligibility and benefit information. With an eligibility response, you should receive information on Medicaid coverage.

**What amount should I expect to receive for members that reside outside of Travis county delivery’s STAR, CHIP and STARKids and MRSA Central STARKids service area?**

When billing for services rendered to an out-of-state Medicaid member, you will be reimbursed according to the member’s home state Medicaid fee schedule, which may or may not be equal to what you are accustomed to receiving for the same service in your state.

**My state does not require me to include an NPI or NDC code and many of the other data elements listed above on a Medicaid claim. Why do I have to include these codes?**

Most state Medicaid programs require NPI and NDC codes and the additional data elements (when applicable) to be populated on claims submitted for Medicaid members for encounter data reporting purposes. To ensure compliance with state Medicaid requirements, providers who bill for Medicaid members should include these data elements on applicable BCBS Medicaid claims or the claims may be pended or denied.

**I do not often see Medicaid members from another state. Why must I enroll as a Medicaid provider outside of my own state when billing for some Medicaid members in other states?**

Many state Medicaid programs require providers to enroll before reimbursement may be provided by the Plan. If you do not enroll with the state where required, the claim could be denied.

**Whom do I contact if I have questions?**

If you have questions, please call

**BCBSTX STAR, CHIP: 1-877-560-8055**

**BCBSTX STAR Kids: 1-877-784-6802**

8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. CST, M–F

## Exhibit 1 – Medicaid Billing Data Elements

Required Data Elements for Medicaid Claims				
<i>NOTE: Applicable Medicaid claims submitted without these data elements will be denied.</i>				
837 Reference	837 Professional <sup>1</sup> Data Element Reference	837 Institutional <sup>2</sup> Data Element Reference	Professional Paper Claim Item Reference (CMS1500) <sup>3</sup>	Institutional Paper Claim Form Locator (UB04) <sup>4</sup>
National Drug Code	Loop 2410 LIN03	Loop 2410 LIN03	Item Number 24 Shaded Portion	Form Locator 43
Rendering Provider Identifier (NPI)	Loop 2310B NM109 unless overridden when reported in Loop 2420A NM109 ONLY when Rendering is different from Loop 2010AA Billing Provider	Loop 2310D NM109 unless overridden when reported in Loop 2420C NM109 ONLY when Rendering is different from Loop 2310A Attending Provider	Item Number 33A NPI# or Item Number 24J (Unshaded) Rendering Provider ID#	Form Locators 78-79 Form Locator 43 Line Level
Billing Provider NPI	Loop 2010AA NM109	Loop 2010AA NM109	Item Number 33A NPI#	Form Locator 56

Other Data Elements for Medicaid Claims				
<i>NOTE: Applicable Medicaid claims submitted without these data elements may be pended or denied until the required information is received.</i>				
837 Reference	837 Professional <sup>1</sup> Data Element Reference	837 Institutional <sup>2</sup> Data Element Reference	Professional Paper Claim Item Reference (CMS1500) <sup>3</sup>	Institutional Paper Claim Form Locator (UB04) <sup>4</sup>
Billing Provider (Second) Address Line	Loop 2010AA N302	Loop 2010AA N302	Item Number 33 Billing Provider Info & Ph # Line 2	Form Locator 1 Line 2
Billing Provider Middle Name or Initial	Loop 2010AA NM105	Loop 2010AA NM105	Item Number 33 Billing Provider Info & Ph # Line 1	Form Locator 1 Line 1
(Billing) Provider Taxonomy Code	Loop 2000A PRV03	Loop 2000A PRV03	Item Number 33B Other ID #	Form Locator 81
(Rendering) Provider Taxonomy Code	Loop 2310B PRV03 unless overridden when reported in Loop 2420A PRV03	Not applicable for institutional claim	Item Number 24I ID Qualifier #	Not applicable for institutional claim
(Service) Laboratory or Facility Postal Zone or Zip Code	Loop 2310C N403 unless overridden when reported in Loop 2420C N403	Loop 2310E N403	Item Number 32 Service Facility Location Information Line 3	Form Locator 1 Line 3

<b>Other Data Elements for Medicaid Claims</b>				
<i>NOTE: Applicable Medicaid claims submitted without these data elements may be pended or denied until the required information is received.</i>				
<b>837 Reference</b>	<b>837 Professional<sup>1</sup> Data Element Reference</b>	<b>837 Institutional<sup>2</sup> Data Element Reference</b>	<b>Professional Paper Claim Item Reference (CMS1500)<sup>3</sup></b>	<b>Institutional Paper Claim Form Locator (UB04)<sup>4</sup></b>
(Ambulance) Transport Distance	Loop 2300 CR106 unless overridden when reported in Loop 2400 CR106	Loop 2400 SV205 with applicable revenue code	Not reportable on 1500 form	Form Locator 42 with applicable revenue code
(Service) Laboratory Facility Name	Loop 2310C NM103 unless overridden when reported in Loop 2420C NM103	Loop 2310E NM103	Item Number 32 Service Facility Location Information Line 1	Form Locator 1 Line 1
(Service) Laboratory or Facility State or Province Code	Loop 2310C N402 unless overridden when reported in Loop 2420C N402	Loop 2310E N402	Item Number 32 Service Facility Location Information Line 3	Form Locator 1 Line 3
Value Code Amount	Not applicable for professional claim	Loop 2300 HI in 5 <sup>th</sup> position within the composite data element (Value Information HI)  Up to 24 value codes may be reported with a corresponding amount	Not applicable for professional claim	Form Locators 39-41  Up to 12 value codes may be reported with a corresponding amount  Form Locator 81 after above are exhausted
Value Code	Not applicable for professional claim	Loop 2300 HI in 2 <sup>nd</sup> position within the composite data element (Value Information HI)  Up to 24 value codes may be reported	Not applicable for professional claim	Form Locators 39-41  Up to 12 value codes may be reported  Form Locator 81 after above are exhausted
Condition Code	Loop 2300 HI in 2 <sup>nd</sup> position within the composite data element (Condition Information HI)  Up to 24 condition codes may be reported	Loop 2300 HI in 2 <sup>nd</sup> position within the composite data element (Condition Information HI)  Up to 24 condition codes may be reported	Item Number 10d	Form Locators 18-28  Up to 11 condition codes may be reported  Form Locator 81 after above are exhausted

<b>Other Data Elements for Medicaid Claims</b>				
<i>NOTE: Applicable Medicaid claims submitted without these data elements may be pended or denied until the required information is received.</i>				
<b>837 Reference</b>	<b>837 Professional<sup>1</sup> Data Element Reference</b>	<b>837 Institutional<sup>2</sup> Data Element Reference</b>	<b>Professional Paper Claim Item Reference (CMS1500)<sup>3</sup></b>	<b>Institutional Paper Claim Form Locator (UB04)<sup>4</sup></b>
Occurrence Codes and Dates	Not applicable for professional claim	Loop 2300 HI in 2 <sup>nd</sup> and 4 <sup>th</sup> positions within the composite data element (Occurrence Information HI)  Up to 24 occurrence codes and associated dates may be reported	Not applicable for professional claim	Form Locators 31-34  Up to 8 occurrence codes and associated dates may be reported  Form Locators 35-36 (FROM field) may be used when available  Form Locator 81 after above are exhausted
Occurrence Span Codes and Dates	Not applicable for professional claim	Loop 2300 HI in 2 <sup>nd</sup> and 4 <sup>th</sup> positions within the composite data element (Occurrence Span Information HI)  Up to 24 occurrence codes and associated dates may be reported	Not applicable for professional claim	Form Locators 35-36  Up to 4 occurrence span codes and associated dates may be reported  Form Locator 81 after above are exhausted
Referring Provider Identifier and Identification Code Qualifier	Loop 2310A NM108/09 or REF01/02 unless overridden when reported in Loop 2420F NM108/09 or REF01/02	Loop 2310F NM108/09 or REF01/02 unless overridden when reported in Loop 2420D NM108/09 or REF01/02	Item Number 17a Other ID# or 17b NPI #	Form Locators 78-79
Ordering Provider Identifier and Identification Code Qualifier	Loop 2420E NM108/09 or REF01/02 when a different from the service line Rendering Provider	Not applicable for institutional claim	Item Number 17a Other ID# or 17b NPI #	Not applicable for institutional claim
Attending Provider NPI	Not applicable for professional claim	Loop 2310A NM109	Not applicable for professional claim	Form Locator 76 Line 1

<b>Other Data Elements for Medicaid Claims</b>				
<i>NOTE: Applicable Medicaid claims submitted without these data elements may be pended or denied until the required information is received.</i>				
<b>837 Reference</b>	<b>837 Professional<sup>1</sup> Data Element Reference</b>	<b>837 Institutional<sup>2</sup> Data Element Reference</b>	<b>Professional Paper Claim Item Reference (CMS1500)<sup>3</sup></b>	<b>Institutional Paper Claim Form Locator (UB04)<sup>4</sup></b>
Operating Physician NPI	Not applicable for professional claim	Loop 2310B NM109 unless overridden when reported in Loop 2420A NM108/09	Not applicable for professional claim	Form Locator 77 Line 1
Claim or Line Note Text	Loop 2300 NTE02 unless overridden when reported in Loop 2400 NTE02 (Line Note NTE)	Loop 2300 NTE02	Item Number 19 Additional Claim Information	Form Locator 80
Certification Condition Applies Indicator and Condition Indicator (Early and Periodic screening diagnosis and treatment (EPSDT) )	Loop 2300 CRC02, CRC03 (EPSDT Referral CRC)  Loop 2300 CRC04 and CRC05 are used when additional conditions apply	Loop 2300 CRC02, CRC03 (EPSDT Referral CRC)  Loop 2300 CRC04 and CRC05 are used when additional conditions apply	Item Number 24H EPSDT/Family Plan	Form Locators 18-28
Service Facility Name and Location Information	Not applicable for professional claim	Loop 2310E	Not applicable for professional claim	Form Locator 1
Ambulance Transport Information  Patient Weight  Ambulance Transport Reason Code  Round Trip Purpose Description  Stretcher Purpose Description	Loop 2300  CR102 CR104  CR109  CR110	Not applicable for institutional claim	Not reportable on 1500 form	Not applicable for institutional claim

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> ASC X12 Standards for Electronic Data Interchange Technical Report Type 3—Health Care Claim: Professional (837), May 2006, ASC X12N/005010X222, Type 1 Errata to Health Care Claim: Professional (837), June 2010, ASC X12N/005010X222A1 and Errata to Health Care Claim: Professional (837), January 2009, ASC X12N/005010X222E1.

<sup>2</sup> ASC X12 Standards for Electronic Data Interchange Technical Report Type 3—Health Care Claim: Institutional (837), May 2006, ASC X12N/005010X223, Type 1 Errata to Health Care Claim: Institutional (837), October 2007, ASC X12N/005010X223A1, Type 1 Errata to Health Care Claim: Institutional (837), June 2010, ASC X12N/005010X223A2 and Errata to Health Care Claim: Institutional (837), January 2009, ASC X12N/005010X223E1.

<sup>3</sup> National Uniform Claim Committee (NUCC). 1500 Health Insurance Claim Form Reference Instruction Manual for Form Version 02/12. Version 2.0. July 2014.

<sup>4</sup> National Uniform Billing Committee (NUBC). Official UB-04 Data Specifications Manual 2015. Version 9.00. July 2014.

## 4.5 Claims Coding

Code claims as you would for BCBSTX claims.

## 4.6 Ancillary Claims

Ancillary providers include Independent Clinical Laboratory, Durable/Home Medical Equipment and Supplies and Specialty Pharmacy providers. File claims for these providers as follows:

- Independent Clinical Laboratory (Lab)
  - File to the BCBS Plan in whose service area the referring provider is located.
- Durable/Home Medical Equipment and Supplies (D/HME)
  - File to the Plan in whose service area the equipment was shipped to or purchased at a retail store.
- Specialty Pharmacy
  - File to the Plan in whose service area the ordering physician is located.

\*If you contract with more than one Plan in a state for the same product type (i.e., PPO or Traditional), you may file the claim with either Plan.

Provider Type	How to File (Required Fields)	Where to File	Example
<b>Independent Clinical Laboratory</b> (any type of non-hospital based laboratory)  Types of Service include, but are not limited to: blood, urine, samples, analysis, etc.	<b>Referring Provider:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Field 17B on CMS 1500 Health Insurance Claim Form or</li> <li>– Loop 2310A (claim level) on the 837 Professional Electronic</li> </ul>	File the claim to the Plan in whose service area the <b>referring provider is located</b> .  <b>Note:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Claim must be processed based on information submitted on the claim.</li> <li>• The referring provider NPI, as submitted on the claim, must be used to determine where service was rendered.</li> <li>• Claims for the analysis of a lab must be filed to the Plan in whose service area the referring provider is located.</li> <li>• BlueCard rules for claims incurred in an overlapping service area and contiguous county apply.</li> </ul>	Blood is drawn in lab or office setting at the request of a referring provider located in <b>[enter Plan X service area]</b> .  Blood analysis is done in <b>[enter Plan Y service area]</b> .  <i>File both portions of the claim to: [enter Plan X service area].</i>



Provider Type	How to File (Required Fields)	Where to File	Example
<p><b>Durable/Home Medical Equipment and Supplies (D/HME)</b></p> <p>Types of Service include, but are not limited to: Hospital beds, oxygen tanks, crutches, etc.</p>	<p><b>Patient's Address:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Field 5 on CMS 1500 Health Insurance Claim Form or</li> <li>- Loop 2010CA on the 837 Professional Electronic Submission.</li> </ul> <p><b>Ordering Provider:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Field 17B on CMS 1500 Health Insurance Claim Form or</li> <li>- Loop 2420E (line level) on the 837 Professional Electronic Submission.</li> </ul> <p><b>Place of Service:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Field 24B on the CMS 1500 Health Insurance Claim Form or</li> <li>- Loop 2300, CLM05-1 on the 837 Professional Electronic Submissions.</li> </ul> <p><b>Service Facility Location Information:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Field 32 on CMS 1500 Health Insurance Form or</li> <li>- Loop 2310C (claim level) on the 837 Professional Electronic Submission.</li> </ul>	<p>File the claim to the Plan in whose service area the equipment was <b>shipped to or purchased in a retail store</b>.</p> <p><b>Note:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Claim must be processed based on information submitted on the claim.</li> <li>• The Place of Service code, as submitted on the claim, must be used to determine where service was rendered (e.g. member home/equivalent setting, retail, office, etc.).</li> <li>• BlueCard rules for claims incurred in an overlapping service area and contiguous county apply.</li> </ul>	<p>A. Wheelchair is purchased at a retail store in <b>[enter Plan Y service area]</b>.</p> <p><i>File to: [enter Plan Y service area]</i></p> <p>B. Wheelchair is purchased on the internet from an online retail supplier in <b>[enter Plan X service area]</b> and shipped to <b>[enter Plan Y service area]</b>.</p> <p><i>File to: [enter Plan Y service area ]</i></p> <p>C. Wheelchair is purchased at a retail store in <b>[enter Plan X service area]</b> and shipped to <b>[enter Plan Y service area]</b>.</p> <p><i>File to: [enter Plan Y service area ]</i></p>
<p><b>Specialty Pharmacy</b></p> <p>Types of Service: Non-routine, biological therapeutics ordered by a healthcare professional as a covered medical benefit as defined by the member's Plan's Specialty Pharmacy formulary. Include, but are not limited to: injectable, infusion therapies, etc.</p>	<p><b>Referring Provider:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Field 17B on CMS 1500 Health Insurance Claim Form or</li> <li>- Loop 2310A (claim level) on the 837 Professional Electronic Submission.</li> </ul>	<p>File the claim to the Plan whose state the <b>Ordering Physician is located</b>.</p> <p><b>Note:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Claim must be processed based on information submitted on the claim.</li> <li>• The ordering physician NPI, as submitted on the claim, must be used to determine where service was rendered.</li> <li>• BlueCard rules for claims incurred in an overlapping service area and contiguous county apply.</li> </ul>	<p>Patient is seen by a physician in <b>[enter Plan X service area]</b> who orders a specialty pharmacy injectable for this patient. Patient will receive the injections in <b>[enter Plan Y service area]</b> where the member lives for 6 months of the year.</p> <p><i>File to: [enter Plan X service area]</i></p>

- The ancillary claim filing rules apply regardless of the provider's contracting status with the BCBS Plan where the claim is filed.
- Providers are encouraged to verify member Eligibility and Benefits by contacting the phone number on the back of the member ID card or call 1.800.676.BLUE (2583), prior to providing any ancillary service.
- Providers that utilize outside vendors to provide services (example: sending blood specimen for special analysis that cannot be done by the Lab where the specimen was drawn) should utilize in-network participating Ancillary Providers to reduce the risk of additional member liability for covered benefits. A list of in-network participating providers may be obtained by contacting BCBSTX.
- Members are financially liable for ancillary services not covered under their benefit plan. It is the provider's responsibility to request payment directly from the member for non-covered services.
- Providers who wish to establish Trading Partner Agreements with other Plans should contact the other plans directly to obtain additional contact information.
- If you have any questions about where to file your claim, please contact your local [BCBSTX Network Management Office Location](#).

## 4.7 Air Ambulance Claims

Claims for air ambulance services must be filed to the BCBS Plan in whose service area the point of pickup ZIP code is located.

NOTE: IF YOU CONTRACT WITH MORE THAN ONE PLAN IN A STATE FOR THE SAME PRODUCT TYPE (I.E., PPO OR TRADITIONAL), YOU MAY FILE THE CLAIM WITH EITHER PLAN.

Service Rendered	How to File (Required Fields)	Where to File	Example
<p><b>Air Ambulance Services</b></p>	<p><b>Point of Pickup ZIP Code:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Populate item 23 on CMS 1500 Health Insurance Claim Form, with the 5-digit ZIP code of the point of pickup                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- For electronic billers, populate the origin information (ZIP code of the point of pick-up), in the Ambulance Pick-Up Location Loop in the ASC X12N Health Care Claim (837) Professional.</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Where Form CMS-1450 (UB-04) is used for air ambulance service not included with local hospital charges, populate Form Locators 39-41, with the 5-digit ZIP code of the point of pickup. The Form Locator must be populated with the approved Code and Value specified by the National Uniform Billing Committee in the UB-04 Data Specifications Manual.                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Form Locators (FL) 39-41</li> <li>- Code: A0 (Special ZIP code reporting), or its successor code specified by the National Uniform Billing Committee.</li> <li>- Value: Five digit ZIP Code of the location from which the beneficiary is initially placed on board the ambulance.</li> <li>- For electronic claims, populate the origin information (ZIP code of the point of pick-up) in the Value Information Segment in the ASC X12N Health Care Claim (837) Institutional.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>File the claim to the Plan in whose service area the point of pickup ZIP code is located*.</p> <p>*BlueCard rules for claims incurred in an overlapping service area and contiguous county apply.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The point of pick up ZIP code is in Plan A service area.</li> <li>• The claim must be filed to Plan A, based on the point of pickup ZIP code.</li> </ul>

- The air ambulance claims filing rules apply regardless of the provider’s contracting status with the BCBS Plan where the claim is filed.

- Where possible, providers are encouraged to verify Member Eligibility and Benefits by contacting the phone number on the back of the Member ID card or calling 1.800.676.BLUE (2583).
- Providers are encouraged to utilize in-network participating air ambulance providers to reduce the risk of additional member liability for covered benefits. A list of in-network participating providers may be obtained by reviewing [Provider Finder](#)<sup>SM</sup>.
- Members are financially liable for air ambulance services not covered under their benefit plan. It is the provider's responsibility to request payment directly from the member for non-covered services.
- Providers who wish to establish Trading Partner Agreements with other Plans should contact the other plans directly to obtain additional contact information.
- If you have any questions about where to file your claim, please contact your local [BCBSTX Network Management Office Location](#).

## 4.8 Contiguous Counties/Overlapping Service Areas

### 4.8.1 Contiguous Counties

Claims may be filed directly to the member's BCBS Plan by contiguous area providers based on the permitted terms of the provider contract, which may include:

- Provider location (i.e. which Plan service area is the providers office located)
- Provider contract with the two contiguous counties (i.e. is the provider contracted with only one or both service areas).
- The member's BCBS Plan (i.e. is the member's BCBS Plan in a county contiguous to the provider location).
- The member's location (i.e. does the member live or work in the service area covered by his/her BCBS Plan).
- The location of where the services were received (i.e. did the member receive service from a provider located in a county contiguous to the member's BCBS Plan).

### 4.8.2 Overlapping Service Areas

Submission of claims in an overlapping service area is dependent on which Plan(s) the provider contracts with in that service area, the type of contract the provider has (ex. PPO, Traditional) and the type of contract the member has with their BCBS Plan.

- If you contract with all local BCBS Plans in your state for the same product type (i.e., PPO or Traditional), you may file an out-of-area member's claim with either Plan.
- If you have a PPO contract with one BCBS Plan, but a Traditional contract with another BCBS Plan, file the out-of-area member's claim by product type.

- For example, if it's a PPO member, file the claim with the Plan that has your PPO contract.
- If you contract with one BCBS Plan but not the other, file all out-of-area claims with your contracted Plan.

## 4.9 Medical Records

### Medical Records

BCBS Plans have made many improvements to the medical records process to make it more efficient and are able to send and receive medical records electronically with other BCBS Plans. This method significantly reduces the time it takes to transmit supporting documentation for our out-of-area claims, reduces the need to request records multiple times and significantly reduces lost or misrouted records.

### Under what circumstances may the provider get requests for medical records for out-of-area members?

1. As part of the pre-authorization process — If you receive requests for medical records from other BCBS Plans prior to rendering services, as part of the pre-authorization process, you will be instructed to submit the records directly to the member's Plan that requested them. This is the only circumstance where you would not submit them to BCBSTX.
2. As part of claim review and adjudication — these requests will come from BCBSTX in the form of a letter, fax, email, or electronic communication requesting specific medical records and including instructions for submission.

### BlueCard Medical Record Process for Claim Review

1. An initial communication, generally in the form of a letter, should be received by your office requesting the needed information.
2. A remittance may be received by your office indicating the claim is being denied pending receipt and review of records. Occasionally, the medical records you submit might cross in the mail with the remittance advice for the claim indicating a need for medical records. A remittance advice is not a duplicate request for medical records. If you submitted medical records previously, but received a remittance advice indicating records were still needed, please contact BCBSTX at **1.800.451.0287** to ensure your original submission has been received and processed. This will prevent duplicate records being sent unnecessarily.
3. If you received only a remittance advice indicating records are needed, but you did not receive a medical records request letter, contact BCBSTX to determine if the records are needed from your office.
4. Upon receipt of the information, the claim will be reviewed to determine the benefits.

### Helpful Ways You Can Assist in Timely Processing of Medical Records

1. If the records are requested following submission of the claim, forward all requested medical records to BCBSTX.

2. Follow the submission instructions given on the request, using the specified physical or email address or fax number. The address or fax number for medical records may be different than the address you use to submit claims.
3. Include the cover letter you received with the request when submitting the medical records. This is necessary to make sure the records are routed properly once received by BCBSTX.
4. Please submit the information to BCBSTX as soon as possible to avoid further delay.
5. Only send the information specifically requested. Frequently, complete medical records are not necessary.
6. Please do not proactively send medical records with the claim. Unsolicited claim attachments may cause claim payment delays.

## 4.10 Adjustments

Contact BCBSTX if an adjustment is required. We will work with the member's BCBS Plan for adjustments; however, your workflow should not be different.

## 4.11 Appeals

Appeals for all claims are handled through BCBSTX. We will coordinate the appeal process with the member's BCBS Plan, if needed.

## 4.12 Coordination of Benefits (COB) Claims

Coordination of benefits (COB) refers to how we ensure members receive full benefits and prevent double payment for services when a member has coverage from two or more sources. The member's contract language explains the order for which entity has primary responsibility for payment and which entity has secondary responsibility for payment.

If you discover the member is covered by more than one health plan, and:

- BCBSTX or any other BCBS Plan is the primary payer, submit other carrier's name and address with the claim to BCBSTX. If you do not include the COB information with the claim, the member's BCBS Plan will have to investigate the claim. This investigation could delay your payment or result in a post-payment adjustment, which will increase your administrative burden.
- Other non-BCBS health plan is primary and BCBSTX or any other BCBS Plan is secondary, submit the claim to BCBSTX only after receiving payment from the primary payor, including the explanation of payment from the primary carrier. If you do not include the COB information with the claim, the member's BCBS Plan will have to investigate the claim. This investigation could delay your payment or result in a post-payment adjustment, which will increase your administrative burden.

Carefully review the payment information from all payers involved on the remittance advice (RA) before balance billing the patient for any potential liability. The information listed on the BCBSTX remittance advice as "patient liability" might be different from the actual amount the patient owes

you, due to the combination of the primary insurer payment and your negotiated amount with BCBSTX.

For Professional claims if the member does not have other insurance, it is imperative on the electronic HIPAA 837 claims submission transaction or CMS 1500 claim form, in box 11D, either “YES” or “NO” be checked. Leaving the box unmarked can cause the member’s Plan to stop the claim to investigate for COB.

### **Coordination of Benefits Questionnaire**

To streamline our claims processing and reduce the number of denials related to Coordination of Benefits, a Coordination of Benefits (COB) questionnaire is available to you under Education & Reference then Forms on the [BCBSTX provider website](#) that will help you and your patients avoid potential claim issues.

When you see any Blue and you are aware that they might have other health insurance coverage (e.g., Medicare), give a copy of the questionnaire to them during their visit. Providers should ensure that the form is completely filled out and at a minimum, includes your name and tax identification or NPI number, the policy holder’s name, group number and identification number including the three character prefix and the member’s signature. Once the form is complete, send it to your local BCBS Plan as soon as possible. Your local BCBS Plan will work with the member’s Plan to get the COB information updated. Collecting COB information from members before you file their claim eliminates the need to gather this information later, thereby reducing processing and payment delays.

## **4.13 Claim Payment**

- If you have not received payment for a claim, do not resubmit the claim because it will be denied as a duplicate. This will cause member confusion because of multiple Explanations of Benefits (EOBs). Claim processing times at various BCBS Plans vary.
- If you do not receive your payment or a response regarding your payment, please call BCBSTX at **1.800.451.0287** or refer to the [Claim Status Tool](#) available on Availity to check the status of your claim.
- In some cases, a member’s BCBS Plan may pend a claim because medical review or additional information is necessary. When resolution of a pended claim requires additional information from you, BCBSTX may either ask you for the information or give the member’s Plan permission to contact you directly.

## 4.14 Claim Status Inquiry

BCBSTX is your single point of contact for all claim inquiries.

Claim status inquiries can be done by:

- Phone—call BCBSTX at **1.800.451.0287**
- Electronically—send a HIPAA transaction 276 (claim status inquiry) to BCBSTX

## 4.15 Calls from Members and Others with Claim Questions

If BCBS Plan members contact you, advise them to contact their BCBS Plan and refer them to their ID card for a customer service number.

The member's BCBS Plan should not contact you directly regarding claims issues. If the member's BCBS Plan contacts you directly and asks you to submit the claim to them, refer them to BCBSTX.

## 4.16 Value Based Provider Arrangements

Plans have value-based care delivery arrangements in place with their providers. Each Plan has created their own arrangement with their provider(s), including reimbursement arrangements. Due to the unique nature of each Plan/provider arrangement, there is no common provider education template for value-based care delivery arrangements that can be created and distributed for use by all Plans.

## 4.17 Key Contacts

For more information:

- Visit the BCBSTX web site at [www.bcbstx.com/provider](http://www.bcbstx.com/provider)
- Call BCBSTX at **1.800.451.0287**
- Contact your local [BCBSTX Network Management Office](#).

# 5. Frequently Asked Questions

## 5.1 BlueCard Basics

### 1. What Is the BlueCard Program?

BlueCard is a national program that enables members of one BCBS Plan to obtain healthcare service benefits while traveling or living in another BCBS Plan's service area. The program links participating healthcare providers with the independent BCBS Plans across the country and in more than 200 countries and territories worldwide through a single electronic network for claims processing and reimbursement.

The program lets you conveniently submit claims for patients from other BCBS Plans, domestic and international, to your local BCBS Plan.



Your local BCBS Plan is your sole contact for claims payment, adjustments and issue resolution.

## 2. What products are included in the BlueCard Program?

The following products/claims are included in the BlueCard Program:

- Traditional (indemnity insurance)
- PPO (Preferred Provider Organization)
- EPO (Exclusive Provider Organization), including Blue High Performance Network (Blue HPN)
- POS (Point of Service)
- Standalone vision
- Standalone prescription drugs

*NOTE: STANDALONE VISION AND STANDALONE SELF-ADMINISTERED PRESCRIPTION DRUGS PROGRAMS ARE ELIGIBLE TO BE PROCESSED THRU BLUECARD WHEN SUCH PRODUCTS ARE NOT DELIVERED USING A VENDOR. CONSULT CLAIM FILING INSTRUCTIONS ON THE BACK OF THE ID CARDS.*

## 3. What products are excluded from the BlueCard Program?

The following products/claims are excluded from the BlueCard Program:

- Stand-alone dental
- Medicare Advantage\*
- The Federal Employee Program (FEP)

Please follow BCBSTX billing guidelines.

## 4. What is the BlueCard Managed Care/POS model?

The BlueCard Managed Care/POS model is for members who reside outside of their BCBS Plan's service area. Under the BlueCard Managed Care/POS model, members are enrolled in BCBSTX network and have a primary care physician (PCP). You can recognize BlueCard Managed Care/POS members who are enrolled in BCBSTX network through the member ID card as you do for all other BlueCard members.

## 5. Are HMO patients serviced through the BlueCard Program?

Occasionally BCBS HMO members affiliated with other BCBS Plans will seek care at your office or facility. You should handle claims for these members the same way as you do for BCBSTX members by submitting them to the BCBSTX.

## 5.2 Identifying members and ID Cards

### 1. How do I identify members?

When members from BCBS Plans arrive at your office or facility, be sure to ask them for their current ID card. The main identifier for out-of-area members is the prefix. The ID cards may also have:

- PPO in a suitcase logo, for eligible PPO/EPO members
- PPOB in a suitcase logo, for PPO members with access to the BlueCard PPO Basic network
- Blank suitcase logo
- An HPN in a suitcase logo with the Blue High Performance Network (HPN) name in the upper right or lower left corner, for Blue HPN EPO members

## 2. What is a “prefix?”

The three-character prefix at the beginning of the member’s identification number is the key element used to identify and correctly route claims. The prefix identifies the BCBS Plan or National Account to which the member belongs. It is critical for confirming a patient’s membership and coverage.

## 3. What do I do if a member has an identification card without a prefix?

Some members may carry outdated identification cards that may not have a prefix. Please request a current ID card from the member.

## 4. How do I identify BlueCard Managed Care/POS members?

The BlueCard Managed Care/POS model is for members who reside outside their BCBS Plan’s service area. BlueCard Managed Care/POS members are enrolled in BCBSTX network and primary care physician (PCP) panels. You can recognize BlueCard Managed Care/POS members who are enrolled in BCBSTX network through the member ID card as you do for all other BlueCard members.

## 5. How do I identify Medicare Advantage members?

Members will not have a standard Medicare card; instead, a BCBS logo will be visible on the ID card. The following examples illustrate how the different products associated with the Medicare Advantage program will be designated on the front of the member ID cards:

<b>Member ID cards for Medicare Advantage products will display one of the benefit product logos shown here:</b>		Health Maintenance Organization
		Medical Savings Account
		Private Fee-For-Service
		Point of Service
		Network Sharing Preferred Provider Organization.

When these logos are displayed on the front of a member's ID card, it indicates the coverage type the member has in his/her BCBS Plan service area or region. However, when the member receives services outside his/her BCBS Plan service area or region, provider reimbursement for covered services is based on the Medicare allowed amount, except for PPO network sharing arrangements.

**BCBSTX** participates in Medicare Advantage PPO Network Sharing arrangements, and contracted provider reimbursement is based on the contracted rate with **BCBSTX**. Non-contracted provider reimbursement is the Medicare allowed amount based on where services are rendered.

*Tip: While all MA PPO members have suitcases on their ID cards, some have limited benefits outside of their primary carrier's service area. Providers should refer to the back the member's ID card for language indicating such restrictions apply.*

## 6. How do I identify international members?

Occasionally, you may see identification cards from members residing abroad or foreign BCBS Plan members. These ID cards will contain three-character prefixes. Please treat these members the same as domestic Blue Plan members.

## 7. What do I do if a member does not have an ID card?

- Obtain as much information as possible from the Blue Plan member, i.e., subscriber name and address, DOB and name of BCBS Plan
- Call (800) 676-BLUE (2583) and wait to be prompted to speak with a service representative
- If your office is not able to confirm member eligibility, follow your standard office procedures for servicing
- You can bill members without proof of insurance or verification.

## 5.3 Verifying Eligibility and Coverage

### How do I verify membership and coverage?

For BCBSTX members, check eligibility and benefits electronically via Availity or your preferred web vendor or call **1.800-451.0287**. For other BCBS Plan members, contact BCBSTX electronically or BlueCard Eligibility by phone to verify the patient's eligibility and coverage:

- Electronic—Submit a HIPAA 270 transaction (eligibility) to BCBSTX.
- Phone—Call BlueCard Eligibility **1.800.676.BLUE (2583)**.

## 5.4 Utilization Review

### How do I obtain utilization review?

You should remind patients that they are responsible for obtaining pre-certification/authorization for outpatient services from their BCBS Plan. Participating providers are responsible for obtaining pre-service review for inpatient facility services when the services are required by the account or member contract (Provider Financial Responsibility). See *section 3.7, Utilization Review*.

You may also contact the member's Plan on the member's behalf. You can do so by:

For BCBSTX members,

- Electronic - Utilize Availity Authorization & Referrals on [Availity](#)
- Phone - or contact BCBSTX Utilization Management at **1.800.441.9188**.

For other BCBS Plans members,

- Electronic—Submit a HIPAA 278 transaction (referral/authorization) to **BCBSTX**.  
*See section 3.9, Electronic Provider Access*
- Phone—Call the utilization management/pre-certification number on the back of the member's card. If the utilization management number is not listed on the back of the member's card, call BlueCard Eligibility 1.800.676.BLUE (2583) and ask to be transferred to the utilization review area.

## 5.5 Claims

### 1. Where and how do I submit claims?

You should always submit claims electronically to BCBSTX to help expedite processing.

Paper claims may be mailed to:

BCBSTX  
PO BOX 660044  
Dallas, TX 75266-0044

Be sure to include the member's complete identification number when you submit the claim. The complete identification number includes the three-character prefix. Do not make up prefixes. Claims with incorrect or missing prefixes and/or member identification numbers cannot be processed.

### 2. How do I submit claims for international Blue members?

The claim submission process for international BCBS Plan members is the same for domestic BCBS Plan members. You should submit the claim directly to BCBSTX.

### 3. How do I handle COB claims?

If after calling 1.800.676.BLUE (2583) or through other means you discover the member has a COB provision in their benefit plan and BCBSTX is the primary payer, submit the claim with information regarding COB to BCBSTX.

If you do not include the COB information with the claim, the member's BCBS Plan or the insurance carrier will have to investigate the claim. This investigation could delay your payment or result in a post-payment adjustment, which will increase your volume of bookkeeping.

### 4. How do I handle Medicare Advantage claims?

Submit claims to BCBSTX. Do not bill Medicare directly for any services rendered to a Medicare Advantage member. Payment will be made directly by a BCBS Plan.

### 5. How do I handle traditional Medicare-related claims?

- When Medicare is the primary payor, submit claims to your local Medicare intermediary.

- All BCBS claims are set up to automatically cross over (or forward) to the member's BCBS Plan after being adjudicated by the Medicare intermediary.

## 6. How do I submit Medicare primary / BCBS Plan secondary claims?

- For members with Medicare primary coverage and BCBS Plan secondary coverage, submit claims to your Medicare intermediary and/or Medicare carrier.
- When submitting the claim, it is essential that you enter the correct BCBS Plan name as the secondary carrier. This may be different from the local BCBS Plan. Check the member's ID card for additional verification.
- Be certain to include the prefix as part of the member identification number. The member's ID will include the prefix in the first three positions. The prefix is critical for confirming membership and coverage, and key to facilitating prompt payments.

***When you receive the remittance advice from the Medicare intermediary, look to see if the claim has been automatically forwarded (crossed over) to the BCBS Plan:***

- If the remittance advice indicates that the claim was crossed over, Medicare has forwarded the claim on your behalf to the appropriate BCBS Plan and the claim is in process. **DO NOT** resubmit that claim to BCBTX; duplicate claims will result in processing and payment delays.
- If the remittance advice indicates that the claim was not crossed over, submit the claim to BCBSTX with the Medicare remittance advice.
- In some cases, the member identification card may contain a COBA ID number. If so, be certain to include that number on your claim.
- For claim status inquiries, contact BCBSTX at **1.800.451.0287**.

## 7. When will I get paid for claims?

Claim processing times at various BCBS Plans vary. If you do not receive your payment or a response regarding your payment, please call BCBSTX at **1.800.451.0287** or refer to the [Claim Status Tool](#) available on Availity to check the status of your claim.

## 5.6 Contacts

### 1. Who do I contact with claims questions?

BCBSTX at **1.800.451.0287**

### 2. How do I handle calls from members and others with claims questions?

If members contact you, advise them to contact their BCBS Plan. Refer them to the front or back of their ID card for a customer service number. A member's BCBS Plan should not contact you directly. If the member's Plan contacts you to request another copy of the member's claim, refer the Plan to BCBSTX.

### 3. Where can I find more information?

For more information:

- Visit BCBSTX Web site at [bcbstx.com/provider](http://bcbstx.com/provider)
- Call BCBSTX at **1.800.451.0287**.
- Contact your local BCBSTX [Network Management office location](#).

## 6. Glossary of BlueCard Program Terms

### Administrative Services Only (ASO)

ASO accounts are self-funded, where the local plan administers claims on behalf of the account, but does not fully underwrite the claims. ASO accounts may have benefit or claims processing requirements that may differ from non-ASO accounts. There may be specific requirements that affect; medical benefits, submission of medical records, Coordination of Benefits or timely filing limitations.

The BCBSTX receives and prices all local claims, handles all interactions with providers, with the exception of Utilization Management interactions, and makes payment to the local provider.

### Affordable Care Act

The comprehensive healthcare reform law enacted in March 2010. The law was enacted in two parts: The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act was signed into law on March 23, 2010, and was amended by the Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act on March 30, 2010. The name "Affordable Care Act" is used to refer to the final, amended version of the law.

### bcbs.com

The Blue Cross Blue Shield Association's Web site.

### BlueCard Access® 1.800.810.BLUE (2583)

A toll-free 800 number for you and members to use to locate healthcare providers in another BCBS Plan's area. This number is useful when you need to refer the patient to a physician or healthcare facility in another location.

### BlueCard Eligibility® 1.800.676.BLUE (2583)

A toll-free 800 number for you to verify membership and coverage information and obtain pre-certification on patients from other BCBS Plans.

### Blue High Performance Network (Blue HPN)

A national network of providers offered in key geographies that provides national accounts enhanced quality and cost savings.

### National Doctor & Hospital Finder Website

A website you can use to locate healthcare providers in another BCBS Plan's area <http://www.bcbs.com/healthtravel/finder.html>. This is useful when you need to refer the patient to a physician or healthcare facility in another location. If you find that any information about you, as a provider, is incorrect on the website, please submit using the BCBSTX [Demographic Change Form](#).

### Blue Cross Blue Shield Global® Core

A medical assistance program that provides BCBS members traveling or living outside the United States, Puerto Rico and U. S. Virgin Islands with access to doctors and hospitals around the world.

**Consumer Directed Healthcare/Health Plans (CDHC/CDHP)**

Consumer Directed Healthcare (CDHC) is a broad umbrella term that refers to a movement in the healthcare industry to empower members, reduce employer costs, and change consumer healthcare purchasing behavior. CDHC provides the member with additional information to make an informed and appropriate healthcare decision through the use of member support tools, provider and network information, and financial incentives.

**Coinsurance**

A provision in a member's coverage that limits the amount of coverage by the benefit plan to a certain percentage. The member pays any additional costs out-of-pocket.

**Coordination of Benefits (COB)**

Ensures that members receive full benefits and prevents double payment for services when a member has coverage from two or more sources. The member's contract language gives the order for which entity has primary responsibility for payment and which entity has secondary responsibility for payment.

**Copayment**

A specified charge that a member incurs for a specified service at the time the service is rendered.

**Deductible**

A flat amount the member incurs before the insurer will make any benefit payments.

**Essential Community Providers**

Healthcare providers that serve predominately low-income, high-risk, special needs and medically-underserved individuals. The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) proposes to define essential community providers as including only those groups suggested in the ACA, namely those named in section 340B(a)(4) of the Public Health Service Act and in section 197(c)(1)(D)(i)(IV) of the Social Security Act.

**Exclusive Provider Organization (EPO)**

A health benefits program in which the member receives no benefits for care obtained outside the PPO network except emergency care and does not include a Primary Care Physician selection. EPO benefit coverage may be delivered via BlueCard PPO and is restricted to services provided by BlueCard PPO providers.

**FEP**

The Federal Employee Program.

**Hold Harmless**

An agreement with a healthcare provider not to bill the member for any difference between billed charges for covered services (excluding coinsurance) and the amount the healthcare provider has contractually agreed on with a BCBS Plan as full payment for these services.

**Marketplace/Exchange**

For purposes of this document, the term Marketplace/Exchange refers to the public exchange as established pursuant to the Affordable Care Act (ACA): A transparent and competitive insurance marketplace where individuals and small businesses can buy affordable and qualified health benefit plans. Affordable Insurance Marketplaces will offer a choice of health plans that meet certain benefits and cost standards.

The ACA allows the opportunity for each state to establish a State-based Marketplace. Recognizing that not all states may elect to establish a State-based Marketplace, the ACA directs the Secretary of HHS to establish and operate a Federally-facilitated Marketplace in any state that does not do so, or will not have an operable Marketplace for the 2014 coverage year, as determined in 2013.

### **Medicaid**

A program designed to assist low-income families in providing healthcare for themselves and their children. It also covers certain individuals who fall below the federal poverty level. Other people who are eligible for Medicaid include low-income children under age six and low-income pregnant women. Medicaid is governed by Federal guidelines in terms of eligibility, procedures, payment level etc., but states have a broad range of options within those guidelines to customize the program to their needs and/or can apply for specific waivers. State Medicaid programs must be approved by CMS; their daily operations are overseen by the State Department of Health (or similar state agency).

### **Medicare Advantage**

The program alternative to standard Medicare Part A and Part B fee-for-service coverage; generally referred to as “traditional Medicare.”

Medicare Advantage offers Medicare beneficiaries several product options (similar to those available in the commercial market), including health maintenance organization (HMO), preferred provider organization (PPO), point-of-service (POS) and private fee-for-service (PFFS) plans.

### **Medicare Crossover**

A program established to allow Medicare to transfer Medicare Summary Notice (MSN) information directly to a payor with Medicare’s supplemental insurance company.

### **Medicare Supplemental (Medigap)**

Pays for expenses not covered by Medicare. Medigap is a term for a health insurance policy sold by private insurance companies to fill the “gaps” in original Medicare Plan coverage. Medigap policies help pay some of the healthcare costs that the original Medicare Plan doesn’t cover. Medigap policies are regulated under federal and state laws and are “standardized.” There may be up to 12 different standardized Medigap policies (Medigap Plans A through L). Each plan, A through L, has a different set of basic and extra benefits. The benefits in any Medigap Plan A through L are the same for any insurance company. Each insurance company decides which Medigap policies it wants to sell. Most of the Medigap claims are submitted electronically directly from the Medicare intermediary to the member’s BCBS Plan via the Medicare Crossover process. Medigap does not include Medicare Advantage products, which are a separate program under the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS). Members who have a Medicare Advantage Plan do not typically have a Medigap policy because under Medicare Advantage these policies do not pay any deductibles, copayments or other cost-sharing.

### **National Account**

An employer group with employee and/or retiree locations in more than one BCBS Plan’s service area.

### **Other Party Liability (OPL)**

Cost containment programs that ensure that BCBS Plans meet their responsibilities efficiently without assuming the monetary obligations of others and without allowing members to profit from



illness or accident. OPL includes coordination of benefits, Medicare, Workers' Compensation, subrogation, and no-fault auto insurance.

**Plan**

Refers to any BCBS Plan.

**Point of Service (POS)**

A health benefit program in which the highest level of benefits is received when the member obtains services from his/her primary care provider/group and/or complies with referral authorization requirements for care. Benefits are still provided when the member obtains care from any eligible provider without referral authorization, according to the terms of the contract.

**Preferred Provider Organization (PPO)**

A health benefit program that provides a significant incentive to members when they obtain services from a designated PPO provider. The benefit program does not require a gatekeeper (primary care physician) or referral to access PPO providers.

**Prefix**

Three characters preceding the subscriber identification number on BCBS ID cards that identify the member's BCBS Plan or National Account.

**Qualified Health Plan (QHP)**

Under the Affordable Care Act, which started in 2014, an insurance plan that is certified by an Exchange, provides essential health benefits, follows established limits on cost-sharing (like deductibles, copayments, and out-of-pocket maximum amounts), and meets other requirements. A qualified health plan will have a certification by each Marketplace in which it is sold.

**Small Business Health Options Program (SHOP)**

Program designed to assist qualified small employers in facilitating the enrollment of their employees in qualified health plans offered in the small group market. The program allows employers to choose the level of coverage and offer choices among health insurance plans. SHOP insurance is generally available to employers with 1-50 employees, but in some states SHOP is available to employers with 1-100 employees.

**State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP)**

SCHIP is a public program administered by the United States Department of Health and Human Services that provides matching funds to states for health insurance to families with children. The program was designed with the intent to cover uninsured children in families with incomes that are modest but too high to qualify for Medicaid. States are given flexibility in designing their SCHIP eligibility requirements and policies within broad federal guidelines. Some states have received authority through waivers of statutory provisions to use SCHIP funds to cover the parents of children receiving benefits from both SCHIP and Medicaid, pregnant women, and other adults.

**Traditional Coverage**

Provides basic and/or supplemental hospital and medical/surgical benefits (e.g., basic, major medical and add-on riders) designed to cover various services. Such products generally include cost sharing features, such as deductibles, coinsurance or copayments.


## 7. BlueCard Program Quick Tips


The BlueCard Program provides a valuable service that lets you file all claims for members from other BCBS Plans with your local Plan.

Here are some key points to remember:

- Make a copy of the front and back of the member's ID card.
- Look for the three-character prefix that precedes the member's ID number on the ID card.
- Call BlueCard Eligibility at 1.800.676.BLUE (2583) to verify the patient's membership and coverage or submit an electronic HIPAA 270 transaction (eligibility) to the local Plan.
- Submit the claim to BCBSTX. Always include the patient's complete identification number, which includes the three-character prefix.
- For claims inquiries, call BCBSTX at **1.800.451.0287**.

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