

THE NPI TIMES

Keeping you up-to-date on National Provider Identifier (NPI) issues at Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Texas (BCBSTX).

Top Five Reasons to Get Your NPI Now

You may have been asking yourself "Why should I obtain an NPI?" Here are the top five reasons to get your NPI now:

5. – Don't Wait

As the implementation date nears, more and more providers will be requesting NPI. Wait times will likely increase. If you do not have your NPI by May 23, 2007, you will not be able to conduct HIPAA-standard electronic claim transactions.

4. – NPI is Complex

NPI requires significant changes for you, your vendors, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), and the health plans with which you contract. Getting your NPI now will allow you time to make system and process changes, both internally and with your billing services/clearinghouses.

3. – Testing Opportunities

The sooner you get your NPI, the sooner you can start testing your systems, your vendors' systems and our systems.

2. – Administrative Ease

Your NPI will replace UPIN, Medicaid and Medicare provider numbers, Blue Cross and Blue Shield plan numbers and other health plans' internal proprietary provider numbers. Now, you will have less numbers to remember when submitting claims and conducting business with BCBSTX.

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If you have not notified us of your NPI by April 15, 2007, your payments may be affected!

You need to notify us of your National Provider Identifier by April 15, 2007 to minimize any potential impact on payments! Do you have your NPI? Have you shared your NPI?

NPI Updates from BCBSTX

We have been diligently working on the NPI initiative and have made significant strides towards compliance. BCBSTX currently:

- Accepts the revised CMS-1500 (08/05) paper claim form (see article below).
- Allows you to use both your NPI and your BCBSTX provider numbers on all standard electronic transactions and the revised CMS-1500 (08/05) paper claim form.
- Offers on-going training, including "NPI 101" and "NPI 201" courses with detailed NPI information posted at www.bcbstx.com.

- Provides updated online companion guides for transaction testing at: www.thinedi.com/hipaa/comp_docs.htm.
- Offers updated NPI information on our Web site at www.bcbstx.com.

In the future, you can expect even more from BCBSTX, such as:

- Acceptance of the new UB-04 paper claim form.
- Continued requests for your NPI if you have not already submitted it to us.
- An NPI 301 training course for even more detailed information on NPI and BCBSTX.
- Updates to the NPI section of our Web site at www.bcbstx.com.

BCBSTX Now Accepting Revised CMS-1500 Forms

As part of the transition to using NPI, providers may now submit claims to BCBSTX using the newly revised version of the CMS-1500 Health Insurance Claim Form (version 08/05). This updated form is specifically designed to accommodate the reporting of NPI and is available on the National Uniform Claim Committee

Web site at: www.nucc.org/content/view/12/35/.

We will continue accepting the current form in addition to the revised form until April 1, 2007. However, after April 1, 2007, only the revised CMS-1500 Health Insurance Claim Form (version 08/05) will be accepted.



**BlueCross BlueShield
of Texas**



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The NPI TIMES***

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Resources

Additional information regarding NPI can be found on the following Web sites:

- CMS: www.cms.hhs.gov/NationalProviderStand/
- National Plan and Provider Enumeration System (NPPES): www.nppes.cms.hhs.gov
- BCBSTX Web site at www.bcbstx.com in the Provider section.

Have a Question?

If you have any questions on NPI and on the application process, contact:

- NPI Enumerator Call Center at 1-800-465-3203, or
- Send an email to: customerservice@npienumerator.com

If you have any questions on how BCBSTX is implementing NPI, contact:

- BCBSTX Provider Customer Service at 1-800-451-0287
- Send an e-mail to npi@bcbstx.com

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Critical Dates and Milestones to Remember

Collection Phase – July 2006 BCBSTX started initial data collection, requesting that all providers submit their NPIs to us.

Transition Phase - Ongoing BCBSTX will accept NPI numbers along with your existing BCBSTX ID on standard electronic claim transactions.

Providers may submit claims using the current or revised CMS-1500 Health Insurance Claim Form. After April 1, 2007, providers must submit claims using ONLY the revised version of the CMS-1500 Health Insurance Claim Form (version 08/05).

CAUTION!

If you don't obtain an NPI, your payments may be affected. You will not be able to use standard HIPAA electronic transactions with the CMS or other health plans. In addition, per federal regulations, penalties may be assessed for non-compliance. We recommend you apply for your NPI well in advance of the deadline to ensure you avoid any penalty.

How to Obtain your NPI(s)

To receive your NPI(s), submit an application online at www.nppes.cms.hhs.gov or contact

the NPI Enumerator at 1-800-465-3203 to request a paper application.

Once you receive your NPI, notify BCBSTX by completing the NPI Submission Form. Copies of the form and submission instructions are available on our Web site at www.bcbstx.com.

You will also want to distribute your NPI(s) to other entities with whom you transact business electronically. Programming changes, systems integration and testing with other vendors may be required to ensure everything is working correctly.