



MEDICARE SECONDARY PAYER (MSP)
EMPLOYER ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM (EAF)

Under federal law, it is the employer's responsibility to inform its insurer or third-party administrator of proper employee counts for the purpose of determining payment priority between Medicare and another insurer. Employer size, not group health plan size, is used in determining whether the group health plan or Medicare is the primary payer. Please refer to the attached instructions for more details. In the absence of employer-provided employee counts, CMS requires that the employer's group health plan coverage be considered primary to Medicare.

Employers should provide this information ANNUALLY during the data collection period and submit their information through Blue Access for EmployersSM (BAESM) or submit this completed form to data_collection@bcbsil.com.

Understand that you are obligated to notify Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Texas (BCBSTX) if and when your status changes, by completing this EAF as a CHANGE or ERROR CORRECTION. Email to data_collection@bcbsil.com.

Form with fields for Employer Name, EIN, Physical Address, Account Number(s), Group Number(s), Effective Year, and checkboxes for client status and submission type.



INSTRUCTIONS COMPLETING THE ANNUAL MSP EMPLOYER ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM

Important Note

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Background

When an individual is covered by both Medicare and an employer's group health plan (GHP), Medicare secondary payer (MSP) rules specify that the employer's total size, not group health plan enrollment size, is a factor in determining whether Medicare benefits are primary or secondary. Employer size is a factor in MSP order of payment determinations when the covered individual is Medicare-entitled due to either age ("working aged") or disability.

Employer information — Who is the Employer?

For MSP purposes, the employer is the legal entity that employs the employees. For example, the employer may be an individual, a partnership, or a corporation. In some situations, it may not be clear which corporation or individual is the employer for MSP purposes. In these cases, employers must use Internal Revenue Service aggregation rules provided in the Internal Revenue Code [IRC 26 U.S.C. Sections 52(a), 52(b), 414(n) (2)]. In general, these rules specify that single employers include:

- all employees of all corporations that are members of the same controlled group of corporations, and
- all employees of trades or business (whether incorporated or not), e.g., employees of partnerships, LLCs, proprietorships that are under common control.

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Service's (CMS) MSP Manual provides additional guidance about aggregation for affiliated service groups and religious orders, as well as authoritative information about employer size and other MSP topics. The MSP Manual is available online at <https://www.cms.gov/Regulations-and-Guidance/Guidance/Manuals/Internet-Only-Manuals-IOMs-Items/CMS019017>

For purposes of this MSP EAF, please understand that you are obligated to notify BCBSTX if and when your status changes, by completing this EAF as a **CHANGE** or **ERROR CORRECTION** and email to data_collection@bcbsil.com.

An **Error Correction** is necessary when a previous MSP EAF was submitted TIMELY during the data collection time frame and a correction is needed.

Question 1 — Did you file a separate Federal Tax Return?

If you filed a federal tax return that did not include information about any other individual or entity, check "Yes." If you filed a federal tax return consolidated with another individual or entity, check "No." If you are not required to file a federal tax return, check "N/A."

Question 2 — Employer Size from Your Federal Tax Return Information

How many employees did all the entities listed on the tax return have on the payroll (whether full-time, part-time, seasonal or partners) during the prior calendar year? It is important that you enter the total number of employees for all entities (including parent, subsidiaries and affiliated entities) listed on the tax return, since this may determine whether or not Medicare will be the primary payer of claims. Subsidiaries of foreign companies must count the number of employees of the organization worldwide.

Question 3 — Are you part of a multi-employer group health plan?

Authoritative guidance for determining multiple employer group health plan participation can be found in the Code of Federal Regulations at 29 CFR § 2510.3-37.



Questions 4 and 5 — Working Aged Rule & Employer Size

Under the MSP “working aged” rule, Medicare is secondary to the employer’s GHP coverage if the employer’s size equals 20 or more employees for each working day in each of 20 or more calendar weeks in the current or prior calendar year. (Question 4 refers to this standard as “the threshold.”) Note: The year of your upcoming renewal is the ‘current’ year. If your company is a new client to BCBSTX AND if there have not yet been 20 weeks in the current calendar year, base your answer on current employee count. Understand that you are obligated to notify BCBSTX if and when your status changes, by completing a new MSP EAF as a CHANGE and submitting it to data_collection@bcbsil.com. This also applies to multi-employer and multiple employer group health plans in which at least one employer employs 20 or more employees.

- *Counting individuals for the “20-or-more” employer size*

- Employees counted in the 20-or-more employer size include the total number of nationwide full-time employees, part-time employees, seasonal employees and partners who work or who are expected to report for work on a particular day.
- Those not counted in the 20-or-more employer size include retirees, COBRA qualified beneficiaries and individuals on other continuation options, and self-employed individuals who participate in the employer’s group health plan.

- *Employer size increases to 20 or more during the year*

If the employer’s size was below 20 during the prior year, the employer’s GHP coverage becomes primary as soon as the employer has had 20 or more employees on each working day of 20 calendar weeks of the current year. The 20 calendar weeks do not have to be consecutive. Then, the employer’s GHP coverage is primary for the remainder of the year and during the following year.

For example, the employer’s size meets the 20-or-more employee threshold as of October 1 of the current calendar year. The employer’s GHP coverage becomes primary for services provided from October 1 of the current calendar year through December 31 of the following year.

Please note: If you check “No” for the current year in EAF **Question 4** and your answer changes to “Yes” at any time, you must promptly notify BCBSTX by completing a new MSP form and indicating the date the change occurred in the space provided in **Question 4**.

- *Employer size fails to meet the threshold of ‘20 or more employees during 20 or more weeks’ during the year*

If the employer’s size met the threshold of 20 or more employees for each working day in each of 20 or more calendar weeks for the prior year, but during the current calendar year the employer size never meets that threshold, the employer’s group health plan remains primary until the end of the current year.

For example, during the last calendar year the employer’s size met the threshold of 20 or more employees for each working day in each of 20 or more calendar weeks. However, during the current calendar year the employer’s size never meets this threshold. The employer’s group health plan coverage remains primary through the current year, ending on December 31.

- *Individuals affected by the working aged rule*

The “working aged rule” applies to individuals who are Medicare-entitled due to age (age-65 or older) and

- Are covered under their employer’s GHP and have “current employment status” and the employer meets the “20-or-more” employer size requirements (above), or
- Are covered under their spouse’s (of any age) employer’s GHP and the spouse has current employment status and the employer meets the “20-or-more” employer size requirements (above).

Questions 6 and 7 — Disability Rule & Employer Size

Under the MSP “disability” rule, Medicare benefits are secondary to an employer’s large group health plan (LGHP) benefits when the employer size equals 100 or more full-time and/or part-time employees on 50 percent or more of the employer’s business days during the prior calendar year. The business days do not have to be consecutive.

For multi-employer plans, Medicare is the secondary payer for all individuals enrolled in the plan as long as at least one of the employers employs 100 or more employees. The 100-employee threshold is not based on the aggregate number of employees of all employers. If you are a multi-employer, please keep this in mind when completing questions 6 and 7.

- *Counting individuals for the “100-or-more” employer size*

- Employees counted in the 100-or-more employer size include the total number of nationwide full-time employees, part-time employees, seasonal employees and partners who work or are expected to report for work on a particular day.



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- Those not counted in the 100-or-more employer size include retirees, COBRA qualified beneficiaries and individuals on other continuation options, and self-employed individuals who participate in the employer's group health plan.

• *Employer size increases to 100 or more during the year*

If the employer's size meets the 100-or-more employee threshold on 50 percent or more of the employer's business days during the current year, the employer's group health plan coverage will be primary to Medicare during the following year.

For example, an employer met the 100-or-more employee threshold on 50 percent or more of the employer's business days on October 1 of the current calendar year. The employer's GHP coverage will be primary for services provided the following year from January 1 through December 31 of the following year.

Please note: If you answer "No" to **Question 6**, you must promptly notify BCBSTX by completing a new MSP form as a CHANGE if your answer changes to "Yes" at the beginning of the next calendar year and sending to data_collection@bcbsil.com.

• *Employer size doesn't meet the threshold of '100 or more employees during 50 percent of business days' during the year*

If the employer's size does not meet the 100-or-more employee threshold during the year, the employer's GHP coverage is secondary to Medicare during the following year.

For example, during the current calendar year the employer's size never meets the threshold of 100 or more full-time and/or part-time employees on 50 percent or more of the employer's business days. The employer's group health plan coverage will be secondary to Medicare for services provided the following year from January 1 through December 31.

• *Individuals affected by the disability rule.*

The "disability rule" applies to individuals who are Medicare-entitled due a Social Security Administration determination of disability and

- Are covered under their employer's GHP and have "current employment status" and the employer meets the "100-or-more" employer size requirements (above), or
- Are covered under their family member's (of any age) employer's GHP and the family member has current employment status and the employer meets the "100-or-more" employer size requirements (above).

The information in these instructions should not be construed as legal advice or as a legal opinion on any specific facts or circumstances and is not intended to replace advice of independent legal counsel.