



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



The Importance of Testing Your NPI

If you have been notified that you are NPI-only ready, submitting claims now is the best way to test, identify, and rectify any issues before compliance is enforced. Using your NPI as the primary identifier gives you the opportunity to know what your experience will be like as of May 23, 2008. Keep in mind the following points:

Providers who submit paper claims **exclusively** may continue to submit NPI-only paper claims without waiting for a “Congratulations” postcard.

Providers who submit **both paper and electronic claims** must wait for a Congratulations postcard prior to submitting NPI-only electronic claims. NPI-only electronic claims submitted prior to receiving this notification from BCBSIL, will be rejected.

Be sure to continue to use your Tax Identification Number in the appropriate fields on all claims.

Contact your electronic trading partner (software vendor, billing service, and/or clearinghouse) to ensure they have your NPI(s) and are equipped for NPI-only submission of your claims.

If you need assistance regarding how to transition to submitting NPI-only claims and are a contracted provider, contact your Provider Network Consultant. If you are not a contracted provider, please contact your electronic trading partner to make sure they are ready and able to submit NPI-only claims on your behalf. If your electronic vendor has any questions, they may contact our E-Commerce Center at 1-800-746-4614.

Non-contracted Provider Alert: What’s at stake if you don’t get your NPI?

There is no other alternative! Per the federal regulation: as of May 23, 2008, BCBSIL will no longer be able to accept electronic or paper claims that are received without an NPI in all required fields.

Not getting your NPI will be inconvenient for you—but it could also put your patient in the middle. Even if you choose not to contract with BCBSIL, we will still need your NPI on all claims submitted on behalf of your patients who are BCBSIL members. Additionally, you must have an NPI to conduct other standard transactions.

For example, as of May 23, 2008, you will need an NPI to gain access to our automated phone system for claim status, member benefits, and eligibility. Getting an NPI and sharing it with BCBSIL will help the claims process run smoothly. This means you can focus your time on providing the best service to your patients.

There’s an easy solution. If you haven’t already applied for your NPI, visit our Web site for details on how to apply, share, test and use your NPI. Once you have your NPI, share it with BCBSIL via e-mail on the Provider section of our Web site at www.bcbsil.com.

As of May 23, 2008, BCBSIL will no longer be able to accept claims received with dual identifiers. As of this critical date, all claims must include your NPI, but may not include your BCBSIL provider number, or any other legacy identifier, per the federal regulation.

How to Use Your NPI as of May 23, 2008

Using your NPI as the sole provider identification number becomes “business as usual” on May 23, 2008. As our transition period winds down, it is important to keep in mind the potential negative effect that operating without an NPI on all HIPAA standard transactions, may have on your business and patients. Here’s a quick reference guide for correctly using your NPI in standard transactions:

- When filing claims, remember to add the rendering provider NPI (Type 1) in the rendering field and billing provider NPI (Type 2 if a business, Type 1 if sole proprietorship) in the billing field. The appropriate billing NPI must be entered to avoid claim rejection and ensure proper payment.
- The NPI will be required to gain access to the automated phone system when calling BCBSIL for claims status, benefits and eligibility information. Because access to the IVR system is considered a HIPAA standard transaction, you will only be able to access it with an NPI.
- Your NPI does not replace your Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN). You must continue to include your TIN on claims for cross referencing and tax reporting purposes, along with your NPI. Only include your TIN in the field designated specifically for this information.
- New provider applications must include an NPI. If an application is received without an NPI, the application will not be processed until the NPI is received along with documentation from the enumerator for verification purposes.
- Most importantly, “NPI only” means that your BCBSIL provider number may no longer be used to identify you in any HIPAA standard transaction. For example, claims that include your BCBSIL provider number in addition to your NPI will be rejected.

BCBSIL will continue to monitor the progress of our provider community to avoid any negative impact on provider revenue and service. Our goal is to maintain HIPAA compliance while completing the execution of a seamless transition to an NPI-only environment. More information on the regulation can be found at www.cms.hhs.gov/NationalProvidentStand/. You also can refer to www.bcbsil.com as we continue to update our Web site regularly with additional information about the NPI transition at BCBSIL.



Make Sure You are Properly Identified as a Sole Proprietorship

BCBSIL recently notified providers for whom our records indicated an NPI was missing. In some cases, we found we were missing the organizational Type 2 NPI for providers who are recorded both as an individual *and* as a group in our system. Follow-up calls to these providers revealed that, while some providers did need to share an additional NPI with us, other providers recorded as groups in our system are no longer classified as such, as they are now designated as sole proprietorships.

Remember, a sole proprietorship is a form of business in which one person owns all of the assets of the business and is solely liable for all debts on an individual basis. Please refer to your Federal SS-4 document, Section 9A, Type of Entity if you are unsure of your status. In the event that your tax status has changed because you are now a sole proprietor, a copy of the Federal SS-4 document must be sent to BCBSIL in order for us to make the appropriate updates in our system.



Use Your Appropriate NPI or NPIs on Claims

When filing claims it is important to use the appropriate NPI(s) in the correct provider identifier fields on the form. As an individual health care provider, you will receive one Individual (Type 1) NPI. This NPI number is not specific to a location or specialty, so regardless

of where you perform the service or what type of service is performed, as an individual, you will always use your Type 1 NPI. However, please be aware that if your organization is a group practice, clinic group, multi-specialty clinic, or similar organization that conducts transactions electronically (whether directly or through a billing service or clearinghouse), your organization will also need an Organizational (Type 2) NPI number or numbers. While an individual provider may only have one Type 1 NPI, organizations may obtain multiple Type 2 NPIs to reflect different locations or levels of care. Other important information to know:

- Providers who are in a solo practice and currently bill with their Social Security Number or sole proprietorship Tax ID number may continue to bill as solo practitioners using only their Type 1 NPI in both the rendering and billing fields on claims.
- If you are an organization that provides health care services using employees or contractors, you need a Type 2 NPI. The organizational Type 2 NPI is used by entities that are incorporated (group practices, clinics, LLCs or similar organizations).
- Submit claims using the individual Type 1 NPI as the rendering provider in Field 24j on the CMS-1500 (08/05) or electronic equivalent. The organizational Type 2 NPI should be submitted as the billing provider in Field 33a on the CMS-1500 (08/05) or electronic equivalent. This applies to any claim submitted by an incorporated group practice.
- Per the regulation, individuals who have incorporated their practice must also obtain an organizational Type 2 NPI for their corporation.



Tip of the Month

When submitting NPI-only claims, your BCBSIL provider number will no longer appear anywhere on your claim. No other identifier should be entered in fields formerly populated by your BCBSIL provider number. Avoid denials or delayed claims payments by including only your NPI in the provider identifier fields!



Resources

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

- Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS): www.cms.hhs.gov/NationalProvidentStand/
- National Plan and Provider Enumeration System (NPPES): www.nppes.cms.hhs.gov
- Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association Web site at www.bcbs.com/npi for audio and video NPI Web cast sessions.
- BCBSIL Web site at www.bcbsil.com/provider. Click on National Provider Identifier for updated information, “Frequently Asked Questions,” an NPI Glossary and more!

Have a Question?

If you have any questions about NPI or the application process:

- Contact the NPI Enumerator Call Center at 1-800-465-3203; or
- Send an e-mail to customerservice@npienumerator.com.

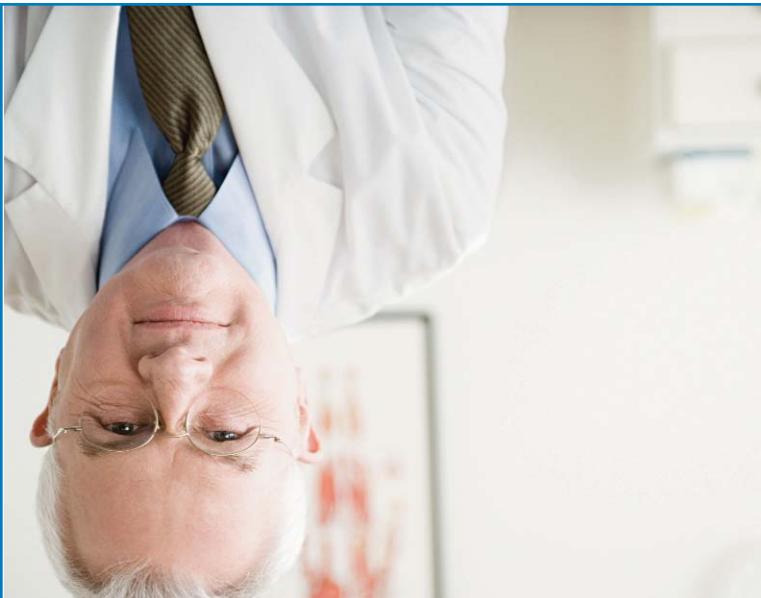
If you have any questions on how BCBSIL is implementing NPI:

- Send an e-mail to npi@bcbsil.com; or
- Contact your Provider Network Consultant who can support you through the entire NPI process; or
- Call the BCBSIL Provider Telecommunications Center at 1-800-972-8088.



300 East Randolph Street
Chicago, IL 60601-5099

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