

WASHINGTON EDUCATION ASSOCIATION Select Medical Plans 1, 2, 3, 4-500, 4-750 or 5 Benefit Booklet Insert

This benefit booklet insert explains a change to your Premera Blue Cross health care program. The change described in this insert becomes effective on January 1, 2008.

We have revised the first sub-section of the *What If I Have Other Coverage?* section that describes how we coordinate benefits with other plans to comply with changes made to Washington state regulations. The rest of the *What If I Have Other Coverage?* section, beginning with the *Effect On Medicare* heading, remain the same.

The first sub-section of the *What If I Have Other Coverage?* section is removed and replaced with the following:

COORDINATING BENEFITS WITH OTHER PLANS

When you have more than one health plan, "coordination of benefits (COB)" makes sure that the combined payments of all your plans don't exceed your covered health costs. You or your provider should file your claims with each plan at the same time. If you have Medicare, Medicare may submit your claims to your secondary plan.

Definitions

For the purposes of COB:

- A **plan** is any of the following that provides benefits or services for medical or dental care. If separate contracts are used to provide coordinated coverage for group members, all the contracts are considered parts of the same plan and there is no COB among them. However, if COB rules don't apply to all contracts, or to all benefits in the same contract, the contract or benefit to which COB doesn't apply is treated as a separate plan.
 - "Plan" means: Group, individual or blanket disability insurance contracts, and group or individual contracts issued by health care service contractors or HMOs, closed panel plans or other forms of group coverage; medical care provided by long-term care plans; and Medicare or any other federal governmental plan, as permitted by law.
 - "Plan" **doesn't mean**: Hospital or other fixed indemnity or fixed payment coverage; accident-only coverage; specified disease or accident coverage; limited benefit health coverage, as defined by state law; school accident type coverage; non-medical parts of long-term care plans; automobile coverage required by law to provide medical benefits; Medicare supplement policies; Medicaid or other federal governmental plans, unless permitted by law.
- **This plan** means your plan's health care benefits to which COB applies. A contract may apply one COB process to coordinating certain benefits only with similar benefits and may apply another COB process to coordinate other benefits. All the benefits of your Premera Blue Cross plan are subject to COB, but your plan coordinates dental benefits separately from medical benefits. Dental benefits are coordinated only with other plans' dental benefits, while medical benefits are coordinated only with other plans' medical benefits.
- **Primary plan** is a plan that provides benefits as if you had no other coverage.
- **Secondary plan** is a plan that is allowed to reduce its benefits in accordance with COB rules. See "Effect On Benefits" later in this section for rules on secondary plan benefits.
- **Allowable expense** is a health care expense, including deductibles, coinsurance and copayments, that is covered at least in part by any of your plans. When a plan provides benefits in the form of services, the reasonable cash value of each service is an allowable expense and a paid benefit. An amount that isn't covered by any of your plans isn't an allowable expense.

An example of an expense that is **not** allowable is any amount over the highest of the expense amounts allowed by either the primary or secondary plan. This is true regardless of what method the plans use to set allowable expenses. However, when Medicare or a Medicare Advantage plan is primary to your other coverage, the allowable expense set by Medicare or the Medicare Advantage plan must be treated as the highest allowable.

- **Custodial parent** is the parent awarded custody by a court decree or, in the absence of a court decree, is the parent with whom the child resides more than half of the calendar year, excluding any temporary visitation.

Primary And Secondary Rules

Certain governmental plans, such as Medicaid and TRICARE, are always secondary by law. Except as required by law, Medicare supplement plans and other plans that don't coordinate benefits at all must pay as if they were primary.

A plan that doesn't have a COB provision that complies with Washington regulations is primary to a complying plan unless the rules of both plans make the complying plan primary. The exception is group coverage that supplements a package of benefits provided by the same group. Such coverage can be excess to the rest of that group's plan. An example is coverage paired with a closed panel plan to provide out-of-network benefits.

The first of the rules below to apply decides which plan is primary. If you have more than one secondary plan, the rules below also decide the order of the secondary plans to each other.

Non-Dependent Or Dependent The plan that doesn't cover you as a dependent is primary to a plan that does. However, if you have Medicare, and federal law makes Medicare secondary to your dependent coverage and primary to the plan that doesn't cover you as a dependent, then the order is reversed.

Dependent Children Unless a court decree states otherwise, the rules below apply:

- **Birthdate rule** When the parents are married or living together, whether or not they were ever married, the plan of the parent whose birthday falls earlier in the year is primary. If both parents have the same birthday, the plan that has covered the parent the longest is primary.
- When the parents are divorced, separated or not living together, whether or not they were ever married:
 - If a court decree makes one parent responsible for the child's health care expenses or coverage, that plan is primary. **This rule and the court decree rules below apply to calendar years starting after the plan is given notice of the court decree.**
 - If a court decree assigns one parent primary financial responsibility for the child but doesn't mention responsibility for health care expenses, the plan of the parent with financial responsibility is primary.
 - If a court decree makes both parents responsible for the child's health care expenses or coverage, the birthday rule determines which plan is primary.
 - If a court decree requires joint custody without making one parent responsible for the child's health care expenses or coverage, the birthday rule determines which plan is primary.
 - If there is no court decree allocating responsibility for the child's expenses or coverage, the rules below apply:
 - The plan covering the custodial parent, first
 - The plan covering the spouse of the custodial parent, second
 - The plan covering the non-custodial parent, third
 - The plan covering the spouse of the non-custodial parent, last
 - If a child is covered by individuals other than parents or stepparents, the above rules apply as if those individuals were the parents.

Retired Or Laid-Off Employee The plan that covers you as an active employee (an employee who is neither laid off nor retired) is primary to a plan covering you as a retired or laid-off employee. The same is true if you are covered as both a dependent of an active employee and a dependent of a retired or laid-off employee.

Continuation Coverage If you have coverage under COBRA or other continuation law, that coverage is secondary to coverage that isn't through COBRA or other continuation law.

Please Note: The retiree/layoff and continuation rules don't apply when both plans don't have the rule or when the "non-dependent or dependent" rule can decide which of the plans is primary.

Length Of Coverage The plan that covered you longer is primary to the plan that didn't cover you as long.

If none of the rules above apply, the plans must share the allowable expenses equally.

COB's Effect On Benefits

The primary plan provides its benefits as if you had no other coverage.

A plan may take into account the benefits of another plan **only** when it is secondary to that plan. The secondary plan is allowed to reduce its benefits so that the total benefits provided by all plans during a calendar year are not more than the total allowable expenses incurred in that year. For each claim, the benefits of the primary and secondary plans must total 100% of the highest allowable expense allowed for the service or supply by either plan. **However, the secondary plan is never required to pay more than its benefit in the absence of COB plus any savings accrued from prior claims incurred in the same calendar year.**

The secondary plan must credit to its deductible any amounts it would have credited if it had been primary. It must also calculate savings for each claim by subtracting its secondary benefits from the amount it would have provided as primary. It must use these savings to pay any allowable expenses incurred during that calendar year, whether or not they are normally covered.

Certain facts about your other health care coverage are needed to apply the COB rules. We may get the facts we need for COB from, or give them to, other plans, organizations or persons. We don't need to tell or get the consent of anyone to do this. State regulations require each of your other plans and each person claiming benefits under this plan to give us any facts we need for COB.

Right Of Recovery/Facility Of Payment If your other plan makes payments that this plan should have made, we have the right, at our discretion, to remit to the other plan the amount we determine is needed to comply with COB. To the extent of such payments, we are fully discharged from liability under this plan. We also have the right to recover any payment over the maximum amount required under COB. We can recover excess payment from anyone to whom or for whom the payment was made or from any other issuers or plans.

For questions about COB, please contact our WEA Select Service Team at 1-800-932-9221 or the Washington Insurance Department.

All other provisions of your program remain unchanged. This insert becomes a part of your Premera Blue Cross health care plan benefit booklet, and should be kept with your booklet for future reference.