

SISC Appeal Language

Your Right To Appeals

For purposes of these Appeal provisions, “claim for benefits” means a request for benefits under the Plan. The term includes both pre-service and post-service claims.

- A pre-service claim is a claim for benefits under the Plan for which you have not received the benefit or for which you may need to obtain approval in advance.
- A post-service claim is any other claim for benefits under the Plan for which you have received the service.

If your claim is denied:

- You will be provided with a written notice of the denial; and
- You are entitled to a full and fair review of the denial.

The procedure the Claims Administrator will follow will satisfy the requirements for a full and fair review under applicable federal regulations.

Notice of Adverse Benefit Determination

If your claim is denied, the Claims Administrator’s notice of the adverse benefit determination (denial) will include:

- information sufficient to identify the claim involved;
- the specific reason(s) for the denial;
- a reference to the specific Plan provision(s) on which the Claims Administrator’s determination is based;
- a description of any additional material or information needed to perfect your claim;
- an explanation of why the additional material or information is needed;
- a description of the Plan’s review procedures and the time limits that apply to them;
- information about any internal rule, guideline, protocol, or other similar criterion relied upon in making the claim determination and about your right to request a copy of it free of charge, along with a discussion of the claims denial decision;
- information about the scientific or clinical judgment for any determination based on medical necessity or experimental treatment, or about your right to request this explanation free of charge, along with a discussion of the claims denial decision; and
- information regarding your potential right to an External Appeal pursuant to federal law.

For claims involving urgent/concurrent care:

- the Claims Administrator’s notice will also include a description of the applicable urgent/concurrent review process; and
- the Claims Administrator’s may notify you or your authorized representative within 72 hours orally and then furnish a written notification.

Appeals (Grievances)

You have the right to appeal an adverse benefit determination (claim denial). You or your authorized representative must file your appeal within 180 calendar days after you are notified of the denial. You will have the opportunity to submit written comments, documents, records, and other information supporting your claim. The Claims Administrator’s review of your claim will take into account all information you submit, regardless of whether it was submitted or considered in the initial benefit determination.

The Claims Administrator shall offer a single mandatory level of appeal which may be a panel review, independent review, or other process consistent with the entity reviewing the appeal. The time frame allowed for the Claims Administrator to complete its review is dependent upon the type of review involved (e.g., pre-service, concurrent, post-service, urgent, etc.).

For pre-service claims involving urgent/concurrent care, you may obtain an expedited appeal. You or your authorized representative may request it orally or in writing. All necessary information, including the Claims Administrator’s decision, can be sent between the Claims Administrator and you by telephone, facsimile or other similar method. To file an appeal

for a claim involving urgent/concurrent care, you or your authorized representative must contact the Claims Administrator at the phone number listed on your ID card and provide at least the following information:

- the identity of the claimant;
- the date (s) of the medical service;
- the specific medical condition or symptom;
- the provider's name;
- the service or supply for which approval of benefits was sought; and
- any reasons why the appeal should be processed on a more expedited basis.

All other requests for appeals should be submitted in writing by the Member or the Member's authorized representative, except where the acceptance of oral *Appeals (Grievances)* is otherwise required by the nature of the appeal (e.g. urgent care). You or your authorized representative must submit a request for review to:

Anthem Blue Cross Life and Health Insurance Company

ATTN: Appeals

P.O. Box 4310, Woodland Hills, CA 91365-4310

You must include your Member Identification Number when submitting an appeal.

Upon request, the Claims Administrator will provide, without charge, reasonable access to, and copies of, all documents, records, and other information relevant to your claim. "Relevant" means that the document, record, or other information:

- was relied on in making the benefit determination; or
- was submitted, considered, or produced in the course of making the benefit determination; or
- demonstrates compliance with processes and safeguards to ensure that claim determinations are made in accordance with the terms of the Plan, applied consistently for similarly-situated claimants; or
- is a statement of the Plan's policy or guidance about the treatment or benefit relative to your diagnosis.

The Claims Administrator will also provide you, free of charge, with any new or additional evidence considered, relied upon, or generated in connection with your claim. In addition, before you receive an adverse benefit determination on review based on a new or additional rationale, the Claims Administrator will provide you, free of charge, with the rationale.

For Out of State Appeals (Grievances) You have to file Provider Appeals with the Host Plan. This means Providers must file Appeals with the same plan to which the claim was filed.

How Your Appeal will be Decided

When the Claims Administrator considers your appeal, the Claims Administrator's will not rely upon the initial benefit determination to the earlier appeal determination. The review will be conducted by an appropriate reviewer who did not make the initial determination and who does not work for the person who made the initial determination.

If the denial was based in whole or in part on a medical judgment, including whether the treatment is experimental, investigational, or not Medically Necessary, the reviewer will consult with a health care professional who has the appropriate training and experience in the medical field involved in making the judgment. This health care professional will not be one who was consulted in making an earlier determination or who works for one who was consulted in making an earlier determination.

Notification of the Outcome of the Appeal

If you appeal a claim involving urgent/concurrent care, the Claims Administrator will notify you of the outcome of the appeal as soon as possible, but not later than 72 hours after receipt of your request for appeal.

If you appeal any other pre-service claim, the Claims Administrator will notify you of the outcome of the appeal within 30 days after receipt of your request for appeal.

If you appeal a post-service claim, the Claims Administrator will notify you of the outcome of the appeal within 60 days after receipt of your request for appeal.

Appeal Denial

If your appeal is denied, that denial will be considered an adverse benefit determination. The notification from the Claims Administrator will include all of the information set forth in the above subsection entitled "Notice of Adverse Benefit Determination."

If, after the denial, the Claims Administrator considers, rely on or generate any new or additional evidence in connection with your claim, the Claims Administrator will provide you with that new or additional evidence, free of charge. The Claims

Administrator will not base their appeal decision on a new or additional rationale without first providing you (free of charge) with, and a reasonable opportunity to respond to, any such new or additional rationale. If the Claims Administrator fails to follow the Appeal procedures outlined under this section the Appeals process may be deemed exhausted. However, the Appeals process will not be deemed exhausted due to de minimis violations that do not cause, and are not likely to cause, prejudice or harm so long as the error was for good cause or due to matters beyond the Claims Administrator's control.

External Review

If the outcome of the mandatory first level appeal is adverse to you and it was based on medical judgment, or if it pertained to a rescission of your coverage, you may be eligible for an independent External Review pursuant to federal law. You must submit your request for External Review to the Claims Administrator within four (4) months of the notice of your final internal adverse determination.

A request for an External Review must be in writing unless the Claims Administrator determines that it is not reasonable to require a written statement. You do not have to re-send the information that you submitted for internal appeal. However, you are encouraged to submit any additional information that you think is important for review.

For pre-service claims involving urgent/concurrent care, you may proceed with an Expedited External Review without filing an internal appeal or while simultaneously pursuing an expedited appeal through the Claims Administrator's internal appeal process. You or your authorized representative may request it orally or in writing. All necessary information, including the Claims Administrator's decision, can be sent between the Claims Administrator and you by telephone, facsimile or other similar method. To proceed with an Expedited External Review, you or your authorized representative must contact the Claims Administrator at the phone number listed on your ID card and provide at least the following information:

- the identity of the claimant;
- the date (s) of the medical service;
- the specific medical condition or symptom;
- the provider's name;
- the service or supply for which approval of benefits was sought; and
- any reasons why the appeal should be processed on a more expedited basis.

All other requests for External Review should be submitted in writing unless the Claims Administrator determines that it is not reasonable to require a written statement. Such requests should be submitted by you or your authorized representative to:

Anthem Blue Cross Life and Health Insurance Company
ATTN: Appeals
P.O. Box 4310, Woodland Hills, CA 91365-4310

You must include Your Member Identification Number when submitting an appeal.

This is not an additional step that you must take in order to fulfill your appeal procedure obligations described above. Your decision to seek External Review will not affect your rights to any other benefits under this health care Plan. There is no charge for you to initiate an independent External Review. The External Review decision is final and binding on all parties except for any relief available through applicable laws.

Requirement to file an Appeal before filing a lawsuit

No lawsuit or legal action of any kind related to a benefit decision may be filed by you in a court of law or in any other forum, unless it is commenced within one year of the Plan's final decision on the claim or other request for benefits. If the Plan decides an appeal is untimely, the Plan's latest decision on the merits of the underlying claim or benefit request is the final decision date. You must exhaust the Plan's internal Appeals Procedure but not including any voluntary level of appeal, before filing a lawsuit or taking other legal action of any kind against the Plan.

If you choose to retain an attorney, expert, consultant or any other individual to assist in presentation of a claim, it must be at your own expense. Neither the plan nor the Claims Administrator will reimburse you for the costs associated with such a retention or for any other expenses you may incur in connection with such a retention.

The Claims Administrator reserves the right to modify the policies, procedures and timeframes in this section upon further clarification from Department of Health and Human Services and Department of Labor.

Legal Action

You may not take legal action against the Claims Administrator to receive benefits:

- Earlier than 60 days after the Claims Administrator receives the claim; or

Later than three years after the date the claim is required to be furnished to the Claims Administrator.