

WHEN YOU HAVE A COMPLAINT OR AN APPEAL

The following complies with federal law and is effective July 1, 2002. Provisions of the laws of your state may supersede.

For the purposes of this section, any reference to "you," "your" or "Member" also refers to a representative or provider designated by you to act on your behalf, unless otherwise noted.

We want you to be completely satisfied with the care you receive. That is why we have established a process for addressing your concerns and solving your problems.

Start With Member Services

We are here to listen and help. If you have a concern regarding a person, a service, the quality of care, or contractual benefits, you can call the toll-free number on your Benefit Identification card, explanation of benefits or claim form and explain your concern to one of our Member Services representatives. You can also express that concern in writing.

We will do our best to resolve the matter on your initial contact. If we need more time to review or investigate your concern, we will get back to you as soon as possible, but in any case within 30 days.

If you are not satisfied with the results of a coverage decision, you can start the appeals procedure.

Appeals Procedure

CG has a two step appeals procedure for coverage decisions. To initiate an appeal, you must submit a request for an appeal in writing to CG within 365 days of receipt of a denial notice. You should state the reason why you feel your appeal should be approved and include any information supporting your appeal. If you are unable or choose not to write, you may ask CG to register your appeal by telephone. Call or write to us at the toll-free number or address on your Benefit Identification card, explanation of benefits, or claim form.

Level One Appeal

Your appeal will be reviewed and the decision made by someone not involved in the initial decision. Appeals involving Medical Necessity or clinical appropriateness will be considered by a health care professional.

For level one appeals, we will respond in writing with a decision within 15 calendar days after we receive an appeal for a required pre-service or concurrent care coverage determination, and within 30 calendar days after we receive an appeal for a postservice coverage determination. If more time or information is needed to make the determination, we will notify you in writing to request an extension of up to 15 calendar days and to specify any additional information needed to complete the review.

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Level One Appeal (Continued)

You may request that the appeal process be expedited if, (a) the time frames under this process would seriously jeopardize your life, health or ability to regain maximum functionality or in the opinion of your Physician would cause you severe pain which cannot be managed without the requested services; or (b) your appeal involves nonauthorization of an admission or continuing inpatient Hospital stay. CG's Physician reviewer, in consultation with the treating Physician, will decide if an expedited appeal is necessary. When an appeal is expedited, CG will respond orally with a decision within 72 hours, followed up in writing.

Level Two Appeal

If you are dissatisfied with our level one appeal decision, you may request a second review. To initiate a level two appeal, follow the same process required for a level one appeal.

Most requests for a second review will be conducted by the Committee, which consists of a minimum of three people. Anyone involved in the prior decision may not vote on the Committee. For appeals involving Medical Necessity or clinical appropriateness the Committee will consult with at least one Physician in the same or similar specialty as the care under consideration, as determined by CG's Physician reviewer. You may present your situation to the Committee in person or by conference call.

For level two appeals we will acknowledge in writing that we have received your request and schedule a Committee review. For required preservice and concurrent care coverage determinations the Committee review will be completed within 15 calendar days and for postservice claims, the Committee review will be completed within 30 calendar days. If more time or information is needed to make the determination, we will notify you in writing to request an extension of up to 15 calendar days and to specify any additional information needed by the Committee to complete the review. You will be notified in writing of the Committee's decision within five business days after the Committee meeting, and within the Committee review time frames above if the Committee does not approve the requested coverage.

You may request that the appeal process be expedited if, (a) the time frames under this process would seriously jeopardize your life, health or ability to regain maximum functionality or in the opinion of your Physician, would cause you severe pain which cannot be managed without the requested services; or (b) your appeal involves nonauthorization of an admission or continuing inpatient Hospital stay. CG's Physician reviewer, in consultation with the treating Physician, will decide if an expedited appeal is necessary. When an appeal is expedited, CG will respond orally with a decision within 72 hours, followed up in writing.

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Independent Review Procedure

If you are not fully satisfied with the decision of CG's level two appeal review regarding your Medical Necessity or clinical appropriateness issue, you may request that your appeal be referred to an Independent Review Organization. The Independent Review Organization is composed of persons who are not employed by CIGNA HealthCare or any of its affiliates. A decision to use the voluntary level of appeal will not affect the claimant's rights to any other benefits under the plan.

There is no charge for you to initiate this Independent Review Process. CG will abide by the decision of the Independent Review Organization.

In order to request a referral to an Independent Review Organization, the reason for the denial must be based on a Medical Necessity or clinical appropriateness determination by CG. Administrative, eligibility or benefit coverage limits or exclusions are not eligible for appeal under this process.

To request a review, you must notify the Appeals Coordinator within 180 days of your receipt of CG's level two appeal review denial. CG will then forward the file to the Independent Review Organization.

The Independent Review Organization will render an opinion within 30 days. When requested and when a delay would be detrimental to your medical condition, as determined by CG's Physician reviewer, the review shall be completed within three days.

The Independent Review Program is a voluntary program arranged by CG.

WHEN YOU HAVE A COMPLAINT OR AN APPEAL

Notice of Benefit Determination on Appeal

Every notice of a determination on appeal will be provided in writing or electronically and, if an adverse determination, will include: (1) the specific reason or reasons for the adverse determination; (2) reference to the specific plan provision on which the determination is based; (3) a statement that the claimant is entitled to receive, upon request and free of charge, reasonable access to and copies of all documents, records, and other Relevant Information as defined; (4) a statement describing any voluntary appeal procedures offered by the plan and the claimant's right to bring an action under ERISA section 502(a); (5) upon request and free of charge, a copy of any internal rule, guideline, protocol or other similar criterion that was relied upon in making the adverse determination regarding your appeal, and an explanation of the scientific or clinical judgment for a determination that is based on a Medical Necessity, experimental treatment or other similar exclusion or limit.

You also have the right to bring a civil action under Section 502(a) of ERISA if you are not satisfied with the decision on review. You or your plan may have other voluntary alternative dispute resolution options such as Mediation. One way to find out what may be available is to contact your local U.S. Department of Labor office and your State insurance regulatory agency. You may also contact the Plan Administrator.

Relevant Information

Relevant Information is any document, record, or other information which: (a) was relied upon in making the benefit determination; (b) was submitted, considered, or generated in the course of making the benefit determination, without regard to whether such document, record, or other information was relied upon in making the benefit determination; (c) demonstrates compliance with the administrative processes and safeguards required by federal law in making the benefit determination; or (d) constitutes a statement of policy or guidance with respect to the plan concerning the denied treatment option or benefit for the claimant's diagnosis, without regard to whether such advice or statement was relied upon in making the benefit determination.

Legal Action

If your plan is governed by ERISA, you have the right to bring a civil action under Section 502(a) of ERISA if you are not satisfied with the outcome of the Appeals Procedure. In most instances, you may not initiate a legal action against CG until you have completed the Level One and Level Two appeal processes. If your appeal is expedited, there is no need to complete the Level Two process prior to bringing legal action.

ARBITRATION

This provision does not apply to dental plans.

To the extent permitted by law, any controversy between CG and the Group, or an insured (including any legal representative acting on behalf of a Member), arising out of or in connection with this Certificate may be submitted to arbitration upon written notice by one party to another. Such arbitration shall be governed by the provisions of the Commercial Arbitration Rules of the American Arbitration Association, to the extent that such provisions are not inconsistent with the provisions of this section.

If the parties cannot agree upon a single arbitrator within 30 days of the effective date of the written notice of arbitration, each party shall choose one arbitrator within 15 working days after the expiration of such 30-day period and the two arbitrators so chosen shall choose a third arbitrator, who shall be an attorney duly licensed to practice law in the applicable state. If either party refuses or otherwise fails to choose an arbitrator within such 15 working day period, the arbitrator chosen shall choose a third arbitrator in accordance with these requirements.

The arbitration hearing shall be held within 30 days following appointment of the third arbitrator, unless otherwise agreed to by the parties. If either party refuses to or otherwise fails to participate in such arbitration hearing, such hearing shall proceed and shall be fully effective in accordance with this section, notwithstanding the absence of such party.

The arbitrator(s) shall render his (their) decision within 30 days after the termination of the arbitration hearing. To the extent permitted by law, the decision of the arbitrator, or the decision of any two arbitrators if there are three arbitrators, shall be binding upon both parties conclusive of the controversy in question, and enforceable in any court of competent jurisdiction.

No party to this Certificate shall have a right to cease performance of services or otherwise refuse to carry out its obligations under this Certificate pending the outcome of arbitration in accordance with this section, except as otherwise specifically provided under this Certificate.

SUMMARY PLAN DESCRIPTION

CLAIM DETERMINATION PROCEDURES UNDER ERISA

The following complies with federal law effective July 1, 2002. Provisions of the laws of your state may supersede.

Procedures Regarding Medical Necessity Determinations

In general, health services and benefits must be medically necessary to be covered under the plan. The procedures for determining medical necessity vary, according to the type of service or benefit requested, and the type of health plan. Medical necessity determinations are made on either a preservice, concurrent, or postservice basis, as described below:

Certain services require prior authorization in order to be covered. This prior authorization is called a "preservice medical necessity determination." The Certificate describes who is responsible for obtaining this review. You or your authorized representative (typically, your health care provider) must request medical necessity determinations according to the procedures described below, in the Certificate, and in your provider's network participation documents as applicable.

When services or benefits are determined to be not medically necessary, you or your representative will receive a written description of the adverse determination, and may appeal the determination. Appeal procedures are described in the Certificate, in your provider's network participation documents, and in the determination notices.

Preservice Medical Necessity Determinations

When you or your representative request a required medical necessity determination prior to care, CG will notify you or your representative of the determination within 15 days after receiving the request. However, if more time is needed due to matters beyond CG's control, CG will notify you or your representative within 15 days after receiving your request. This notice will include the date a determination can be expected, which will be no more than 30 days after receipt of the request. If more time is needed because necessary information is missing from the request, the notice will also specify what information is needed, and you or your representative must provide the specified information to CG within 45 days after receiving the notice. The determination period will be suspended on the date CG sends such a notice of missing information, and the determination period will resume on the date you or your representative responds to the notice.

SUMMARY PLAN DESCRIPTION

CLAIM DETERMINATION PROCEDURES UNDER ERISA

Preservice Medical Necessity Determinations (Continued)

If the determination periods above would (a) seriously jeopardize your life or health, your ability to regain maximum function, or (b) in the opinion of a Physician with knowledge of your health condition, cause you severe pain which cannot be managed without the requested services, CG will make the preservice determination on an expedited basis. CG's Physician reviewer, in consultation with the treating Physician, will decide if an expedited appeal is necessary. CG will notify you or your representative of an expedited determination within 72 hours after receiving the request. However, if necessary information is missing from the request, CG will notify you or your representative within 24 hours after receiving the request to specify what information is needed. You or your representative must provide the specified information to CG within 48 hours after receiving the notice. CG will notify you or your representative of the expedited benefit determination within 48 hours after you or your representative responds to the notice. Expedited determinations may be provided orally, followed within 3 days by written or electronic notification.

If you or your representative fails to follow CG's procedures for requesting a required preservice medical necessity determination, CG will notify you or your representative of the failure and describe the proper procedures for filing within five days (or 24 hours, if an expedited determination is required, as described above) after receiving the request. This notice may be provided orally, unless you or your representative requests written notification.

Concurrent Medical Necessity Determinations

When an ongoing course of treatment has been approved for you and you wish to extend the approval, you or your representative must request a required concurrent medical necessity determination at least 24 hours prior to the expiration of the approved period of time or number of treatments. When you or your representative requests such a determination, CG will notify you or your representative of the determination within 24 hours after receiving the request.

Postservice Medical Necessity Determinations

When you or your representative requests a medical necessity determination after services have been rendered, CG will notify you or your representative of the determination within 30 days after receiving the request. However, if more time is needed to make a determination due to matters beyond CG's control CG will notify you or your representative within 30 days after receiving the request. This notice will include the date a determination can be expected, which will be no more than 45 days after receipt of the request.

SUMMARY PLAN DESCRIPTION

CLAIM DETERMINATION PROCEDURES UNDER ERISA

Postservice Medical Necessity Determinations (Continued)

If more time is needed because necessary information is missing from the request, the notice will also specify what information is needed, and you or your representative must provide the specified information to CG within 45 days after receiving the notice. The determination period will be suspended on the date CG sends such a notice of missing information, and the determination period will resume on the date you or your representative responds to the notice.

Notice of Adverse Determination

Every notice of an adverse benefit determination will be provided in writing or electronically, and will include all of the following that pertain to the determination: (1) the specific reason or reasons for the adverse determination; (2) reference to the specific plan provisions on which the determination is based; (3) a description of any additional material or information necessary to perfect the claim and an explanation of why such material or information is necessary; (4) a description of the plan's review procedures and the time limits applicable, including a statement of a claimant's rights to bring a civil action under section 502(a) of ERISA following an adverse benefit determination on appeal; (5) upon request and free of charge, a copy of any internal rule, guideline, protocol or other similar criterion that was relied upon in making the adverse determination regarding your claim, and an explanation of the scientific or clinical judgment for a determination that is based on a medical necessity, experimental treatment or other similar exclusion or limit; (6) in the case of a claim involving urgent care, a description of the expedited review process applicable to such claim.