



PEEHIP

Public Education Employees' Health Insurance Plan

Administered By:
Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Alabama

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Overview of the Plan

As Plan Administrator for the Public Education Employee's Health Insurance Plan (PEEHIP), Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Alabama pledges to you that we will provide the best service we can in the administration of your group health care plan. This booklet summarizes your group's benefits. It also summarizes conditions, limitations, and exclusions to those benefits as well as sections explaining eligibility and defining certain words. Please be sure to read the entire booklet. This booklet is a "summary plan description" or "plan."

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Alabama is an independent corporation operating under a license from the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association, an association of independent Blue Cross and Blue Shield Plans. The Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association permits us to use the Blue Cross and Blue Shield service marks in the state of Alabama. Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Alabama is not acting as an agent of the Association. No representation is made that any organization other than Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Alabama and your employer will be responsible for honoring this contract. The purpose of this paragraph is for legal clarification; it does not add additional obligations on the part of Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Alabama not created under the original agreement.

If you have any questions please call our Customer Service at 800.327.3994.

For online information about your PEEHIP benefits, go to www.bcbsal.com/peehip.

This site contains an interactive page which can be used to e-mail a Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Alabama PEEHIP Customer Service Representative. For online information on all benefits available to you as a PEEHIP member along with the corresponding rates, you may go to www.rsa-al.gov.

The following provisions of this booklet contain a summary in English of your rights and benefits under the plan. If you have questions about your benefits, please contact Customer Service at 800.327.3994. If needed, simply request a Spanish translator and one will be provided to assist you in understanding your benefits.

Atención por favor - Spanish

Este folleto contiene un resumen en inglés de sus beneficios y derechos del plan. Si tiene alguna pregunta acerca de sus beneficios, por favor póngase en contacto con el departamento de Servicio al Cliente llamando al 800.327.3994. Solicite simplemente un intérprete de español y se proporcionará uno para que le ayude a entender sus beneficios.

Notice to Enrollees in a Self-Funded Non-Federal Governmental Group Health Plan

Under a Federal law known as the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA), Public Law 104-191, as amended, group health plans must generally comply with the requirements listed below. However, the law also permits State and local governmental employers that sponsor health plans to elect to exempt a plan from these requirements for any part of the plan that is “self-funded” by the employer, rather than provided through a health insurance policy. The Public Education Employees’ Health Insurance Board has elected to exempt the **Public Education Employees’ Health Insurance Program** from the following requirements:

- Protections against having benefits for mental health and substance use disorders be subject to more restrictions than apply to medical and surgical benefits covered by the plan.

The exemption from these federal requirements will be in effect for the plan year beginning October 1, 2011. The election will be for every subsequent plan year.

HIPAA also requires the Plan to provide covered employees and dependents with a “certificate of creditable coverage” when they cease to be covered under the Plan. There is no exemption from this requirement. The certificate provides evidence that you were covered under this Plan, because if you can establish your prior coverage, you may be entitled to certain rights to reduce or eliminate a preexisting condition exclusion if you join another employer’s health plan, or if you wish to purchase an individual health insurance policy.

For more information regarding this notice, please contact PEEHIP.

Creditable Coverage Notice About Your Prescription Drug Coverage and Medicare

PEEHIP elected to continue providing prescription drug benefits to Medicare-eligible retirees and covered dependents even when these members are eligible for the Medicare Part D program. However, if a Medicare-eligible member or dependent chooses to enroll in the Medicare Part D program, he or she will lose the PEEHIP prescription drug coverage.

Medicare-eligible members and dependents still need Medicare Part A and Part B but not Part D. Most Medicare-eligible members and dependents should not enroll in Medicare Part D if they are covered by the PEEHIP Medicare Plus program.

Please read this notice carefully and keep it where you can find it. This notice has information about your current prescription drug coverage with PEEHIP and about your options under Medicare’s prescription drug coverage. This information can help you decide whether or not you want to join a Medicare drug plan or keep your PEEHIP drug coverage. If you are considering joining a Medicare drug plan, you should compare your current coverage, including which drugs are covered at what cost, with the coverage and costs of the plans offering Medicare prescription drug coverage in your area. Information about where you can get help to make decisions about your prescription drug coverage is at the end of this notice.

There are two important things you need to know about your current coverage and Medicare’s prescription drug coverage:

1. Medicare prescription drug coverage became available in 2006 to everyone with Medicare. You can get this coverage if you join a Medicare Prescription Drug Plan or join a Medicare Advantage Plan (like an HMO or PPO) that offers prescription drug coverage. All Medicare drug plans provide at least a standard level of coverage set by Medicare. Some plans may also offer more coverage for a higher monthly premium.

2. PEEHIP has determined that the prescription drug coverage offered by the PEEHIP is, on average for all plan participants, expected to pay out as much as standard Medicare prescription drug coverage pays and is therefore considered Creditable Coverage. Because your existing PEEHIP coverage is Creditable Coverage, you can keep this coverage and not pay a higher premium (a penalty) if you later decide to join a Medicare drug plan.

When Can You Join A Medicare Drug Plan?

You can join a Medicare drug plan when you first become eligible for Medicare and each year from October 15 through December 7.

However, if you lose your current creditable prescription drug coverage, through no fault of your own, you will also be eligible for a two (2) month Special Enrollment Period (SEP) to join a Medicare drug plan.

What Happens To Your Current PEEHIP Coverage If You Decide to Join A Medicare Drug Plan?

If you do decide to join a Medicare drug plan and drop your PEEHIP drug plan, your current PEEHIP drug coverage will terminate on the date that you enroll in a Medicare drug plan. Please be aware that you and your covered dependents will lose the PEEHIP drug coverage and you will not be able to get this coverage back until you drop the Medicare Part D coverage. You cannot have PEEHIP prescription drug coverage and Part D coverage at the same time.

If you enroll in a Medicare drug plan, you and your dependents will still be eligible for your current PEEHIP **health** benefits but will have no **prescription drug** coverage under PEEHIP.

When Will You Pay A Higher Premium (Penalty) To Join A Medicare Drug Plan?

You should also know that if you drop or lose your current coverage with PEEHIP and don't join a Medicare drug plan within 63 continuous days after your current coverage ends, you may pay a higher premium (a penalty) to join a Medicare drug plan later.

If you go 63 continuous days or longer without creditable prescription drug coverage, your monthly premium may go up by at least 1% of the Medicare base beneficiary premium per month for every month that you did not have that coverage. For example, if you go nineteen months without creditable coverage, your premium may consistently be at least 19% higher than the Medicare base beneficiary premium. You may have to pay this higher premium (a penalty) as long as you have Medicare prescription drug coverage. In addition, you may have to wait until the following October to join.

For More Information About This Notice Or Your Current Prescription Drug Coverage...

Contact the PEEHIP office at 877.517.0020 for further information. NOTE: You will receive this notice each year and you may request a copy of this notice at any time.

For More Information About Your Options Under Medicare Prescription Drug Coverage...

More detailed information about Medicare plans that offer prescription drug coverage is in the "Medicare & You" handbook. You will get a copy of the handbook in the mail every year from Medicare. You may also be contacted directly by Medicare drug plans.

For more information about Medicare prescription drug coverage:

- Visit www.medicare.gov
- Call your State Health Insurance Assistance Program (see the inside back cover of your copy of the “Medicare & You” handbook for their telephone number) for personalized help
- Call 800-MEDICAR (800.633.4227). TTY users should call 877.486.2048.

An exception may apply to certain “low-income” individuals who may be eligible for prescription drug subsidies, and thus may be better off applying for a subsidy and Part D (two separate steps). For information about this extra help, visit Social Security on the web at www.socialsecurity.gov, or call them at 800.772.1213 (TTY 800.325.0778).

Remember: Keep this Creditable Coverage notice. If you decide to join one of the Medicare drug plans, you may be required to provide a copy of this notice when you join to show whether or not you have maintained creditable coverage and, therefore, whether or not you are required to pay a higher premium (a penalty).

Purpose of the Plan

The plan is intended to help you and your covered dependents pay for the costs of medical care. The plan does not pay for all of your medical care. For example, you may be required to contribute through payroll deduction before you obtain coverage under the plan. You may also be required to pay deductibles, copayments, and coinsurance.

Definitions

Near the end of this booklet you will find a section called *Definitions*, which identifies words and phrases that have specialized or particular meanings. In order to make this booklet more readable, we generally do not use initial capitalized letters to denote defined terms. Please take the time to familiarize yourself with these definitions so that you will understand your benefits.

Receipt of Medical Care

Even if the plan does not cover benefits, you and your provider may decide that care and treatment are necessary. You and your provider are responsible for making this decision.

Beginning of Coverage and Exclusion Periods for Pre-Existing Conditions

The section of this booklet called *Eligibility and Pre-Existing Condition Exclusion Periods* will tell you what is required for you to be covered under the plan and when your coverage begins. This section will also tell you whether you will have to serve an exclusion period before you are covered for pre-existing medical conditions.

Medical Necessity and Precertification

The plan will only pay for care that is medically necessary, as determined by Blue Cross. Blue Cross develops medical necessity standards to aid them when they make medical necessity determinations. Blue Cross publishes these standards on the Internet at www.bcbsal.com/providers/policies. The definition of medical necessity is found in the *Definitions* section of this booklet.

In some cases, such as inpatient hospital admissions in non-emergency situations, the plan requires that you precertify the medical necessity of your care. The provisions later in this booklet will tell you when precertification is required. Look on the back of your ID card for the phone number that you or your provider should call. In some cases, Blue Cross contracts with providers require the provider to initiate the precertification process for you. Your provider should tell you when these requirements apply. You are responsible for making sure that your provider initiates and complies with any precertification requirements under the plan. Please note that precertification relates only to the medical necessity of care; it does not mean that your care will be covered under the plan. Precertification also does not mean that your group has paid Blue Cross all monies due for you.

In-network care costs and enhanced benefits are through negotiated discounts with medical providers. In-network providers are hospitals, physicians, and other health care providers that contract with Blue Cross and/or Blue Shield plans for furnishing health care services at a reduced price. Examples of in-network providers include PMD, Preferred Care, and BlueCard PPO.

Certain outpatient diagnostic imaging services may require prior authorization as to the medical necessity of the diagnostic service. Information about these prior authorization requirements can be found on our web site at www.bcbsal.com/providers/preferredRadiologyProgram. Your in-network provider should help you comply with these requirements.

A special feature of your plan gives you access to the national network of providers called BlueCard PPO. Each local Blue Cross and/or Blue Shield plan designates which of its providers are PPO providers. In order to locate a PPO provider in your area you should call the BlueCard PPO toll-free access line at 800.810.BLUE (2583) or visit the BlueCard PPO Provider Finder web site at www.bcbsal.com/healthtravel/finder.html. PPO providers will file claims on your behalf with the local Blue Cross plan where services are rendered. The local Blue Cross plan will then forward the claims to Blue Cross for verification of eligibility and determination of benefits. Assuming the services are covered, you will normally only be responsible for out-of-pocket costs such as deductibles, copayments, and coinsurance.

Sometimes a network provider may furnish a service to you that is either not covered under the plan or is

not covered under the contract between the provider and the local Blue Cross plan where services are rendered. When this happens, benefits may be denied or may be covered under some other portion of the plan, such as *Other Covered Services*.

As you read the remainder of this booklet, you should pay attention to the type of in-network provider that is treating you, since benefit levels and your out-of-pocket costs may vary.

Relationship Between Blue Cross and/or Blue Shield Plans and the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Alabama is an independent corporation operating under a license from the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association, an association of independent Blue Cross and Blue Shield plans. The Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association permits us to use the Blue Cross and Blue Shield service marks in the state of Alabama. Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Alabama is not acting as an agent of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association. No representation is made that any organization other than Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Alabama and your employer will be responsible for honoring this contract. The purpose of this paragraph is for legal clarification; it does not add additional obligations on the part of Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Alabama not created under the original agreement.

Limitations and Exclusions

The plan contains a number of provisions that limit or exclude benefits for certain services and supplies, even if medically necessary. You need to be aware of these limits and exclusions in order to take maximum advantage of this plan.

Claims and Appeals

When you receive services from an in-network provider, your provider will generally file claims for you. In other cases, you may be required to pay the provider and then file a claim with Blue Cross for reimbursement under the terms of the plan. If Blue Cross denies a claim in whole or in part, you may file an appeal with Blue Cross. Blue Cross will give you a full and fair review. Thereafter, you may have the right to an independent external review. The provisions of the plan dealing with claims or appeals are found further on in this booklet.

Termination of Coverage

The next section called *Eligibility and Pre-Existing Condition Exclusion Periods* tells you when coverage will terminate under the plan. If coverage terminates, no benefits will be provided thereafter, even if for a condition that began before the plan or your coverage termination. In some cases you will have the opportunity to buy COBRA coverage after your group coverage terminates. COBRA coverage is explained in detail later in this booklet.

Eligibility and Pre-Existing Condition Exclusion Periods

Enrollment Issues

Open Enrollment

The Open Enrollment period begins July 1 and ends August 31 for changes to be effective October 1. Each year, all PEEHIP eligible active and retired members are sent an Open Enrollment one-page notice to their home address. In addition, the complete Open Enrollment packet is available on the PEEHIP Open Enrollment web page by July 1, every year. Active and retired members can view and/or download a copy of the Open Enrollment packet from the PEEHIP Open Enrollment web page at www.rsa-al.gov/PEEHIP/open-enroll.html.

Members can make their insurance changes through Member Online Services at www.rsa-al.gov. For those members who do not have internet access and cannot download the information, an Open Enrollment packet can be mailed if the member contacts RSA Member Services at 877.517.0020.

Open Enrollment will end by the following deadlines:

- The deadline for submitting **paper** Open Enrollment forms is **August 31**. Any paper forms postmarked after August 31 will not be accepted.
- The deadline for submitting **online** Open Enrollment changes is midnight of **September 10**. After September 10, online Open Enrollment changes will not be accepted and the Open Enrollment link will be closed.
- The deadline for enrollment or re-enrolling in a **Flexible Spending Account** online or on paper is **September 30**.
- No changes in coverage or tobacco status can be made from a phone call.

No Open Enrollment changes can be made after these deadlines.

Current Employees

Open Enrollment for all current employees takes place in July and August for coverage to be effective October 1 of each year. Employees may add new types of coverage, dependent coverage or change coverage types during this Open Enrollment period. Waiting periods on pre-existing conditions will be waived for members/dependents enrolling in new coverages that are effective October 1.

New Employees

New employees may enroll on their date of employment, the first day of the month following employment, or October 1. The HEALTH INSURANCE AND OPTIONAL ENROLLMENT APPLICATION or online enrollment must be completed within 30 days of the member's employment date. **If the form or online enrollment is not completed within 30 days, the employee is only allowed to enroll in single Hospital Medical coverage effective the date the form is completed.**

Waiting periods will apply on pre-existing conditions for all new coverages not effective on October 1, subject to the following conditions: new employees and dependents with effective dates of coverage on or after July 1 and before October 1 are given waivers on the waiting periods for pre-existing conditions. **Children under the age of 19 are given waivers on waiting periods for pre-existing conditions.**

Unless proof of previous coverage is received and approved by PEEHIP, employees with effective dates of coverage after October 1 and before July 1 are required to serve a 270-day waiting period on pre-existing conditions.

Transfers

Employees who transfer from one system to another system are considered current employees and must keep existing insurance coverage until the Open Enrollment period for changes to be effective October 1.

Enrollment Outside of Open Enrollment

Employees Hired After October 1

New employees hired after October 1 are required to serve a 270-day waiting period on pre-existing conditions unless proof of previous coverage is received and approved by PEEHIP. These employees may enroll only on their date of employment or the first day of the month following their date of employment.

New employees may add family coverage on their date of employment or within 60 days of employment. All enrollment forms or online enrollment must be completed within 30 days of member's date of employment or the employee is only eligible to enroll in single Hospital Medical coverage effective the date the form is completed.

Employees who are employed less than full-time and are enrolled in only Optional Plans cannot add the Hospital Medical Plan outside of the Open Enrollment period if they become full-time.

Loss of Coverage

Involuntary Loss

Employees whose spouse or other dependent has an involuntary loss of Hospital Medical coverage are allowed to add family coverage to their existing Hospital Medical plan within 45 days of the loss of coverage. The member must send documentation from the employer in which coverage was lost stating the reason for the loss of coverage. In addition, the letter must provide the employment and termination date as well as the date the insurance coverage ended. Members and/or dependent(s) are required to serve a 270-day waiting period on pre-existing conditions unless proof of previous coverage is received and approved by PEEHIP. If PEEHIP is not notified within 45 days, the member and/or the dependent(s) are required to wait and enroll October 1. Employees are only allowed to enroll in the **Hospital Medical Plan** when there has been a **loss of coverage**. The member cannot enroll in dental or vision coverage outside of Open Enrollment even if it was part of the plan in which they lost coverage.

Examples of involuntary loss situations:

- layoffs
- company discontinuing insurance coverage completely
- company changing insurance carriers (not just a change in benefits and premiums) and no longer offering the previous carrier. This does not apply to a self-insured plan that is only changing insurance administrators.
- spouse being fired
- divorce

Examples of loss of Hospital Medical coverage that are not considered involuntary:

- loss of coverage due to employment strike
- voluntary resignation or voluntary change in employment
- change in benefits or premiums with the insurance plan

Voluntary Loss

The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) does allow special enrollment periods when a member or dependent loses other Hospital Medical insurance coverage in certain cases. The employee has 45 days to request special enrollment when there has been a voluntary loss of other coverage. HIPAA is explained in more detail in the HIPAA section of this Member Handbook.

When enrolling in Hospital Medical coverage, the member must complete a HEALTH INSURANCE AND OPTIONAL ENROLLMENT APPLICATION and attach a letter stating the reason for the loss of coverage from the

employer through which coverage was lost. In addition, the letter must provide the employment and termination date as well as the date the insurance coverage ended.

If loss of coverage is due to divorce, the member must indicate this on the form and give the exact date of divorce. If adding family coverage, the member must complete a HEALTH INSURANCE AND OPTIONAL STATUS CHANGE form and provide the necessary information on dependents. The member is eligible to enroll in only the **Hospital Medical Plan** under HIPAA.

The member cannot enroll in dental or vision coverage outside of Open Enrollment even if it was a part of the plan in which they lost coverage.

Changes Permissible During Open Enrollment

Single or family coverage enrollment:

- Add dependent coverage
- Add additional eligible dependents
- Transfer from one PEEHIP Hospital Medical Plan to another PEEHIP Hospital Medical Plan or an HMO Plan
- Transfer from PEEHIP Supplemental Plan to PEEHIP Hospital Medical Plan
- Apply for Federal Poverty Discount on hospital medical premiums
- Enroll in Flexible Spending Accounts for active members
- Add adult child under the age of 26

Waiting Periods

Waiting periods on pre-existing conditions will be waived under the following conditions:

- New retiree subscribers from non-participating units who join immediately upon retirement and have Hospital Medical coverage from the non-participating unit
- Subscribers of new units joining PEEHIP
- Subscribers of an HMO Plan who elect to transfer to PEEHIP Hospital Medical or PEEHIP Supplemental Plan coverage effective October 1 or vice versa
- Any non-subscriber of PEEHIP who elects to enroll in one of the PEEHIP Hospital Medical Plans or the HMO Plan during the Open Enrollment period for an October 1 effective date
- Dependent children under the age of 19

Cancelling or Changing Coverage Outside of Open Enrollment - Active Member

On October 1, 2005, all active members began paying their premiums using pre-tax dollars. Therefore, active members must have an IRS qualifying event before they can be allowed to cancel their Hospital Medical Plan or change their coverage outside of the Open Enrollment period. Also, the request to cancel or change coverage must be within 45 days of the IRS qualifying event.

Examples of IRS qualifying events are:

1. adoption of child;
2. birth of a child;
3. death of a spouse or dependent;
4. dependent loss of coverage;
5. divorce or annulment;
6. legal custody of child;
7. marriage;

8. marriage of dependent child;
9. termination of spouse employment and loss of insurance coverage;
10. commencement of spouse employment,
11. Medicaid/Medicare entitlement, or
12. FMLA/LOA.

Appropriate documentation must be received and approved before the change can be made.

Members are not eligible to drop the medical plan when they change from full-time to part-time status.

If all dependents on the policy are ineligible, the coverage will automatically change to an individual plan effective the first of the month following the cancellation of the last remaining dependent. When a policy is cancelled, the coverage remains in effect through the last day of the month. Policies cannot be cancelled in the middle of a month.

Insurance Eligibility

Guidelines for Insurance Eligibility

Full-time employees and permanent part-time employees are eligible for coverage with PEEHIP.

Full-Time Employees

A full-time employee is any person employed on a full-time basis in any public institution of education within the state of Alabama. These institutions must provide instruction for any combination of grades K through 14 exclusively, under the auspices of the State Board of Education.

Permanent Part-Time Employees

An eligible permanent part-time employee is not a substitute or a transient employee. A permanent part-time employee is eligible for PEEHIP if he or she agrees to payroll deduction for a pro rata portion of the premium cost for a full-time employee. The portion is based on the percentage of time the permanent part-time workers is employed.

Ineligible Employees

The following employees are not eligible to participate in PEEHIP:

- A seasonal, transient, intermittent or adjunct employee who is hired on an occasional or as needed basis.
- An adjunct instructor who is hired on a quarter-to-quarter or semester-to-semester basis and/or only teaches when a given class is in demand.
- Board attorneys and local school board members if they are not permanent employees of the institution.
- Contracted employees who may be on the payroll but are not actively employed by the school system.
- Extended day workers hired on an hourly or as needed basis.

Family Coverage Eligibility

Members can enroll their eligible dependents under PEEHIP by: 1) enrolling online at www.rsa-al.gov; or 2) filing a HEALTH INSURANCE AND OPTIONAL ENROLLMENT APPLICATION with PEEHIP.

An eligible dependent is defined as:

1. The employee's lawful spouse as defined by Alabama law to whom you are currently and legally married (excludes a divorced and common law spouse).
2. In accordance with the federal Health Care Reform Legislation, the following adult children are eligible for coverage under your contract:
 - a. A married or unmarried child under the age of 26 if the child is your biological child, legally

adopted child, stepchild or foster child without conditions of residency, student status, or dependency. A foster child is any child placed with you by an authorized placement agency or by judgment, decree, or other order of any court of competent jurisdiction.¹

- b. The eligibility requirements for **any other children** such as grandchildren, for example, must meet the same requirements as foster children and must be placed with you by decree or other order of any court of competent jurisdiction, for example, legal custody or legal guardianship.¹

However, PEEHIP is not required and will not provide coverage for a child of a child receiving dependent coverage. Also, maternity benefits are not covered for children of any age, regardless of marital status.

3. A dependent child of any age incapable of self-sustaining employment because of a physical or mental handicap and is chiefly dependent on the employee for support. The handicap must have existed prior to the time the child attained age 26. Also, the child had to be covered as a dependent on the employee's PEEHIP policy before reaching the limiting age. For example, approved incapacitated children can continue on any PEEHIP plans they are on at the time they age out, but they are not eligible to be covered on other PEEHIP plans once they reach the limiting age of 26.¹

The employee must contact the PEEHIP office and request an INCAPACITATED DEPENDENT form. Proof of the child's condition and dependence must be submitted to PEEHIP within 45 days after the date the child would otherwise cease to be covered because of age. PEEHIP may require proof of the continuation of such condition and dependence. If the child is approved as an incapacitated child and allowed to stay on the PEEHIP Hospital Medical Plan, the child cannot change plans and be covered on other PEEHIP plans, such as an HMO or Optional Plan if he or she has already reached the limiting age of 26.

¹*Appropriate documentation will be required by PEEHIP before dependents can be enrolled*

Adult Children

PEEHIP is required to offer and extend dependent hospital medical coverage (at the member's option) to adult children up to age 26. The normal family hospital medical rate will be charged to anyone who enrolls an eligible adult child between the age of 19-26. **No additional charge will be required.** Members will be allowed to enroll their adult child(ren) during the annual Open Enrollment period which begins July 1 and ends August 31 for an October 1 effective date. Maternity benefits are not covered for children of any age regardless of marital status.

Documentation Required by PEEHIP

Every member who has a dependent enrolled on his or her PEEHIP coverage(s) will be required to certify to PEEHIP their dependent's eligibility. Certification may require appropriate documents to support your dependent's eligibility. Such documents required will be a marriage certificate and one additional document to show proof of current marital status for a spouse such as one of the following:

Option #1

- Marriage certificate
- **AND one** of the following tax documents to show marriage is still current:
 - Page 1 and signature page of member's most current Federal Income Tax Return (1040, 1040A or 1040EZ) as filed with the IRS listing the spouse
 - Page 1 and Certificate of Electronic Filing or transmission page (if electronically completed or completed by a tax professional) of member's most current Federal Income Tax Return (1040, 1040A, or 1040EZ) **as filed with the IRS** listing the spouse
 - Transcript of member's most current Federal Income Tax Return (1040, 1040A, or 1040EZ) listing the spouse

Option #2

- Marriage certificate
- **AND one** of the following documents to show marriage is still current:
 - Current mortgage statement, home equity loan, or lease agreement listing both member and spouse
 - Current property tax documents listing both member and spouse
 - Automobile registration that is currently in effect listing both member and spouse
 - Current credit card or account statement listing both member and spouse
 - Current utility bill listing both member and spouse
 - Current utility bill listing the spouse at the same address as the member

Note: *“Current” is defined as within the last six months.*

Other documents required are a birth certificate for a natural child; a certificate of adoption for an adopted child; a marriage certificate and a birth certificate for a step child; a placement authorization for a foster child; a court order signed by a judge appointing legal guardianship or legal custody for other children who are not biological, adopted or step children.

Enrollments cannot be processed without the appropriate documentation as explained above.

PEEHIP is not bound by a court order to insure dependents who do not meet PEEHIP guidelines.

Dependent Eligibility Audit

PEEHIP has limited funds to cover the high cost of claims and coverage of its eligible members and their dependents who are enrolled in PEEHIP coverages. PEEHIP must use its limited funds appropriately and this entails monitoring compliance with eligibility policies to prevent fraud, waste and abuse. Therefore, PEEHIP is conducting a dependent eligibility audit to ensure compliance with its dependent eligibility policies.

If you are covering an ineligible dependent, you must notify PEEHIP and disenroll the dependent immediately. If you know of someone who is covering an ineligible dependent, please notify PEEHIP by phone 877.517.0020, fax 877.517.0021, email peehipinfo@rsa-al.gov or mail PEEHIP, P.O. Box 302150, Montgomery, AL 36130-2150.

Covering ineligible dependents unnecessarily raises costs for all eligible PEEHIP members. Help PEEHIP prevent fraud, waste and abuse through compliance with its dependent eligibility policies.

Ineligible Dependents

- Once an “eligible” dependent has “aged out,” that person is ineligible to participate in PEEHIP again as a dependent except subsequently as the spouse of an eligible member. The ineligible dependent must be removed from coverage the first of the month following his or her 26th birthday.
- Ex-spouses are not eligible dependents even if a member continues to pay for family coverage. The ex-spouse must be deleted from coverage effective the first day of the month following the date of divorce.
- An employee who is eligible for PEEHIP as a subscriber cannot be covered as a dependent child on another PEEHIP policy.
- A child of a dependent child cannot both be covered on the same policy.
- Examples of ineligible dependents include, but are not limited to, the following: ex-spouse; common law spouse; daughter-in-law or son-in-law; grandchildren or other children related to you by blood or marriage other than biological, adopted, foster or step-children for which you do not have legal guardianship or legal custody; children not related by blood or marriage to you for which you do not have legal guardianship or legal custody who are not foster children or adopted children.

COBRA for Dependents

When a child or spouse is no longer eligible for coverage, he or she may be eligible to continue health insurance coverage under COBRA. To elect coverage under COBRA, the member or dependent must notify PEEHIP within 60 days from the date the dependent is no longer eligible for coverage.

Student Dependent Program

The Student Dependent program was discontinued effective October 1, 2010. Student dependents who have birthdays in September 2010 or after no longer need to certify to PEEHIP their full-time status as a student. The Federal Health Care Reform Legislation does not allow eligibility to be based on residency, student status or dependency.

Newly Acquired Dependents – Single Coverage

Marriage

A member enrolled in single coverage who marries and wishes to acquire family coverage can request coverage within 45 days of the marriage. You must mail a copy of the marriage certificate to PEEHIP after adding the new spouse to coverage through Member Online Services at www.rsa-al.gov. The effective date of coverage can be the date of marriage or the first day of the following month. The 270-day waiting period on pre-existing conditions is waived if proof of previous coverage is received and approved by PEEHIP. Prior notification is not required.

If you do not enroll your new spouse through the online system or in writing within 45 days of the date of marriage, the policy cannot be changed to family and the new spouse cannot be added until the Open Enrollment Period. This policy applies to active members only because the premiums for active members are pretaxed and IRS guidelines do not allow coverage changes outside of the 45 days from the qualifying event.

Newborn

An active member enrolled in single coverage who desires family coverage due to the birth of a child can request coverage within 45 days of the birth. Mail a copy of the birth certificate after adding your newborn through the Member Online Services system at www.rsa-al.gov. You can also submit written notification to PEEHIP within 45 days of the date of birth. The effective date of coverage can be the date of birth or the first day of the following month. A waiting period on pre-existing conditions is waived for the newborn child. Prior notification is not required.

If PEEHIP does not receive your online enrollment or written notification within 45 days of the date of birth, the policy cannot be changed to family and the new dependent cannot be added until the Open Enrollment period. This policy applies to active members only because the premiums for active members are pretaxed and IRS guidelines do not allow coverage changes outside of the 45 days from the qualifying event. If a newborn is not covered on the date of birth, claims for the newborn at the time of birth will not be paid.

When adding family coverage, a member can add all eligible dependents to the policy. However, the newly added dependents who are age 19 or older may be subject to the 270-day waiting period on pre-existing conditions unless proof of previous coverage is received and approved by PEEHIP. A member who is only enrolled in the four Optional Plans cannot enroll in the Hospital Medical Plan due to the birth of a child.

Newly Acquired Dependents – Family Coverage

If a member is enrolled in family coverage, the member may enroll a new dependent(s) by completing and mailing a HEALTH INSURANCE AND OPTIONAL STATUS CHANGE form to PEEHIP within 45 days of acquiring the dependent(s). Prior notification is not required. Application for dependent coverage must be made by the employee and approved and processed by PEEHIP prior to the payment of any claims.

PEEHIP is not bound by a court order to insure dependents who do not meet PEEHIP guidelines.

Updating Information

Name and Social Security Number Changes

Currently, PEEHIP determines a member's name for insurance purposes from the TRS FORM 100 ENROLLMENT form, or the HEALTH INSURANCE AND OPTIONAL ENROLLMENT APPLICATION. In the near future,

PEEHIP will be updating names from information received from the Social Security office. Therefore, the name on all insurance and TRS forms must be the same as the name on the Social Security card.

PEEHIP requires a copy of the member's Social Security card before a name or Social Security number change can be made. Also, active employees must provide a correct Social Security card to their employer to correct their TRS and PEEHIP accounts. The disclosure of your Social Security number is mandatory for PEEHIP coverage so that PEEHIP may ensure compliance with the federal Medicare Secondary Payer rules created by 42 USC 1395y(b). Your Social Security number will be used by PEEHIP for the purpose of coordination of benefits.

Address Changes

To change an address, you must notify PEEHIP in writing or the preferred method to update your address is to use the secure online process. To change your address online, go to the RSA Web site at www.rsa-al.gov and make an address change. Select the **Member Online Services** option on the left side of the home page and follow the instructions. This address change will automatically transmit to the insurance carriers and also update your address with the Teachers' Retirement System and RSA-1 if you are a participant in those accounts. However, the address change you make through the RSA online system will not change your address with your employer. You must contact your employer to have your address changed in their system.

To change your address in writing, you should complete an ADDRESS CHANGE NOTIFICATION form which can be downloaded from the RSA Web site. PEEHIP will also accept a letter with the old address, new address, insured's name and Social Security number.

The PEEHIP department cannot accept an address change by phone. All address changes should be made online or on the address change cards provided by the U.S. Postal Service or the ADDRESS CHANGE NOTIFICATION form provided by RSA. The card must then be mailed to PEEHIP for the actual change to occur.

National Medical Child Support Orders

If the group receives an order from a court or administrative agency directing the plan to cover a child, the group will determine whether the order is a National Medical Child Support Order (NMCSO). A NMCSO is a qualified order from a court or administrative agency directing the plan to cover the employee's child regardless of whether the employee has enrolled the child for coverage. The group has adopted procedures for determining whether such an order is a NMCSO.

The plan will cover an employee's child if required to do so by a NMCSO. If the group determines that an order is a NMCSO, Blue Cross will enroll the child for coverage effective as of a date specified by the group, but not earlier than the later of the following:

- If Blue Cross receives a copy of the order within 30 days of the date on which it was entered, along with instructions from the group to enroll the child pursuant to the terms of the order, coverage will begin as of the date on which the order was entered.
- If Blue Cross receives a copy of the order later than 30 days after the date on which it was entered, along with instructions from the group to enroll the child pursuant to the terms of the order, coverage will begin as of the date on which the order is received. PEEHIP will not provide retroactive coverage in this instance.

Coverage may continue for the period specified in the order up to the time the child ceases to satisfy the definition of an eligible dependent. If the employee is required to pay extra to cover the child, the group may increase the employee's payroll deductions. During the period the child is covered under the plan as a result of a NMCSO, all plan provisions and limits remain in effect with respect to the child's coverage except as otherwise required by federal law. For example, a child covered by a NMCSO may be subject to a pre-existing condition exclusion.

While the NMCSO is in effect Blue Cross will make benefit payments – other than payments to providers – to the parent or legal guardian who has been awarded custody of the child. Blue Cross will also provide sufficient information and forms to the child's custodial parent or legal guardian to allow the child to enroll in the plan. Upon request, Blue Cross will also send claims reports directly to the child's custodial parent or legal guardian.

Relationship to Medicare and Provision for Medicare-Eligibles

You must notify PEEHIP when you or any of your covered dependents become eligible for Medicare.

Active Employees

PEEHIP is required by the Age Discrimination in Employment Act, as amended by the Tax Equity and Fiscal Responsibility Act of 1982, to offer its active employees over age 65 coverage under its group health plan under the same condition as any employees under age 65. As a result of an accompanying amendment to the Social Security Act, Medicare is secondary to benefits payable under an employer-sponsored health insurance plan for employees over age 65 and their spouses over age 65. If the service is also covered by Medicare, the claim can be submitted to Medicare which may pay all or a portion of the unpaid balance of the claim subject to Medicare limitations.

As a result of these changes, PEEHIP does not provide an active member or his or her spouse with benefits which supplement Medicare. The member has the right to elect coverage under PEEHIP on the same basis as any other employee.

If a member chooses to be covered under PEEHIP, the plan will be the primary payer for those items and services covered by Medicare. (Note that Medicare covers hospitalization, post-hospital nursing home care, home health services.) This means that the plan will pay the covered claims and those of the member's Medicare-eligible spouse first, up to the limits contained in the plan, and Medicare may pay all or a portion of the unpaid balance of the claims, if any, subject to Medicare limitations. If the member's spouse is not eligible for Medicare, the plan will be the sole source of payment for the spouse's claims.

Since PEEHIP also covers items and services not covered by Medicare, PEEHIP will be the sole source of payment of medical claims for these services.

Because of the cost of Medicare Part B, a member age 65 or older may decide to defer enrolling for Part B until he or she actually reaches retirement, at which point Medicare will become the primary payer and the member must enroll in Medicare Part B effective the date of retirement. However, a member and his or her Medicare-eligible spouse can enroll in Medicare Part B only during certain times allowed by Medicare. Medicare-eligible members should enroll in Part A and Part B no later than the date of retirement of the policyholder.

The Social Security Administration handles Medicare enrollments. Therefore, if you have questions about when to enroll in Medicare Part B, you should contact the Social Security Administration at 800.772.1213. A Medicare-eligible retiree and/or spouse must have both Medicare Part A and Part B to have adequate coverage with PEEHIP. If you do not have Part B, PEEHIP will only pay 20% of the Medicare allowable fee (subject to a \$30 copay on office visits, emergency room visits and outpatient consultations) as if you had Part B.

If I work after age 65 or become eligible for Medicare, am I still covered?

If you continue to be actively employed when you are age 65 or older and are insured on a PEEHIP active contract, you and your spouse will continue to be covered for the same benefits available to employees under age 65. In this case, your PEEHIP plan will pay all eligible expenses first. If you are enrolled in Medicare, Medicare will pay for Medicare-eligible expenses, if any, not paid by the group benefits plan.

If both you and your spouse are over age 65, you may elect to withdraw completely from the PEEHIP plan and purchase a Medicare Supplement contract. This means that you will have no benefits under the PEEHIP plan. In addition, the employer is prohibited by law from purchasing your Medicare Supplement contract for you or reimbursing you for any portion of the cost of the contract.

Other Medicare Rules

Disabled Individuals: If you or your spouse is eligible for Medicare due to disability and also covered under the plan by virtue of your current employment status with the employer, the plan will be primary and Medicare will be secondary.

End-Stage Renal Disease: If you are eligible for Medicare as a result of End-Stage Renal Disease (permanent kidney failure), the plan will generally be primary and Medicare will be secondary for the first 30 months of your Medicare eligibility. Thereafter, Medicare will be primary and the plan will be secondary.

If you have any questions about coordination of your coverage with Medicare, please contact PEEHIP for further information.

PEEHIP members who retired on disability after September 30, 2005, but are also eligible for service retirement are subject to the Sliding Scale for PEEHIP premiums.

Medicare rules require a Medicare-eligible, active PEEHIP member who is covered on their spouse's PEEHIP **retired** contract to have Medicare as the primary payer on the active PEEHIP member. The active, Medicare-eligible member must have Medicare Part A and Part B coverage.

If the active member does not want Medicare as his or her primary payer and does not want to enroll in Medicare Part B until retirement, he or she will have to enroll in a PEEHIP **active** contract and will not be able to combine allocations with the retired PEEHIP-eligible spouse. Most of the time, in this situation, active members must wait and enroll in their own PEEHIP medical policy during the Open Enrollment period or their spouse's date of retirement. When the active Medicare-eligible member retires, he or she will need to enroll in Medicare Part B. The effective date of Medicare Part B needs to be the date of retirement to avoid a lapse in coverage.

Retired Employees

Retired employees are not affected by the TEFRA amendment to the Age Discrimination in Employment Act; therefore, upon retirement and Medicare eligibility the member's coverage under PEEHIP will complement his or her Medicare coverage. Medicare will be the primary payer and PEEHIP will be the secondary payer for retirees and dependents eligible for Medicare. Medicare approved admissions will not be subject to the Preadmission Certification requirements.

PEEHIP remains primary for retirees until the retiree is Medicare-eligible. A Medicare-eligible retiree and/or spouse must have both Medicare Part A and Part B to have adequate coverage with PEEHIP. Most Medicare-eligible retirees and dependents should not enroll in the Medicare Part D program.

After Medicare pays 80% of the approved amount after the Part B deductible, PEEHIP will pay the remainder of the Medicare approved amount without a Major Medical deductible (subject to a \$30 copay on office visits, emergency room visits and outpatient consultations) on PEEHIP approved services. In rare situations some services are covered by Medicare and are not by PEEHIP. In the rare situation that a service is not covered by Medicare but is covered by PEEHIP, PEEHIP will be primary and all PEEHIP deductible and copayment amounts will apply as will all PEEHIP precertification requirements.

Termination of Coverage

Plan coverage ends as a result of the first to occur of the following (generally, coverage will continue to the end of the month in which the event occurs):

- The date on which the employee fails to satisfy the conditions for eligibility to participate in the plan, such as termination of employment or reduction in hours (except during vacation or as otherwise provided in the *Leaves of Absence* rules);
- For spouses, the first day of the month following the date of divorce;
- For children, the first day of the month following the date a child ceases to be a dependent;
- For the employee and his or her dependents, the date of the employee or dependent's death;
- You fail to pay your group any contribution amounts due within 30 days after the day due;
- Upon discovery of fraud or intentional misrepresentation of a material fact by you or your group;
- Any time your group fails to comply with the contribution or participation rules in the plan documents;
- When none of your group's members still live, reside or work in Alabama; or,
- On 30-days advance written notice from your group to Blue Cross.

In all cases except the last item above, the termination occurs automatically and without notice. All the dates of termination assume that payment for coverage for you and all other employees in the proper

amount has been made to that date. If it has not, termination will occur back to the date for which coverage was last paid.

The contract with PEEHIP (and the coverage as administered by Blue Cross) will end as a result of the first to occur of the following (generally, coverage will continue to the end of the month in which the event occurs):

- Your group fails to pay Blue Cross the amount due within 30 days after the day due;
- Upon discovery of fraud or intentional misrepresentation of a material fact by your group;
- Any time your group fails to comply with the contribution or participation rules in the plan documents;
- When none of your group's members still live, reside or work in Alabama; or,
- On 30-days advance written notice from your group to us.

HIPAA Certificates of Creditable Coverage

The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) creates a concept known as "creditable coverage." Your coverage under this plan is considered creditable coverage under HIPAA. If you have sufficient creditable coverage under this plan and you do not incur a break in coverage (63 continuous days of no creditable coverage), you may be able to reduce or eliminate the application of a pre-existing illness exclusion in another health plan.

At any time up to 24 months after the date on which your coverage ceases under the plan, you may request a copy of a certificate of creditable coverage. In order to request this certificate, you or someone on your behalf must call or write Customer Service at Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Alabama.

Leaves of Absence

If you qualify for an approved leave of absence under the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA), you may retain your coverage under the plan during an FMLA leave, provided that you continue to pay your premiums. In general, the FMLA applies to employers who employ 50 or more employees. You should contact your employer or group to determine whether a leave qualifies as FMLA leave.

You may also continue your coverage under the plan for up to two years during an employer-approved leave of absence.

If you are on military leave covered by the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act of 1994, you should contact your employer about your rights to continue coverage under the plan.

Wellness and Weight Watchers Program

(Administered by the Alabama Department of Public Health)

All active and retired members and dependents covered by the PEEHIP Hospital Medical Plan, HMO or Optional Plans can receive free health screening by the Public Health Department nurses at different sites during the year. The health screening tests include blood pressure, glucose, and an HDL/LDL cholesterol screening as well as osteoporosis screenings for high risk members.

The PEEHIP Wellness program also includes a smoking cessation toll-free Quitline (800.784.8669) which is available 24-hours a day providing live counseling from 8:00 a.m. until 8:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. The Wellness program also includes a Weight Watchers benefit for high risk members who have a body mass index of 25 or more. The member's cost is \$85 for a 15-week program with PEEHIP paying the remaining \$85. Members must attend at least 12 of the 15 sessions to receive full reimbursement by PEEHIP.

Additional information can be obtained on the Public Health Department website at www.adph.org/worksitewellness or by calling 800.252.1818 and asking for the Wellness Division. The wellness screenings are intended to assist employees and their families identify health risks and receive early and necessary treatment and ultimately lower health care costs.

COBRA Coverage

The Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1986 (COBRA) requires PEEHIP and most other group health plans to offer employees and their families the opportunity for a temporary extension of health coverage. The continuation of coverage is offered at group rates in certain instances where coverage under PEEHIP would otherwise end.

All public education employees of the State of Alabama who are covered under the PEEHIP group health insurance have the right to choose continuation of coverage if the employee loses group health coverage due to a reduction in hours of employment or because of a resignation or termination of employment (for reasons other than gross misconduct on the part of the employee).

Each public education institution has the responsibility by law to notify the PEEHIP office immediately when an employee loses group health coverage due to the employee's:

- death
- termination of employment
- or reduction in hours

COBRA Compliance

The sanctions imposed under the auspices of COBRA can be quite severe, making a determination of compliance greatly important. It is the employer's responsibility to notify PEEHIP within a maximum of 30 days of an employee's termination, death or reduction in hours. The employer must notify the PEEHIP office by entering a termination date in the employer portal before the next payroll cycle. Employers must key the termination date in the employer portal for each employee who loses insurance coverage due to resignation or termination of employment or reduction in hours, even if the employee does not want to continue the coverage or is transferring allocation to a spouse. Employers are subject to a penalty of \$100 per day for every day that they are past the 30-day notification deadline

It is the employee's or dependent's responsibility to notify PEEHIP within a maximum of 60 days when the dependent needs continuation coverage under COBRA.

COBRA allows the employer a maximum of 30 days to notify PEEHIP of the above named qualifying events. However, the employer's immediate notification to PEEHIP will help reduce the amount of time the plan is exposed to adverse risk and potential premium increases.

Termination for Gross Misconduct

If an employer terminates an employee for gross misconduct, then PEEHIP is not required to provide continuation of coverage under the provisions of COBRA. However, the employer must still notify the PEEHIP office of the termination by entering the termination information via the employer portal.

Eligibility

Under COBRA, the employee, ex-spouse or dependent family member has the responsibility to inform PEEHIP within 60 days of a divorce, legal separation, or a child losing dependent status under the Plan and must obtain a Continuation of Coverage Application Form. PEEHIP may be notified by phone or in writing.

A dependent's coverage ends on the last day of the month in which the dependent becomes ineligible by turning age 26 or by divorce or legal separation.

When PEEHIP is notified of a qualifying event, PEEHIP will in turn notify the eligible member that he or she has the right to choose continuation of coverage. It is important to note that the eligible member has 60 days from the date he or she would lose coverage because of one of the qualifying events to inform PEEHIP that he or she wants continuation of coverage.

If the eligible member does not choose continuation of coverage, his or her PEEHIP group health insurance coverage will end the last day of the month in which the member becomes ineligible.

If a member and/or dependent become entitled to Medicare after electing COBRA coverage, he or she is no

longer eligible to continue the COBRA coverage. However, dependents on the contract will be allowed to continue COBRA coverage up to a total of 36 months from the date of the original qualifying event.

Continuation of Coverage

If the eligible member chooses continuation of coverage, PEEHIP is required to give the member coverage which, as of the time coverage is being provided, is identical to the coverage provided under the Plan to similarly situated employees or family members and is the same coverage he or she had prior to the qualifying event.

COBRA requires that the eligible member be afforded the opportunity to maintain continuation of coverage for 18 months due to a termination of employment or reduction in hours. COBRA requires that eligible dependents who become ineligible for reasons such as aging out or divorce be afforded an opportunity to maintain coverage for 36 months.

COBRA members have the same rights such as adding a newborn child or a new spouse within 45 days of the date of birth or marriage as other employed or retired members.

COBRA also provides that a member's continuation of coverage may be cut short for any of the following five reasons:

1. PEEHIP no longer provides group health coverage to any of its employees.
2. The premium for continuation of coverage is not paid by the member when payment is due, or the premium payment is insufficient.
3. The member becomes covered under another group health plan which does not contain any exclusions or limitations with respect to any pre-existing condition.
4. The member or dependent becomes entitled to Medicare after COBRA benefits begin.
5. The member becomes divorced from a covered member and subsequently remarries and is covered under the new spouse's group health plan, which does not contain any exclusions or limitations with respect to pre-existing conditions.

An eligible member does not have to show that he or she is insurable to choose continuation of coverage. However, under COBRA, he or she is required to pay the full monthly premium for continuation of coverage.

Cobra coverage is available for 18 months for a terminated employee and their dependents and 36 months for a dependent who becomes ineligible for reasons such as aging out or divorce.

If a member who is on COBRA dies before the 18 months has lapsed and the member's family is covered under COBRA, the eligible covered family members can continue the COBRA coverage up to a total of 36 months from the date of the original qualifying event.

Dependent Coverage

A spouse of an employee covered by PEEHIP has the right to choose continuation of coverage if the spouse loses group health coverage under the Plan for any of the following reasons:

- death of the employee
- termination of the employee's employment (for reasons other than gross misconduct) or reduction in the employee's hours of employment
- divorce or legal separation
- employee's eligibility for Medicare

In the case of a dependent child of an employee covered by PEEHIP, he or she has the right to continuation of coverage if group health coverage under the Plan is lost for any of the following reasons:

- death of a parent
- termination of a parent's employment (for reasons other than gross misconduct) or reduction in a parent's hours of employment with the employer

- parents' divorce or legal separation
- parent becomes eligible for Medicare
- dependent ceases to be a dependent child under the Plan

Members on COBRA Who Return to Work

When a member who is enrolled in PEEHIP under COBRA returns to work and does not have a break in coverage, the member is not allowed to change coverage until the Open Enrollment period.

If a member chooses not to continue their insurance coverage under COBRA and has a break in coverage, the member must complete a new enrollment application when he or she is re-employed in public education.

Exception: Employees enrolled in one or more Optional plans while on COBRA can add the remaining Optional plans when he or she becomes eligible for a full allocation. However, employees enrolled in one or more Optional plans while on COBRA cannot enroll in a Hospital Medical plan until Open Enrollment.

Can COBRA Coverage be Extended for Covered Members who Become Disabled?

Yes. In certain circumstances, COBRA can be extended for covered members who become disabled. If a covered member becomes disabled under Title 11 (OASDI) or Title XVS (SSI) of the Social Security Act during the first 60 days after the employee's termination of employment or reduction in hours, the 18-month period may be extended to 29 months on the date the disabled individual becomes covered by Medicare, whichever occurs sooner. This 29-month period also applies to any non-disabled family members who are receiving COBRA coverage, regardless of whether the disabled individual elects the 29-month period for him or herself.

In order for this disability extension to apply, you must notify the PEEHIP office of Social Security's determination within 60 days after the date of the determination and before the expiration of the 18-month period. You must also notify PEEHIP within 30 days of any revocation of Social Security disability benefits.

The cost of COBRA after the 18th month will be 150% of the full cost of coverage under the plan, assuming that the disabled individual elects to be covered under the disability extension. If the only persons who elect the disability extension are non-disabled family members, the cost of coverage will remain at 102% of the full cost of coverage.

For spouses and children, the disability extension may be further extended to 36 months if another qualifying event (death, divorce, enrollment in Medicare, or loss of dependent status) occurs during the 29-month period. The 36-month period will run from the original date of the termination of employment or reduction in hours.

Leave of Absence

A member who goes on an authorized leave of absence without pay can continue group health coverage for up to two years of authorized leave before he or she would be required to enroll in continuation of coverage under the COBRA provisions. A member on an approved leave of absence can continue the health insurance coverage for two years and then can continue the health insurance coverage for an additional 18 months under the COBRA provisions.

Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA)

The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA), protects Americans who move from one job to another, who are self-employed, or who have pre-existing medical conditions. HIPAA applies to the PEEHIP Hospital Medical plan and HMO plan but not to the PEEHIP optional plans.

HIPAA provides for increased health coverage portability for our members with fewer restrictions on pre-existing conditions, certification requirements for prior health coverage, and special enrollment periods. HIPAA provides for other benefits such as guaranteed availability and renewability of health insurance coverage.

HIPAA includes the following:

- requires plans to give credit toward a member's or dependent's pre-existing condition limitations period for prior creditable coverage
- defines what can be a pre-existing condition
- requires plans, on an individual's request, to certify the period of previous insurance coverage
- limits the period during which pre-existing condition limitations can be imposed
- prohibits the use of pre-existing condition limitations for pregnancies, adopted children and newborns

Credit Must Be Given for Creditable Coverage

When the medical coverage is cancelled on a PEEHIP member or dependent, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Alabama will mail a Certificate of Creditable Coverage to the member's address on file. These certificates are mailed to all members when coverage under the Hospital Medical Plan ends. This Certificate provides evidence of prior health coverage and can be used to demonstrate creditable coverage to the member's new plan or issuer and are furnished automatically to members and upon request by an individual within 24 months after the coverage ends.

PEEHIP will accept the Certificates of Creditable Coverage for members from other plans enrolling outside of the Open Enrollment period and will reduce their pre-existing condition exclusion period by the length of the total period of prior creditable coverage. If there is a break in coverage longer than 63 days, PEEHIP is not required to accept the Certificate of Creditable Coverage. Members must send the certificate to the PEEHIP office to receive credit for previous coverage.

Special Enrollment Periods

HIPAA requires group health plans to provide special enrollment periods during which certain individuals who previously declined health coverage are allowed to enroll. A special enrollee is not treated as a late enrollee. The 9-month pre-existing condition waiting period may be applied to a special enrollee but must be reduced by the special enrollee's creditable coverage. Special enrollment occurs when:

- an individual with other insurance coverage loses that coverage
- a person becomes a dependent through marriage
- a birth of a dependent child
- an adoption or placement of adoption of a child under the age of 18

These individuals are not required to wait until the Open Enrollment period to enroll. This special enrollment period is available to employees and their dependents who meet certain requirements:

1. The employee or dependent must otherwise be eligible for coverage under the terms of their plan.
2. When the PEEHIP coverage was previously declined, the employee or dependent must have been covered under another group health plan or must have had other health insurance coverage.

3. If the other coverage is COBRA continuation of coverage, the special enrollment can only be requested after exhausting COBRA continuation of coverage.
4. If the other coverage is not COBRA continuation of coverage, special enrollment can only be requested after losing eligibility for the other coverage or after cessation of employer contributions for the other coverage. In each case, the employee has 45 days to request special enrollment. An individual does not have a special enrollment right if the individual loses the other coverage for the following reasons:
 - as a result of the individual's failure to pay premiums
 - for cause (such as making a fraudulent claim)
 - if other coverage has an increase in premiums or a change in benefits

These examples do not qualify as a loss of coverage under the HIPAA Federal guidelines.

The special enrollment for new dependents can occur if a person has a new dependent by birth, marriage, adoption, or placement for adoption. The election to enroll must be made within 45 days following the birth, marriage, adoption, or placement for adoption.

If the request is not made within 45 days of the loss of coverage, the special enrollment benefit does not apply. In addition, the coverage effective date must be within 45 days of the loss of coverage.

Cost Sharing

Calendar Year Deductible	\$300 per person per calendar year (three deductibles per family)
Calendar Year Out-of-Pocket Maximum	\$400 per person (applicable to Other Covered Services) plus the \$300 calendar year deductible. Covered expenses benefits pay at 100% of the allowed amount thereafter.

Calendar Year Deductible

Other parts of this booklet will tell you when benefits are subject to the calendar year deductible. Here are some special rules concerning application of the calendar year deductible:

- The calendar year deductible must be satisfied on a per person per calendar year basis, subject to the family maximum.
- The family deductible is an aggregate dollar amount. This means that all amounts applied toward individual deductibles will count toward the family aggregate amount. Once the family aggregate calendar year deductible is met, no further family members must satisfy the calendar year deductible.
- When covered charges are applied towards the deductible for services rendered in October, November, or December, we will credit those covered charges towards the calendar year deductible for the following year.
- Only one calendar year deductible is required when two or more family members have expenses resulting from injuries received in one accident.
- The deductible will be applied to claims in the order in which they are processed regardless of the order in which they are received.

Calendar Year Out-of-Pocket Maximum

The calendar year out-of-pocket maximum is specified in the table above. The calendar year out-of-pocket maximum generally applies to services or supplies that are subject to the calendar year deductible. There may be exceptions to this, depending upon specifications from your group. You may also call Customer Service if you have questions about payments that count towards the calendar year out-of-pocket maximum. Once the maximum has been reached, covered expenses of the type that count towards the maximum will be paid at 100% of the allowed amount.

There may be many expenses you are required to pay under the plan that **do not** count towards the calendar year out-of-pocket maximum, and that you must continue to pay even after you have met the calendar year out-of-pocket maximum. The following are some examples:

- Out-of-network coinsurance on most services;
- The calendar year deductible;
- Per admission deductibles;
- Copayments;
- Amounts paid for non-covered services or supplies;
- Amounts paid for services or supplies in excess of the allowed amount (for example, an out-of-network provider requires you to pay the difference between the allowed amount and the provider's total charges);
- Amounts paid for services or supplies in excess of any plan limits (for example, a limit on the number of covered visits for a particular type of provider);
- Amounts paid as a penalty (for example, failure to precertify); and,

- Private duty nursing services

The calendar year out-of-pocket maximum applies on a per person per calendar year basis.

Lifetime Maximum

There is no lifetime dollar maximum on essential health benefits under the plan.

Other Cost Sharing

The plan may impose other types of cost sharing requirements such as the following:

- **Per admission deductibles:** These apply upon admission to a hospital. Only one per admission deductible is required when two or more family members have expenses resulting from injuries received in one accident.
- **Copayments:** A copayment is a fixed dollar amount you must pay on receipt of care. The most common example is the office visit copayment that must be satisfied when you go to a doctor's office.
- **Coinsurance:** Coinsurance is the amount that you must pay as a percent of the allowed amount. A common example is the percentage of the allowed amount that you must pay when you receive other covered services.
- **Amounts in excess of the allowed amount:** As a general rule, and as explained in more detail in *Definitions*, the allowed amount may often be significantly less than the provider's actual charges. You should be aware that when using out-of-network providers you can incur significant out-of-pocket expenses as the provider has not contracted with us or their local Blue Cross and/or Blue Shield plan for a negotiated rate and they can bill you for amounts in excess of the allowed amount. For example: Out-of-network provider claims may include expensive ancillary charges (billed by the facility or a physician) such as implantable devices for which no extra reimbursement is available as these charges are not separately considered under the plan. This means you will be responsible for these charges.

Out-of-Area Copayments and Coinsurance

When you obtain health care services through the BlueCard Program outside of the Alabama service area, the amount you pay for covered services is calculated on the lower of:

1. The billed charges for your covered services, or
2. The negotiated price that the on-site Blue Cross and/or Blue Shield plan ("Host Plan") passes on to Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Alabama.

Often, this "negotiated price" will consist of a simple discount that reflects the actual price paid by the Host Plan. But sometimes it is an estimated price that factors into the actual price expected settlements, withholds, any other contingent payment arrangements and non-claims transactions with your health care provider or with a specified group of providers. The negotiated price may also be billed charges reduced to reflect an average expected savings with your health care provider or with a specified group of providers. The price that reflects average savings may result in greater variation (more or less) from the actual price paid than will the estimated price. The negotiated price may also be adjusted in the future to correct for over-or underestimation of past prices. However, the amount you pay is considered a final price.

Statutes in a small number of states may require the Host Plan to use a basis for calculating your payment for covered services that does not reflect the entire savings realized, or expected to be realized, on a particular claim or to add a surcharge. Should any state statutes mandate payment calculation methods that differ from the usual BlueCard method noted above in paragraph one of this section or require a surcharge, we would then calculate your liability for any covered health care services in accordance with the applicable state statute in effect at the time you received your care.

Health Benefits

Attention: Benefit levels for mental health disorders and substance abuse are set forth in the *Mental Health and Substance Abuse Benefits* section of this booklet.

Inpatient Hospital Benefits

Attention: Preadmission Certification is required for all hospital admissions except emergency hospital admissions and maternity admissions.

For emergency hospital admissions, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Alabama must receive notification within 48 hours of the admission.

If a newborn child remains hospitalized after the mother is discharged, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Alabama will treat this as a new admission for the newborn. However, newborns require precertification only in the following instances:

- The baby is transferred to another facility from the original facility; or,
- The baby is discharged and then readmitted.

Preadmission certification does not mean that your admission is covered. It only means that Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Alabama has approved the medical necessity of the admission. For example, your admission may relate to a pre-existing condition for which benefits are not yet available to you under the plan.

In many cases your provider will initiate the preadmission certification process for you. You should be sure to check with your admitting physician or the hospital admitting office to confirm whether preadmission certification has been obtained. It is your responsibility to ensure that you or your provider obtains preadmission certification.

For preadmission certification call 800.248.2342 (toll-free).

If preadmission certification is not obtained, no benefits will be payable for the hospital admission or the services of the admitting physician.

BENEFIT	IN-NETWORK (PPO)	OUT-OF-NETWORK (NON-PPO)
INPATIENT HOSPITAL FACILITY SERVICES		
Deductibles and Copay	\$200 per admission deductible and a \$25 copay days 2-5.	\$200 per admission deductible and a \$25 copay days 2-5.
Inpatient Facility Coverage (including maternity) Note: Maternity benefits are not available to dependent children of any age.	Covered at 100% of the allowance for semi-private room and board, intensive care units, general nursing services and usual hospital ancillaries.	Covered at 80% of the allowance for semi-private room and board, intensive care units, general nursing services and usual hospital ancillaries.
	Note: In Alabama, inpatient benefits for non-member hospitals are available only in cases of accidental injury.	
Preadmission Certification	All hospital admissions require preadmission certification (except emergency hospital admissions and maternity); notification within 48 hours for emergencies. For preadmission certification, call 800.248.2342. If preadmission certification is not obtained, no benefits are available.	
Individual Case Management	Coordinates care in the event of a catastrophic or lengthy illness or injury. For more information, call 800.821.7231.	
Disease Management	Coordinates care for chronic conditions such as asthma, diabetes, coronary artery disease, congestive heart failure and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease.	
Baby Yourself	A prenatal wellness program highly recommended for all pregnancies. For more information, call 800.222.4379. You can also enroll online at www.behealthy.com . Note: Effective January 1, 2012, the \$200 maternity admission deductible will be waived for all members who enroll in the Baby Yourself program within the first trimester of pregnancy. The \$25 copay will still apply for days 2-5 if applicable.	

Attention: If you receive inpatient hospital services in an out-of-network hospital in the Alabama service area, no benefits are payable under the plan unless services are to treat an accidental injury.

Inpatient hospital benefits consist of the following if provided during a hospital stay:

- Bed and board and general nursing care in a semiprivate room;
- Use of special hospital units such as intensive care or burn care and the hospital nurses who staff them;
- Use of operating, delivery, recovery, and treatment rooms and the equipment in them;
- Administration of anesthetics by hospital employees and all necessary equipment and supplies;
- Casts, splints, surgical dressings, treatment and dressing trays;
- Diagnostic tests, including laboratory exams, metabolism tests, cardiographic exams, encephalographic exams, and X-rays;
- Physical therapy, hydrotherapy, radiation therapy, and chemotherapy;
- Oxygen and equipment to administer it;
- All drugs and medicines used by you if administered in the hospital;
- Regular nursery care and diaper service for a newborn baby while its mother has coverage;
- Blood transfusions administered by a hospital employee.

If you are discharged from and readmitted to a hospital within 90 days, the days of each stay will apply toward any applicable maximum number of inpatient days.

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Alabama may reclassify services or supplies provided to a hospital patient to a level of care determined by us to be medically appropriate given the patient's condition, the services rendered, and the setting in which they were rendered. This means that Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Alabama may, at times, reclassify an inpatient hospital admission as outpatient services. There may also be times in which Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Alabama deny benefits altogether based upon their determination that services or supplies were furnished at an inappropriate level of care.

Group health plans and health insurance issuers offering group health insurance coverage generally may not, under federal law, restrict benefits for any hospital length of stay in connection with childbirth for the mother or newborn child to less than 48 hours following a vaginal delivery, or less than 96 hours following a Cesarean section. However, federal law generally does not prohibit the mother's or newborn's attending provider, after consulting with the mother, from discharging the mother or her newborn earlier than 48 hours (or 96 hours as applicable). In any case, plans and issuers may not, under federal law, require that a provider obtain authorization from the plan or insurance issuer for prescribing a length of stay not in excess of 48 hours (or 96 hours).

Inpatient Rehabilitation Benefits

(Limited to a lifetime of 60 days)

These inpatient hospital benefits consist of:

- General nursing care;
- Physical therapy and hydrotherapy;
- Speech and hearing therapy;
- Functional occupational therapy.

The patient's condition must require:

- A rehabilitation trained physician available 24 hours a day;
- A rehabilitation trained nurse present 24 hours a day;

- Four hours of therapy provided by a licensed therapist a day;
- Continued progress toward goals requiring you to remain in the hospital. Your record must show conferences with your physician, therapists, and nurses at least weekly about your progress, any problems and their solutions, and review of the goals set for you. Inpatient care for rehabilitation is excluded:
 - If it maintains or is mainly to keep you clean or fed, or to help you take care of yourself;
 - If just to make sure you keep to a therapy schedule or take your prescribed medicine;
 - If only repeating services that don't require a skilled therapist, e.g., walking, conditioning, or maintenance;
 - If your condition warrants that your rehab services could be provided on an outpatient basis;
 - If you can't improve further.

Occupational therapy services when the following conditions are met:

1. The services must be medically necessary and performed by a licensed occupational therapist.
2. The services must be related to the hand and/or treatment of lymphedema, and must be of a type that is covered under the occupational therapy program. Call Customer Service at 800.327.3994 to determine what specific diagnostic codes and procedures are covered.

If you see a Preferred Occupational Therapist, the therapist will bill Blue Cross and Blue Cross will pay him or her directly. By contrast, if you see an occupational therapist who is not a Preferred Occupational Therapist, you may have to file your claim, and Blue Cross will pay you directly.

Preferred Occupational Therapists may be required to pre-certify services during the course of your treatment. If so, the Preferred Occupational Therapist will initiate the precertification process for you. If precertification is denied, you will have the right to appeal the denial.

Blue Cross standards for inpatient stays for rehabilitation are based on physician referral, how weak you are, how many services you need, how often you need them, how skilled the providers must be, and whether these services will improve your condition.

Outpatient Hospital Benefits

BENEFIT	IN-NETWORK (PPO)	OUT-OF-NETWORK (NON-PPO)
OUTPATIENT HOSPITAL FACILITY SERVICES		
Surgery	Covered at 100% of the allowance subject to a \$150 facility copay.	Covered at 80% of the allowance subject to the calendar year deductible.
Medical Emergency In-Area / Out-of-Area Emergency Room Facility Charge	Covered at 100% of the allowance subject to a \$150 facility copay if a true medical emergency. If the diagnosis does not meet medical emergency criteria, covered at 80% of the allowance subject to the calendar year deductible.	Covered at 100% of the allowance subject to a \$150 facility copay if a true medical emergency. If the diagnosis does not meet medical emergency criteria, covered at 80% of the allowance subject to the calendar year deductible.
Accidental Injury	Covered at 100% of the allowance with no deductible or copay required.	Covered at 100% of the allowance with no deductible or copay within 72 hours of the accident. Thereafter, covered at 80% of the allowance subject to the calendar year deductible.
Diagnostic Lab & Pathology	Covered at 100% of the allowance subject to a \$5 copay per test.	Covered at 80% of the allowance subject to the calendar year deductible.
Diagnostic X-ray	Covered at 100% of the allowance with no deductible or copay required.	Covered at 80% of the allowance subject to the calendar year deductible.
Hemodialysis	Covered at 100% of the allowance subject to a \$25 facility copay.	Covered at 80% of the allowance subject to the calendar year deductible.
IV Therapy, Chemotherapy and Radiation Therapy	Covered at 100% of the allowance subject to a \$25 facility copay.	Covered at 80% of the allowance subject to the calendar year deductible.
Note: In Alabama, outpatient benefits for non-member hospitals are available only in cases of accidental injury.		

Attention: If you receive outpatient hospital services in an out-of-network hospital in the Alabama service area, no benefits are payable under the plan unless services are to treat an accidental injury.

We may reclassify services or supplies provided to a hospital patient to a level of care determined by us to be medically appropriate given the patient's condition, the services rendered, and the setting in which they were rendered. This means that we may, at times, reclassify an outpatient hospital service as an inpatient admission. There may also be times in which we deny benefits altogether based upon our determination that services or supplies were furnished at an inappropriate level of care.

Certain outpatient diagnostic imaging services may require prior authorization as to the medical necessity of the diagnostic service. Information about these prior authorization requirements can be found on our web site at www.bcbsal.com/providers/preferredRadiologyProgram. Your in-network provider should help you comply with these requirements.

Physician Benefits

Attention: The benefits listed below apply only to the physician's charges for the services indicated. Claims for outpatient facility charges associated with any of these services will be processed under your outpatient hospital benefits and subject to any applicable outpatient copayments. Examples may include 1) laboratory testing performed in the physician's office, but sent to an outpatient hospital facility for processing; 2) operating room and related services for surgical procedures performed in the outpatient hospital facility.

BENEFIT	IN-NETWORK (PPO)	OUT-OF-NETWORK (NON-PPO)
PHYSICIAN SERVICES		
Office Visits and Outpatient Consultations	Covered at 100% of the allowance subject to a \$30 office visit copay.	Covered at 80% of the allowance subject to the calendar year deductible.
Emergency Room Physician Fees	Covered at 100% of the allowance subject to a \$30 visit copay.	Covered at 100% of the allowance subject to a \$30 visit copay.
Surgery and Anesthesia	Covered at 100% of the allowance with no deductible or copay.	Covered at 80% of the allowance subject to the calendar year deductible.
Inpatient Visits, Second Surgical Opinions and Inpatient Consultations	Covered at 100% of the allowance with no deductible or copay.	Covered at 80% of the allowance subject to the calendar year deductible.
Maternity	Covered at 100% of the allowance with no deductible or copay.	Covered at 80% of the allowance subject to the calendar year deductible.
Diagnostic Lab & Pathology Exams	Covered at 100% of the allowance. There is a \$5 copay per test.	Covered at 80% of the allowance subject to the calendar year deductible.
Diagnostic X-ray	Covered at 100% of the allowance with no deductible or copay.	Covered at 80% of the allowance subject to the calendar year deductible.

The following terms and conditions apply to physician benefits:

- Surgical care includes inpatient and outpatient preoperative and postoperative care, reduction of fractures, endoscopic procedures, and heart catheterization.
- Maternity care includes obstetrical care for pregnancy, childbirth, and the usual care before and after those services.
- Inpatient hospital visits related to a hospital admission for surgery, obstetrical care, or radiation therapy are normally covered under the allowed amount for that surgery, obstetrical care, or radiation therapy. Hospital visits unrelated to the above services are covered separately, if at all.
- Certain diagnostic imaging services performed in a physician's office may require prior authorization as to the medical necessity of the diagnostic service. Information about these prior authorization requirements can be found on our web site at www.bcbsal.com/providers/preferredRadiologyProgram. Your in-network provider should help you comply with these requirements.

Physician Preventive Benefits

Attention: In some cases, routine immunizations and routine preventive services may be billed separately from your office visit or other facility visit. In that case, and in all cases where the primary purpose for your visit is not routine preventive services and/or routine immunizations, the applicable office visit or outpatient facility copayments under your Physician Benefits or Outpatient Hospital Benefits may apply.

BENEFIT	IN-NETWORK (PPO)	OUT-OF-NETWORK (NON-PPO)
PREVENTIVE CARE SERVICES		
Routine Immunizations and Preventive Services	Covered at 100% of the allowance with no deductible or copay. See www.bcbsal.com/preventiveservices for a listing of the specific immunizations and preventive services.	Not covered.
Additional Routine Preventive Services	Covered at 100% of the allowance with no deductible or copay: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urinalysis (once by age 5 and once between age 12 through 17) • CBC (once each calendar year) 	Not covered.
Zostavax (Shingles) Vaccine	Covered at 100% of the allowance with no deductible or copay for members age 60 and over.	Not covered.
MENTAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE		
Inpatient Facility Services	Covered at 100% of the allowance subject to the following copays: \$15 per day for days 10-14; \$20 per day for days 15-19; \$25 per day for days 20-24; \$30 per day for days 25-30. Covers up to 30 days per person each plan year (10/1-9/30). Inpatient Substance Abuse limited to one admission per plan year and a maximum of two admissions per lifetime. Mental Health and Substance Abuse days are aggregate. No rollover to Major Medical.	Covered at 100% of the allowance subject to a \$200 per admission deductible and a \$25 copay days 2-5. Provides coverage only for short-term crisis intervention and only until the patient is stable enough to be moved to a PPO hospital. Precertification is required.
Inpatient Physician Services	Covered at 80% of the allowance subject to the calendar year deductible. Coverage is available only during a covered admission up to 30 days per plan year.	Covered at 80% of the allowance subject to the calendar year deductible.
Outpatient Physician Services	Covered at 80% of the allowance with no deductible. See Benefit Booklet for coverage limitations.*	Covered at 50% of the allowance subject to the calendar year deductible. Limited to 10 visits each plan year.*

Mental Health and Substance Abuse Benefits

For services, supplies, or treatment for mental health disorders and substance abuse by a licensed clinical psychologist, psychiatrist, or medical doctor, the following benefits may be available subject to the benefit maximums, copayments, and deductibles shown below:

- Inpatient care for mental health disorders and substance abuse;
- Outpatient visits;
- Individual, group and family therapy or counseling;
- Psychological and laboratory testing.

Service or Supply	In-Network	Out-Of-Network
Mental Health and Substance Abuse		
Inpatient Facility Services	Covered at 100% of the allowance subject to the following copays: \$15 per day for days 10-14; \$20 per day for days 15-19; \$25 per day for days 20-24; \$30 per day for days 25-30. Covers up to 30 days per person each plan year (10/1-9/30). Inpatient Substance Abuse limited to one admission per plan year and a maximum of two admissions per lifetime. Mental Health and Substance Abuse days are aggregate. No rollover to Major Medical.	Covered at 100% of the allowance subject to a \$200 per admission deductible and a \$25 copay for days 2-5 . Provides coverage only for short-term crisis intervention and only until the patient is stable enough to be moved to a PPO hospital. Precertification is required.
Inpatient Physician Services	Covered at 80% of the allowance subject to the calendar year deductible. Coverage is available only during a covered admission up to 30 days per plan year	Covered at 80% of the allowance subject to the \$300 calendar year deductible.
Outpatient Physician Services	Covered at 80% of the allowance with no deductible. See complete outpatient PPO benefits below.	Covered at 50% of the allowance subject to the \$300 calendar year deductible. Limited to 10 visits each plan year.
Outpatient PPO Benefits		
Intake and Evaluation	Included in the combined 20-visit maximum per member each plan year	\$10 copay per day
Individual and Family Therapy	Limited to 2 units per procedure per member each day (billed in 30 minute units)	\$10 per procedure
Crisis Intervention	Limited to 4 units per member each day (billed in 15 minute units)	\$10 per day
Psychometric Testing and Diagnostic Testing by Psychologist	Limited to 5 hours per member each plan year (billed in one hour units)	\$20 per hour
Psychometric Testing and Diagnostic Testing by Technician	Limited to 5 hours per member each plan year (billed in one hour units)	\$20 per hour
Psychometric Testing and Diagnostic Testing by Computer	Limited to 5 hours per member each plan year (billed in one hour units)	\$20 per hour
Group Therapy	Limited to 2 hours per member each plan year (billed in 30 minute units)	\$5 per hour
Physician Assessment	Limited to 4 hours per member each day (billed in 15 minute units)	\$10 per day
Substance Abuse Intensive Outpatient Program	Limited to 40 visits per member each plan year	No copay
Partial Hospitalization	Limited to 90 visits per member each plan year	\$20 per day
Adult and Child Mental Illness Intensive Day	Limited to 50 visits per member each plan year	\$10 per day

Treatment		
Adult Rehabilitation Day Program	Limited to 35 visits per member each plan year	\$5 per day
Hospital Screening/After Hours	Limited to \$150 per day	No copay
Medication Monitoring	Limited to 2 units per member per day (billed in 15 minute units)	No copay
Medication Administration		No copay
Outpatient Non-PPO	10 visits per plan year, subject to the \$300 calendar year deductible	50% copayment

Attention: Inpatient hospital benefits for treatment of mental health disorders and substance abuse are available in the Alabama service area only if the hospital is an in-network provider.

The following services and supplies are not covered:

- Diagnosis or treatment of mental retardation;
- Treatment solely for obesity;
- Services related to nicotine addiction;
- Sex therapy programs or treatment for sex offenders;
- Services or supplies furnished by a substance abuse facility (including a substance abuse residential facility); except for PEEHIP PPO facilities;
- Services provided by psychiatric specialty hospitals that do not participate with nor are considered members of any Blue Cross and/or Blue Shield plan; except for PEEHIP PPO facilities.

Exhibit I: Alabama Certified Mental Health Centers

AltaPointe Health Systems 5750 A Southland Drive Mobile, AL 36693 251.450.5901	East Central MH/MR Board ** 200 Cherry Street Troy, AL 36081 334.566.6022	Mountain Lakes Behavioral Healthcare ** 2409 Homer Clayton Dr. Guntersville, AL 35976 256.582.3203
Baldwin County MH/MR Center * ** 372 South Greeno Road Fairhope, AL 36532-1905 251.990.4190	Eastside MHC 129 East Park Circle Birmingham, AL 35235 205.836.7283	Northwest Alabama MHC ** 1100 7th Avenue Jasper, AL 35501 205.387.0541
Brewer-Porch Children's Center 2501 Woodland Road Tuscaloosa, AL 35487 205.348.7236	Gateway Family Counseling Center 1401 20 th Street South Birmingham, AL 35205 205.510.2600	Riverbend Center for MH * ** 635 West College Street Florence, AL 35630 256.764.3431
Cahaba Center for MH/MR ** Reynolds Building 1017 Medical Center Parkway Selma, AL 36701 334.875.2100	Glenwood, Inc. 150 Glenwood Lane Birmingham, AL 35242 205.969.2880	South Central AL MHC ** 19815 Bay Branch Road Andalusia, AL 36420 334.222.2525 877.530.0002 Access Number
Calhoun-Cleburne MH Center ** 331 East 8 th Street Anniston, AL 36207 256.236.3403	Indian Rivers MHC ** 3701 Loop Road E Bldg 39 Tuscaloosa, AL 35403 205.562.3700	Southwest AL MH/MR Center ** 328 West Claiborne Street Monroeville, AL 36461 251.575.4203
Cheaha MH Center ** 351 West 3 rd Street Sylacauga, AL 35150 256.245.1340	Jefferson-Blount-St. Clair MH/MR Authority 940 Montclair Road Suite 200 Birmingham, AL 35213 205.595.4555	Spectracare Mental Health System 134 Prevatt Road Dothan, AL 36302 334.712.2720
Cherokee-Etowah-DeKalb MHC ** 901 Goodyear Avenue Gadsden, AL 35903 256.492.7800	Mental Health Center of Madison County 4040 South Memorial Pkwy #C Huntsville, AL 35802 256.533.1970	UAB Community Psychiatry ** 4 th Floor 908 20th Street South Birmingham, AL 35205 205.934.4108
Chilton-Shelby MHC ** 67 Hwy 67 Calera, AL 35040 205.668.1327	Mental Health Center of North Central Alabama 1316 Somerville Road SE Suite 1 Decatur, AL 35601 256.260.7324 800.365.6008 Access Number	West Alabama MH Center ** 1215 South Walnut Demopolis, AL 36732 334.289.2410
Cullman Area MH Authority 1909 Commerce Avenue NW Cullman, AL 35058 256.734.4688	Montgomery Area MH Center 101 Coliseum Boulevard Montgomery, AL 36109 334.279.7830	Western Mental Health Center *** 1701 Avenue D Ensley Birmingham, AL 35218 205.788.7770
East Alabama MHC * ** 2506 Lambert Drive Opelika, AL 36801 334.742.2700 800.815.0630		

*Partial or Day Hospitalization

**Intensive Outpatient Program

***No Outpatient Substance Abuse treatment, only intensive day and rehab day programs.

Community Mental Health Center and Substance Abuse Agencies

Adolescent Intensive Outpatient Programs

Center	County
Baldwin County Mental Health Center	Baldwin
The Bridge, Inc.	Cullman/DeKalb/Mobile/ Morgan/St. Clair/Tuscaloosa
Cahaba Mental Health Center	Dallas/Perry/Wilcox
Calhoun/Cleburne Mental Health Center	Calhoun/Cleburne
Cheaha Mental Health Center	Clay/Coosa/Randolph/Talladega
Chemical Addictions Program	Montgomery
Chilton-Shelby Mental Health Center	Chilton/Shelby
Lighthouse Counseling Center	Autauga/Montgomery
Riverbend Center for Mental Health	Lauderdale
Spectracare Health Systems	Barbour/Dale/Geneva/Henry/Houston
UAB Substance Abuse Program	Jefferson
West Alabama Mental Health Center	Choctaw /Greene/Hale/Marengo/Sumter

Other Covered Services

Service or Supply	In-Network	Out-Of-Network
Accident-related dental services, which consist of treatment of natural teeth injured by force outside your mouth or body if service is received within 90 days of the injury	80% of the allowed amount, subject to the calendar year deductible	80% of the allowed amount, subject to the calendar year deductible
Ambulance services	80% of the allowed amount, subject to the calendar year deductible	80% of the allowed amount, subject to the calendar year deductible
Infertility Services: Limited to a lifetime maximum of 8 artificial insemination attempts (whether successful or not). Benefits are not provided for IVF or ART	100% of the allowed amount, no deductible	100% of the allowed amount, subject to the calendar year deductible
Chiropractic: Professional services of a licensed chiropractor practicing within the scope of his license	80% of the allowed amount, no deductible Note: In Alabama, more than 12 visits in a calendar year rendered by a participating chiropractor require precertification.	80% of the allowed amount, subject to calendar year deductible. Member responsible for any difference between the charge and the allowed amount. Limited to 12 visits in a calendar year.
Dialysis services at a renal dialysis facility	80% of the allowed amount, subject to the calendar year deductible	80% of the allowed amount, subject to the calendar year deductible
DME: Durable medical equipment and supplies, which consist of the following: (1) artificial arms and other prosthetics, leg braces, and other orthopedic devices; and (2) medical supplies such as oxygen, crutches, casts, catheters, colostomy bags and supplies, and splints	80% of the allowed amount, subject to the calendar year deductible (for DME the allowed amount will generally be the smaller of the rental or purchase price)	80% of the allowed amount, subject to the calendar year deductible (for DME the allowed amount will generally be the smaller of the rental or purchase price). Member responsible for any difference between the charge and the allowed amount.
Eyeglasses or contact lenses: One pair will be covered if medically necessary to replace the human lens function as a result of eye surgery or eye injury or defect	80% of the allowed amount, subject to the calendar year deductible	80% of the allowed amount, subject to the calendar year deductible
Home health and hospice care within the state of Alabama	100% of the allowed amount, no deductible	Not covered

Home health and hospice care outside the state of Alabama	100% of the allowed amount, no deductible; precertification is required – call 800.821.7231	80% of the allowed amount, subject to the calendar year deductible; precertification is required – call 800.821.7231
Occupational therapy services for the hand and/or treatment of lymphedema	80% of the allowed amount, subject to the calendar year deductible	80% of the allowed amount, subject to the calendar year deductible
Physical therapy	80% of the allowed amount, subject to the calendar year deductible	80% of the allowed amount, subject to the calendar year deductible. Member responsible for any difference between the charge and the allowed amount.
Speech therapy Limited to 30 visits per benefit period	80% of the allowed amount, subject to the calendar year deductible	80% of the allowed amount, subject to the calendar year deductible
TMJ	80% of the allowed amount, subject to the calendar year deductible; non-surgical benefits are limited to a \$1,000 lifetime maximum payment Surgical care must be precertified at least three weeks prior to surgery	

** When using a Preferred or Participating Provider, the provider will bill Blue Cross and Blue Cross will pay him or her directly. If you see a Non-Preferred or Non-Participating Provider, you may have to file your claim and you will be responsible for charges in excess of the allowed amount.*

Baby Yourself Program

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Alabama and PEEHIP offer Baby Yourself, a prenatal wellness program for expectant mothers. This program is part of your PEEHIP hospital medical coverage and is available at no cost to you. PEEHIP strongly encourages all expectant mothers covered under the PEEHIP Hospital Medical Plan to sign up for Baby Yourself today. It is never too late to sign up during your pregnancy, but the sooner you sign up the better. If you are a soon-to-be expectant mother, please sign up as soon as you confirm your pregnancy. PEEHIP encourage you to sign up for the program with each pregnancy even if you have already participated. When you sign up, you will receive:

- Support from an experienced Blue Cross registered nurse
- Educational information by telephone and email during your pregnancy
- Useful gifts that encourage healthy habits, proper prenatal care, and help you understand the changes and challenges of pregnancy

The vast majority of mothers who delivered premature babies did not participate in the PEEHIP Baby Yourself program. The goal of Baby Yourself is to have healthy mothers and babies at delivery. If you are pregnant, please enroll today in Baby Yourself by calling 800.222.4379 or register online at www.behealthy.com.

Effective January 1, 2012, PEEHIP began waiving the \$200 deductible for the delivery of a baby for those PEEHIP members or PEEHIP spouses who enrolled in the Baby Yourself Program within the first trimester. The \$25 copay for days 2-5 still applies.

Individual Case Management

Services available through Comprehensive Managed Care; see the Individual Case Management section for details.

Prescription Drugs

Prescription Drug Benefits Provided Through MedImpact and the Specialty Provider		
<p>Prescription Drug Plan: A copay will be charged for each 30-day supply</p> <p>Approved maintenance drugs may be purchased up to a 90-day supply for one copayment of \$12 for generic drugs, \$80 for preferred brand name drugs and \$120 for non-preferred brand name drugs. The drug must be on the approved maintenance list of drugs and must be prescribed as a maintenance drug.</p> <p>First fill for a new maintenance drug will be a 30-day supply</p> <p>Refills on retail and specialty medications (30-day supply) are allowed only after 75% of the previous prescription has been used (for example, 23 days into a 30-day supply). For maintenance medications (90-day supply), refills are allowed only after 85% of the previous prescription has been used (for example, 77 days into a 90-day supply).</p> <p>Certain medications are subject to Step Therapy, prior authorization, and quantity level limits</p> <p>Pharmacists must dispense generic drugs unless physician indicates in longhand "Do not substitute."</p>	<p>Participating Pharmacy: Each prescription purchase from a Participating Pharmacy will be covered at 100% subject to the following copays:</p> <p>Generic Drugs: \$6 copay per prescription (30-day supply) \$7 copay per prescription if filled at Walgreens pharmacies (30-day supply)</p> <p>Preferred Brand Name Drugs: \$40 copay per prescription (30-day supply)</p> <p>Non-Preferred Brand Name Drugs: \$60 copay per prescription (30-day supply)</p> <p>Diabetic Supplies are covered only through the Prescription Drug Plan unless the member has Medicare as his/her primary coverage.</p> <p>Medicare Part B medications and supplies for Medicare eligible members must be filed with Medicare first and then filed with Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Alabama for secondary coverage.</p> <p>MedImpact is the administrator for the core pharmacy program. Walgreens Specialty Pharmacy is the preferred specialty provider.</p>	<p>Non-Participating Pharmacy in Alabama: There are no benefits available for prescription drugs purchased from a Non-Participating Pharmacy in Alabama.</p> <p>Non-Participating Pharmacy Outside Alabama: Same as participating pharmacy with applicable copayments. Member will be responsible for the difference between the allowance and drug charge.</p>
<p>Diabetic Supplies: (copays apply)</p> <p>Drug benefits for medically necessary fertility drugs are covered at 50% copay for any fertility drug up to a lifetime maximum of \$2,500 cost to the PEEHIP plan.</p>		
<p>Note: To view current Prescription Drug Lists, visit www.rsa-al.gov/peehip/pharm-benefits.html</p>		

For questions concerning prescription drugs, call MedImpact at 877.606.0727
www.medimpact.com or <https://mp.medimpact.com/ala>

For questions concerning specialty drugs, call the specialty provider at 877.694.5320
www.walgreenshealth.com/peehip

Prescription Drug Benefits

Prescription Drug Benefits are administered by MedImpact. All benefits are subject to copays, conditions, limitations and exclusions of the plan.

1. In Alabama, benefits are only for prescriptions purchased from Participating Pharmacies. Participating Pharmacies bill MedImpact and MedImpact pays them. You pay only the copay or the cost of the drug if it is less than the copay. You can determine whether a pharmacy is a Participating Pharmacy by going to the website <https://mp.medimpact.com/ala>.
2. Benefits for specialty medications are provided through Walgreens specialty pharmacy. The Walgreens Customer Service telephone number is 877.694.5320. Specialty medications are generally defined as high cost oral, injectable and infused drugs which treat complex, chronic or life-threatening conditions and require patient specific dosing, ongoing monitoring for effective patient adherence, periodic lab and/or diagnostic testing for continued treatment determination, and specialized handling and distribution.
3. To be eligible for benefits, drugs must be medically necessary, legend drugs prescribed by a physician and dispensed by a pharmacy. Legend drugs are medicines which must by law be labeled, "Caution: Federal Law prohibits dispensing without a prescription." Compound drugs are covered if at least one of the drugs in the compound is a legend drug. Oral contraceptives qualify for benefits when prescribed for a medical condition but not when prescribed for birth control. In some cases, drugs may also require prior authorization. Your participating Pharmacist will advise if this is a requirement.
4. Drugs can be dispensed in a maximum of a 30-day supply for each drug or refill. Refills are allowed only after 75% of the previous prescription has been used, e.g., 23 days into a 30-day supply.
5. The first fill of a maintenance drug can be dispensed for up to a 30-day supply. Refilled maintenance drugs can be dispensed in a 90-day supply when the prescription is written for a 90-day supply and the drug is on the approved PEEHIP maintenance list. Refills are allowed on maintenance medication only after 85% of the prescription has been used. Also, there cannot be more than a 130-day lapse from the time that the maintenance drug prescription has been purchased and filed through the PEEHIP prescription plan. Approved maintenance list drugs may be purchased up to a 90-day supply with two copays when the drug is prescribed by the physician as a maintenance drug. You can determine if a drug is on the maintenance list by going to www.rsa-al.gov/PEEHIP/pharm-benefits.html or calling your Participating Pharmacy. In order for a drug to be considered for the Maintenance List, it must meet all the following criteria as determined by an expert panel of physicians and pharmacists:
 - Drug has a low probability for dosage or therapy changes due to side effects, serum drug concentration monitoring, or therapeutic response over a course of prolonged therapy;
 - Drug's most common use is to treat a chronic disease state;
 - Drug is administered continuously rather than intermittently;
 - Excluded are dosage forms that are not practical for large dispensing quantities (such as liquids) and drugs known for life-threatening toxicity when taken as an intentional overdose;
 - New drugs that are classified as non-formulary are not eligible to be added to the PEEHIP maintenance list.
6. Drugs dispensed from Non-Participating Pharmacies outside of Alabama have the same pharmacy copays as drugs dispensed from Participating Pharmacies. However, you must pay any difference above the amount MedImpact would pay a Participating Pharmacy. You must file a manual claim form with MedImpact and MedImpact will pay you direct.
7. All claims must be received within 365 days after medications are filled in order for the claim to be considered for payment.
8. Manual claim forms can be obtained from the website: www.rsa-al.gov/pehip/peehip-pubs-forms.html#health.

9. A Participating Pharmacy must dispense a generic medication when one is available. Please read *Section 16-25A-18 (Act#2002-266)* in the *Code of Alabama 1975* for additional information.

10. **Non-Medicare eligible retirees** and **Active** members requiring insulin and/or diabetic supplies:

- Diabetic supplies such as insulin, test strips, lancets, and syringes are covered under PEEHIP prescription plan. The pharmacist must file insulin first and after filing insulin file syringes. Syringes are covered with no copay. Insulin and syringes must be filed by the pharmacist on the same day, otherwise each has a separate copay. The pharmacist must file test strips first and then the lancets, Lancets are covered with no copay. Test strips and lancets must be filed by the pharmacist on the same day, otherwise each has a separate copay.
- Glucose monitors always have a separate copay. Glucose monitors are limited to one per person each contract year.
- Insulin pump and supplies are covered under Blue Cross Major Medical benefits and not under the pharmacy program.
- The copay that applies depends on whether the monitor or supplies are generic, Preferred Brand or Non-Preferred Brand.
- Blood glucose test strips, lancets and glucose monitors are the only diabetic supplies available through the Prescription Drug program.
- Benefits for insulin, needles and syringes, blood glucose test strips, lancets and glucose monitors are only provided under the Prescription Drug benefits.

11. **Medicare eligible retirees** requiring insulin and/or diabetic supplies:

- Insulin, needles and syringes purchased on the same day in the same quantity will have one copay; otherwise, each has a separate copay.
- Blood glucose test strips, lancets and glucose monitors are not covered under the Prescription Drug program for Medicare eligible retirees. These diabetic supplies are covered under Medicare Part B. In most cases, if you choose to use a Medicare participating pharmacy or supplier, the provider will bill Medicare and Medicare will pass your claim to Blue Cross and Blue Shield (not MedImpact) for the secondary processing. You will not pay anything at the point-of-sale after you have met your annual Medicare Part B deductible when you purchase from a Medicare participating provider.
- Medicare Part B covered medications are excluded from coverage under the PEEHIP prescription drug benefit but will be covered under the Medicare Part B benefit.
- Medicare Part B covers certain drugs and supplies that include but are not limited to those within the following categories: diabetes supplies (such as blood glucose test strips, lancets and blood glucose monitors); oral anti-cancer medications; respiratory medications; and immunosuppressants. Retirees who are Medicare-eligible must receive Medicare Part B drugs and diabetic supplies under Medicare Part B. These products are not covered under the PEEHIP prescription drug benefit for members who have Medicare as primary coverage.

What is a Preferred Drug?

With so many prescription drugs available today, how can you be sure that you are receiving therapeutically safe and effective medication?

- An expert panel of physicians and pharmacists have developed and endorsed the Preferred Drug List.
- These drugs represent safe and cost-effective drug therapy.
- The Preferred Drug List is used primarily by physicians in selecting clinically appropriate and cost effective drugs for their patients.
- You can access the Preferred Drug List at the website:
www.rsa-al.gov/PEEHIP/pharm-benefits.html.

Making a Choice

1. When you purchase a covered prescription from a Participating Pharmacy, you will only be responsible for the copay.
2. The amount of the copay is determined by whether the drug you purchase is a brand-name prescription on the Preferred Drug List, another brand name drug not on the preferred drug list, or a generic.
3. Required copays: Generic-**lowest copay**; Preferred Brand Products-**standard copay**; all other brand products (not included on the Preferred Drug List)-**highest copay**.
4. Copay amounts for prescription drugs are determined according to your benefit plan design. Please check your group benefit materials for specific copay amounts and coverage information.
5. You will always receive the lowest copay when purchasing generics.
6. Some drugs do not have a generic equivalent, but many do. Simply ask your physician or pharmacist if a generic is available for your prescription.

Step Therapy Program

The PEEHIP prescription drug program includes Step Therapy for certain medications. The Step Therapy program was implemented to keep PEEHIP sound and to keep premiums and copayments at a reasonable and affordable level. The Step Therapy program applies to “new” prescriptions that have not been purchased in over 130 days. A prescription is considered “new” if the member or covered dependent has not filed and processed the prescription claim with MedImpact in over 130 days.

Step Therapy is a program especially for people who take prescription drugs regularly to treat ongoing medical conditions such as arthritis/pain, heartburn, or high blood pressure. It is designed to:

- provide safe and effective treatments for your good health
- make prescriptions more affordable
- enable PEEHIP to continue to provide affordable prescription coverage while controlling rising costs

Step Therapy is organized in a series of “steps” *with your doctor* approving your medication every step of the way. It is developed under the guidance and direction of independent, licensed doctors, pharmacists, and other medical experts. Together with MedImpact, they review the most current research on thousands of drugs tested and approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for safety and effectiveness.

How does Step Therapy work?

First Step: Generic drugs are usually in the first step. These drugs are commonly prescribed, less expensive treatments that are safe and effective in treating many medical conditions. Your copayment is usually the lowest with a first-step drug. It will be necessary for you to use the first-step drugs before the plan will pay for second-step drugs.

Second Step: If your treatment path requires more medications, then the program moves you along to this step, which generally includes brand-name drugs. Brand-name drugs are usually more expensive than generics, so most have a higher copayment.

When a prescription for a second-step drug is processed at your pharmacy for the first time, your pharmacist will receive a message indicating the PEEHIP plan uses Step Therapy. If you would rather not pay full price for your prescription drug, your doctor needs to give you a prescription for a first-step drug. Only your doctor can change your current prescription to a first-step drug covered by your program. To receive a first-step drug: **Ask your pharmacist to call your doctor** and request a new prescription *or contact your doctor* to get a new prescription.

With Step Therapy, more expensive, brand-name drugs are usually covered in a later step in the program if you have already tried the first-step drug. If your doctor decides you need a different drug for medical reasons before you have tried a first-step drug, then your doctor can call MedImpact to request a “prior authorization.” If the second-step drug is approved, you will pay a higher copayment than for a first-step drug. If the drug is not approved, you will need to pay the full price for the drug. You can appeal the decision

through the appeals process outlined in this handbook.

If you have medical reasons that prevent you from trying a first-step drug, your physician can contact MedImpact to request a prior authorization by calling 800.347.5841. For other questions about the Step Therapy program, contact MedImpact Customer Service toll free at 877.606.0727.

Members who are new to PEEHIP or if a husband and wife switch from one PEEHIP contract to another, they may not be subject to the Step Therapy clinical programs. For these members to be grandfathered into the Step Therapy Program, they will need to provide documentation that they have been on the medication(s) 130 days prior to their enrollment date with PEEHIP.

Prescription Drug Exclusions and Limitations

The following items are not eligible for coverage:

- Appetite Suppressants
- Contraceptive Devices
- Desoxyn/Dexedrine-for Weight Control Purposes
- Agents used to suppress appetite and control fat absorption (e.g. Xenical, Meridia)
- Experimental Drugs
- Over-the-Counter Drugs (OTC is not covered even if prescribed by a physician)
- Progesterone Suppositories-for PMS
- Replacement for Lost or Destroyed Drugs
- Topical Minoxidil
- Yocon
- Photo-aged skin products
- Hair growth agents
- Injectable cosmetics (e.g. Botox)
- Depigmentation products used for skin conditions requiring a bleaching agent
- Serums, toxoids and some vaccines
- Legend homeopathic drugs
- OTC equivalents (Items available over the counter without a prescription even when prescribed by a physician (vitamins and food supplements)
- Non-Participating Pharmacies in Alabama are not covered
- Nicotine Gum and some smoking cessation agents
- Oral medications used to treat erectile dysfunction. Examples include, but are not limited to Viagra, Cialis, Levitra, and Yohimbine
- Prescription drugs and medicines are considered under "Prescription Drug Benefits" and are not eligible for coverage under Major Medical. Prescription drugs purchased from a Non-Participating Pharmacy in Alabama are not covered under any portion of the plan.
- Transcutaneous nicotine patches which are now OTC drugs

The following items have limited coverage:

- Contraceptive Drugs-oral contraceptives or other birth control methods are not covered except when they are prescribed by a physician for a medical condition and not for the purpose of birth control.

- Growth hormones are not covered after age 18.
- Certain drugs have quantity level limits for a 30-day supply. Your pharmacist will advise if this is a requirement.
- Certain drugs require prior authorization. Your pharmacist will advise if this is a requirement.
- Drug benefits for medically necessary fertility drugs are covered at a 50% copay for any infertility drug up to a lifetime maximum of \$2,500 cost to the PEEHIP plan.

Act 2002-266 Generic Equivalent Drug

As a condition of participation in PEEHIP, a pharmacist shall dispense a generic equivalent medication to fill a prescription for a patient covered by PEEHIP when one is available unless the physician indicates in longhand writing on the prescription “medically necessary” or “dispense as written” or “do not substitute”. The generic equivalent drug product dispensed shall be pharmaceutically and therapeutically equivalent and contain the same active ingredient or ingredients and shall be of the same dosage, form and strength.

Health Management Benefits

Health Management Benefits	
Individual Case Management	Coordinates care in event of catastrophic or lengthy illness or injury
Care Management	Coordinates care for chronic conditions such as asthma, diabetes, coronary artery disease, congestive heart failure and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease

Unfortunately, some people suffer from catastrophic, long-term or chronic illness or injury. If you suffer due to one of these conditions, a Blue Cross Registered Nurse may work with you, your physician, and other health care professionals to design a benefit plan to best meet your health care needs. In order to implement the plan, you, your physician, and Blue Cross must agree to the terms of the plan. The program is voluntary to you and your physician. Under no circumstances are you required to work with a Blue Cross case management nurse. Benefits provided to you through individual case management are subject to your plan benefit maximums. If you think you may benefit from individual case management, please call the Health Management division at 205.733.7067 or 800.821.7231 (toll-free).

You may also qualify to participate in the care management program. Care management is designed for individuals whose long-term medical needs require disciplined compliance with a variety of medical and lifestyle requirements. If the manager of the care management program determines from your claims data that you are a good candidate for care management, the manager will contact you and ask if you would like to participate. Participation in the program is completely voluntary. If you would like to obtain more information about the program, call our customer service department.

Additional Benefit Information

Infertility Services

Benefits for Medically Necessary infertility services are provided as follows:

- Artificial insemination and related services, including physician services, laboratory services, x-ray services, and ultrasound services
- Benefits for medications for infertility treatment are provided with a 50% copay up to a lifetime maximum cost of \$2,500 for PEEHIP per member contract. Members will pay 100% of the medications after the \$2,500 lifetime maximum is reached.

Benefits are limited to a lifetime maximum of 8 artificial insemination attempts (whether successful **or not**).

Benefits are NOT provided for Assisted Reproductive Technology (ART) which is any process taking human eggs or sperm or both and putting them into a medium or a body to try to cause reproduction.

Colorectal Cancer Screening

Benefits for colorectal cancer screening vary depending upon the reason the procedure is performed and the way in which the provider files the claim.

- If the colorectal cancer screening is performed in connection with the diagnosis or treatment of a medical condition, and if the provider properly files the claim with this information, Blue Cross will process the claim as a diagnostic or surgical procedure according to the benefit provisions of the plan dealing with diagnostic or surgical procedures.
- If you are at high risk of developing colon cancer or you have a family history of colon cancer – within the meaning of our medical guidelines – and if the provider properly files the claim with this information, Blue Cross will process the claim as a diagnostic or surgical procedure according to the benefit provisions of the plan dealing with diagnostic or surgical procedures.

In all other cases the claim will be subject to the provisions and limitations described elsewhere in this booklet, including the section called *Physician Preventive Benefits*.

Mastectomy and Mammograms

Women's Health and Cancer Rights Act Information:

A member who is receiving benefits in connection with a mastectomy will also receive coverage for reconstruction of the breast on which a mastectomy was performed and reconstruction of the other breast to produce a symmetrical appearance; prostheses; and treatment of physical complications at all stages of the mastectomy, including lymphedema.

Benefits for this treatment will be subject to the same calendar year deductible and coinsurance provisions that apply for other medical and surgical benefits.

Benefits for Mammograms:

Benefits for mammograms vary depending upon the reason the procedure is performed and the way in which the provider files the claim:

- If the mammogram is performed in connection with the diagnosis or treatment of a medical condition, and if the provider properly files the claim with this information, Blue Cross will process the claim as a diagnostic procedure according to the benefit provisions of the plan dealing with diagnostic X-rays.
- If you are at high risk of developing breast cancer or you have a family history of breast cancer – within the meaning of our medical guidelines – and if the provider properly files the claim with this information, Blue Cross will process the claim as a diagnostic procedure according to the benefit provisions of the plan dealing with diagnostic X-rays.
- In all other cases the claim will be subject to the provisions and limitations described elsewhere in this booklet, including the section called *Physician Preventive Benefits*.

Organ, Tissue, and Bone Marrow/Cell Transplants

The organs and tissue for which there are transplant benefits are: (1) heart; (2) liver; (3) lungs; (4) pancreas; (5) kidney; (6) heart-valve; (7) skin; (8) cornea; and (9) small bowel. Bone marrow transplants, which include stem cells and tissue to restore or make stronger the bone marrow function, are also included. All organ and bone marrow transplants (excluding kidney) must be performed in a hospital or other facility on our list of approved facilities for that type of transplant and it must have our advance written approval. When we approve a facility for transplant services it is limited to the specific types of transplants stated. Covered transplant benefits for the recipient include any medically necessary hospital, medical-surgical and other services related to the transplant, including blood and blood plasma.

Transplant benefits for cadaveric donor organ costs are limited to search, removal, storage and the transporting the organ and removal team.

Transplant benefits for living donor expenses are limited to:

- solid organs: testing for related and unrelated donors as pre-approved by us
- bone marrow: related-donor testing and unrelated-donor search fees and procurement if billed

through the National Marrow Donor Program or other recognized marrow registry

- prediagnostic testing expenses of the actual honor for the approved transplant
- hospital and surgical expenses for removal of the donor organ, and all such services provided to the donor during the admission
- transportation of the donated organ
- post-operative hospital, medical, laboratory and other services for the donor related to the organ transplant limited to up to 90 days of follow-up care after date of donation.

All organ and bone marrow transplant benefits for covered recipient and donor expenses are and will be treated as benefits paid or provided on behalf of the member and will be subject to all terms and conditions of the plan applicable to the member, such as deductibles, copays, coinsurance, pre-existing condition exclusions and other plan limitations. For example, if the member's coverage terminates, transplant benefits also will not be available for any donor expenses after the effective date of termination.

There are no transplant benefits for: (1) any artificial or mechanical devices; (2) organ or bone marrow transplants from animals; (3) donor costs available through other group coverage; (4) if any government funding is provided; (5) the recipient if not covered by this plan; (6) recipient or donor room, food, or transportation costs Blue Cross did not approve in writing; (7) a condition or disease for which a transplant is considered investigational; (8) transplants performed in a facility not on the Blue Cross approved list for that type or for which Blue Cross has not given written approval in advance.

Tissue, cell and any other transplants not listed above are not included in this organ and bone marrow transplant benefit but may be covered under other applicable provisions of the plan when determined to be medically necessary and not investigational. These transplants include but are not limited to: heart valves, tendon, ligaments, meniscus, cornea, cartilage, skin, bone, veins, etc.

Coordination of Benefits (COB)

COB is a provision designed to help manage the cost of health care by avoiding duplication of benefits when a person is covered by two or more benefit plans. COB provisions determine which plan is primary and which is secondary. A primary plan is one whose benefits for a person's health care coverage must be determined first without taking the existence of any other plan into consideration. A secondary plan is one which takes into consideration the benefits of the primary plan before determining benefits available under its plan. Some COB terms have defined meanings. These terms are set forth at the end of this COB section.

Order of Benefit Determination

Which plan is primary is decided by the first rule below that applies: (Note, however, that if the other plan is Medicare the order of benefit determination is determined by the applicable Medicare secondary payer laws.)

1. **Noncompliant Plan:** If the other plan is a noncompliant plan and has no COB provision, then the other plan shall be primary and this plan shall be secondary unless the COB terms of both plans provide that this plan is primary.
2. **Employee/Dependent:** The plan covering a patient as an employee, member, subscriber, or contract holder (that is, other than as a dependent) is primary over the plan covering the patient as a dependent. In some cases, depending upon the size of the employer, Medicare secondary payer rules may require Blue Cross to reverse this order of payment. This can occur when the patient is covered as an inactive or retired employee, is also covered as a dependent of an active employee, and is also covered by Medicare. In this case, the order of benefit determination will be as follows: first, the plan covering the patient as a dependent; second, Medicare; and third, the plan covering the patient as an inactive or retired employee.
3. **Dependent Child – Parents Not Separated or Divorced:** If both plans cover the patient as a dependent child of parents who are married or living together the plan of the parent whose birthday falls earlier in the year will be primary. If the parents have the same birthday, the plan covering the patient longer is primary. If the other plan does not use the "birthday rule", the other plan's rule will be used.
4. **Dependent Child – Separated or Divorced Parents:** If two or more plans cover the patient as a dependent child of parents who are divorced or separated, benefits are determined in this order:
 - a. The order of benefits for the child are as follows:
 - i. first, the plan of the custodial parent;
 - ii. second, the plan covering the custodial parent's spouse;
 - iii. third, the plan covering the non-custodial parent; and,
 - iv. last, the plan covering the non-custodial parent's spouse.
 - b. If a court decree states that a parent is responsible for the dependent child's health care expenses or health care coverage benefits are determined in this order:
 - i. first, the plan of the court-ordered parent;
 - ii. second, the plan of the spouse of the court-ordered parent; and,
 - iii. third, the plan of the non-court-ordered parent, and
 - iv. last, the plan of the spouse of the non-court ordered parent.
 - c. If the divorced or separated parents have joint legal custody, benefits are determined as if the parents are not separated or divorced as explained in item #3 above.
5. **Active Employee or Retired or Laid-Off Employee:**
 - a. The plan that covers a person as an active employee (that is, an employee who is

neither laid off nor retired) or as a dependent of an active employee is the primary plan. The plan covering that same person as a retired or laid-off employee or as a dependent of a retired or laid-off employee is the secondary plan. Ex. If a PEEHIP member has a retired PEEHIP contract and the spouse of the member is actively employed and has an active non-PEEHIP plan, the non-PEEHIP active contract is primary over PEEHIP even on the PEEHIP member as a dependent regardless of Medicare.

- b. If none of the above rules determine the order of payment, the plan covering the patient longer is primary.
- c. This rule does not apply if the rule in the paragraph "Employee/Dependent" above can determine the order of benefits. For example, if a retired employee is covered under his or her own plan as a retiree and is also covered as a dependent under an active spouse's plan, the retiree plan will be primary and the spouse's active plan will be secondary.

Active/Inactive Employee: When a patient is covered under one plan as an active employee and under another plan as a retired or inactive employee (e.g., a former employee receiving COBRA benefits), the plan which covers the patient as an active employee is primary over a plan which covers the patient as a laid-off or retired employee. This applies to the employee's dependents as well unless the dependents have other coverage due to their own current or former employment status.

Longer/Shorter Length of Coverage: If none of the above rules determine the order of payment, the plan covering the patient the longer time is primary.

If this plan is secondary, it will pay more than if it had been primary.

COBRA or Continuation Coverage:

1. If a person whose coverage is provided pursuant to COBRA or under a right of continuation pursuant to state or other federal law is covered under another plan, the plan covering the person as an employee, member, subscriber or retiree or covering the person as a dependent of an employee, member, subscriber or retiree is the primary plan and the plan covering that same person pursuant to COBRA or under a right of continuation pursuant to state or other federal law is the secondary plan.
2. If the other plan does not have this rule, and if, as a result, the plans do not agree on the order of benefits, this rule is ignored.
3. This rule does not apply if the rule in the paragraph "Employee/Dependent" above can determine the order of benefits. For example, if a former employee is receiving COBRA benefits under his former employer's plan (the "COBRA plan") and is also covered as a dependent under an active spouse's plan, the COBRA plan will be primary and the spouse's active plan will be secondary. Similarly, if a divorced spouse is receiving COBRA benefits under his or her former spouse's plan (the "COBRA plan") and is also covered as a dependent under a new spouse's plan, the COBRA plan will be primary and the new spouse's plan will be secondary.

Longer/Shorter Length of Coverage: If the preceding rules do not determine the order of benefits, the plan that covered the person for the longer period of time is the primary plan and the plan that covered the person for the shorter period of time is the secondary plan.

Equal Division: If the plans cannot agree on the order of benefits within thirty (30) calendar days after the plans have received all of the information needed to pay the claim, the plans shall immediately pay the claim in equal shares and determine their relative liabilities following payment, except that no plan shall be required to pay more than it would have paid had it been the primary plan.

Determination of Amount of Payment

1. If this plan is primary, it shall pay benefits as if the secondary plan did not exist.
2. If our records indicate this plan is secondary, Blue Cross will not process your claims until you have filed them with the primary plan and the primary plan has made its benefit determination.

If this plan is required to make a secondary payment according to the above rules, it will subtract the amount

paid by the primary plan from the amount it would have paid in the absence of the primary plan, and pay the difference, if any. In many cases, this will result in no payment by this plan.

COB Terms

Allowable Expense: Except as set forth below or where a statute requires a different definition, the term “allowable expense” means any health care expense, including coinsurance, copayments, and any applicable deductible that is covered in full or in part by any of the plans covering the person.

The term “allowable expense” does not include the following:

- An expense or a portion of an expense that is not covered by any of the plans.
- Any expense that a provider by law or in accordance with a contractual agreement is prohibited from charging a covered person.
- Any type of coverage or benefit not provided under this plan. For example, if this plan does not provide benefits for mental health disorders and substance abuse, dental services and supplies, vision care, prescriptions drugs, or hearing aids, or other similar type of coverage or benefit, then it will have no secondary liability with respect to such coverage or benefit. In addition, the term “allowable expense” does not include the amount of any reduction in benefits under a primary plan because (a) the covered person failed to comply with the primary plan’s provisions concerning second surgical opinions or precertification of admissions or services, or (b), the covered person had a Blue Cross benefit because he or she did not use a preferred.

Birthday: The term “birthday” refers only to month and day in a calendar year and does not include the year in which the individual is born.

Custodial Parent: The term “custodial parent” means:

- A parent awarded custody of a child by a court decree; or,
- In the absence of a court decree, the parent with whom the child resides for more than one half of the calendar year without regard to any temporary visitation.

Group-Type Contract: The term “group-type contract” means a contract that is not available to the general public and is obtained and maintained only because of membership in or a connection with a particular organization or group, including blanket coverage. The term does not include an individually underwritten and issued guaranteed renewable policy even if the policy is purchased through payroll deduction at a premium savings to the insured since the insured would have the right to maintain or renew the policy independently of continued employment with the employer.

Hospital Indemnity Benefits: The term “hospital indemnity benefits” means benefits not related to expenses incurred. The term does not include reimbursement-type benefits even if they are designed or administered to give the insured the right to elect indemnity-type benefits at the time of claim.

Noncompliant Plan: The term “noncompliant plan” means a plan with COB rules that are inconsistent in substance with the order of benefit determination rules of this plan. Examples of noncompliant plans are those that state their benefits are “excess” or “always secondary.”

Plan: The term “plan” includes group insurance contracts, health maintenance organization (HMO) contracts, closed panel plans or other forms of group or group-type coverage (whether insured or uninsured); care components of long-term care contracts, such as skilled nursing care; medical benefits under group or individual automobile contracts; and Medicare or any other federal governmental plan, as permitted by law.

The term “plan” does not include non-group or individual health or medical reimbursement insurance contracts. The term “plan” also does not include hospital indemnity coverage or other fixed indemnity coverage; accident-only coverage; specified disease or specified accident coverage; limited benefit health coverage, as defined by state law; school accident type coverage; benefits for non-medical components of long-term care policies; Medicare supplement policies; Medicaid policies; or coverage under other federal governmental plans, unless permitted by law.

Primary Plan: The term “primary plan” means a plan whose benefits for a person’s care coverage must be

determined without taking the existence of any other plan into consideration. A plan is a primary plan if:

- The plan either has no order of benefit determination rules, or its rules differ from those permitted by this regulation; or,
- All plans that cover the person use the order of benefit determination rules required by this regulation, and under those rules the plan determines its benefits first.

Secondary Plan: The term “secondary plan” means a plan that is not a primary plan.

Right to Receive and Release Needed Information

Certain facts about care coverage and services are needed to apply these COB rules and to determine benefits payable under this plan and other plans. Blue Cross may get the facts we need from or give them to other organizations or persons for the purpose of applying these rules and determining benefits payable under this plan and other plans covering the person claiming benefits. Blue Cross is not required to tell or get the consent of any person to do this. Each person claiming benefits under this plan must give Blue Cross any facts we need to apply these COB rules and to determine benefits payable as a result of these rules.

Facility of Payment

A payment made under another plan may include an amount that should have been paid under this plan. If it does, Blue Cross may pay that amount to the organization that made that payment. That amount will then be treated as though it were a benefit paid under this plan. Blue Cross will not have to pay that amount again. The term “payment made” includes providing benefits in the form of services, in which case “payment made” means the reasonable cash value of the benefits provided in the form of services.

Right of Recovery

If the amount of the payments made by Blue Cross is more than they should have paid under this COB provision, Blue Cross may recover the excess from one or more of the persons it has paid to or for whom it has paid; or any other person or organization that may be responsible for the benefits or services provided for the covered person. The “amount of the payments made” includes the reasonable cash value of any benefits provided in the form of services.

Special Rules for Coordination with Medicare

Federal law may require the plan in certain circumstances to pay benefits on a primary basis to Medicare. (That is, the plan will determine its benefits first and Medicare will determine its benefits second). Except where otherwise required by federal law, the plan will pay benefits on a secondary basis to Medicare or will pay no benefits at all for services or supplies that are included within the scope of Medicare's coverage, depending upon, among other things, the size of your group, whether your group is a member of an association, and the type of coordination method used by your group. For example, some groups may exclude or reduce benefits for members who fail to enroll, when eligible, in Medicare. For further information about the circumstances in which this plan is required to pay primary to Medicare you may ask your group or go to www.medicare.gov, where you will find several helpful publications.

Subrogation

Right of Subrogation

If PEEHIP pays or provides any benefits for you under this plan, PEEHIP is subrogated to all rights of recovery which you have in contract, tort, or otherwise against any person or organization for the amount of PEEHIP has paid or provided. That means that PEEHIP may use our right to recover money from that other person or organization.

Right of Reimbursement

Besides the right of subrogation, PEEHIP has a separate right to be reimbursed or repaid from any money you, including your family members; recover for an injury or condition for which PEEHIP has paid plan benefits. This means that you promise to repay PEEHIP from any money you recover the amount PEEHIP has paid or provided in plan benefits. It also means that if you recover money as a result of a claim or a lawsuit, whether by settlement or otherwise, you must repay PEEHIP. And, if you are paid by any person or company besides PEEHIP, including the person who injured you, that person's insurer, or your own insurer, you must repay PEEHIP. In these and all other cases, you must repay PEEHIP.

PEEHIP has the right to be reimbursed or repaid first from any money you recover, even if you are not paid for all of your claim for damages and you are not made whole for your loss. This means that you promise to repay PEEHIP first even if the money you recover is for (or said to be for) a loss besides plan benefits, such as pain and suffering. It also means that you promise to repay PEEHIP first even if another person or company has paid for part of your loss. And it means that you promise to repay PEEHIP first even if the person who recovers the money is a minor. In these and all other cases, PEEHIP still has the right to first reimbursement or repayment out of any recovery you receive from any source.

Right to Recovery

You agree to furnish Blue Cross promptly all information which you have concerning your rights of recovery or recoveries from other persons or organizations and to fully assist and cooperate with Blue Cross in protecting and obtaining the reimbursement and subrogation rights in accordance with this section.

You or your attorney will notify Blue Cross before filing any suit or settling any claim so as to enable Blue Cross to participate in the suit or settlement to protect and enforce PEEHIP's rights under this section. If you do notify Blue Cross so that Blue Cross is able to and do recover the amount of the benefit payments for you, PEEHIP will share proportionately with you in any attorney's fees charged you by your attorney for obtaining the recovery. If you do not give PEEHIP or Blue Cross that notice, the reimbursement or subrogation recovery under this section will not be decreased by any attorney's fee for your attorney.

You further agree not to allow the reimbursement and subrogation rights under this plan to be limited or harmed by any other acts or failures to act on your part. It is understood and agreed that if you do, PEEHIP may suspend or terminate payment or provision of any further benefits for you under the plan.

Health Benefit Exclusions

In addition to other exclusions set forth in this booklet, we **will not** provide benefits under any portion of this booklet for the following:

A

Services or expenses for elective **abortions**.

Services or expenses for **acupuncture**, biofeedback, and other forms of self-care or self-help training.

Anesthesia services or supplies or both by local infiltration.

Services, care, treatment, or supplies furnished by a provider that is not recognized by us as an **approved provider** for the type of service or supply being furnished. For example, we reserve the right not to pay for some or all services or supplies furnished by certain persons who are not medical doctors (M.D.s), even if the services or supplies are within the scope of the provider's license. Call Customer Service if you have any question as to whether your provider is recognized as an approved provider for the services or supplies that you intend to receive.

B

Services or expenses for or related to contraceptive/**birth control** methods except when they are prescribed by a physician for a medical condition and not for the purpose of birth control.

C

Services or expenses of a hospital stay, except one for an emergency, unless Blue Cross **certifies** it before your admission. Services or expenses of a hospital stay for an emergency if we are not notified within 48 hours, or on our next business day after your admission, or if we determine that the admission was not medically necessary.

Services or expenses for which a **claim** is not properly submitted to Blue Cross.

Services or expenses for a **claim Blue Cross has not received within 365 days** after services were rendered or expenses incurred.

Services or expenses for personal hygiene, **comfort or convenience** items such as: air-conditioners, humidifiers, whirlpool baths, and physical fitness or exercise apparel. Exercise equipment is also excluded. Some examples of exercise equipment are shoes, weights, exercise bicycles or tracks, weights or variable resistance machinery, and equipment producing isolated muscle evaluations and strengthening. Treatment programs, the use of equipment to strengthen muscles according to preset rules, and related services performed during the same therapy session are also excluded.

Services or expenses for sanitarium care, **convalescent care**, or rest care, including care in a nursing home.

Services or expenses for cosmetic surgery. **Cosmetic surgery** is any surgery done primarily to improve or change the way one appears. "Reconstructive surgery" is any surgery done primarily to restore or improve the way the body works or correct deformities that result from disease, trauma or birth defects. Reconstructive surgery is a covered benefit; cosmetic surgery is not. (See the section, *Mastectomy and Mammograms*, for exceptions.) Complications or later surgery related in any way to cosmetic surgery is not covered, even if medically necessary, if caused by an accident, or if done for mental or emotional relief.

- You should contact Blue Cross prior to surgery to find out whether a procedure will be reconstructive or cosmetic. You and your physician must prove to Blue Cross' satisfaction that surgery is reconstructive and not cosmetic. You must show Blue Cross history and physical exams, visual field measures, photographs and medical records before and after surgery. Blue Cross may not be able to determine prior to your surgery whether or not the proposed procedure will be considered cosmetic.

- Some surgery is always cosmetic such as ear piercing, neck tucks, face lifts, buttock and thigh lifts, implants to small but normal breasts (except as provided by the Women's Health and Cancer Rights Act), hair implants for male-pattern baldness and correction of frown lines on the forehead. In other surgery, such as blepharoplasty (eyelids), rhinoplasty (nose), chemical peel and chin implants, it depends on why that procedure was done. For example, a person with a deviated septum may have trouble breathing and may have many sinus infections. To correct this they have septoplasty. During surgery the physician may remove a hump or shorten the nose (rhinoplasty). The septoplasty would be reconstructive surgery while the rhinoplasty would be denied as cosmetic surgery. Surgery to remove excess skin from the eyelids (blepharoplasty) would be cosmetic if done to improve your appearance, but reconstructive if done because your eyelids kept you from seeing very well.

Services or expenses for treatment of injury sustained in the commission of a **crime** (except for treatment of injury as a result of a medical condition or as a result of domestic violence) or for treatment while confined in a prison, jail or other penal institution.

Services or expenses for **custodial care**. Care is "custodial" when its primary purpose is to provide room and board, routine nursing care, training in personal hygiene, and other forms of self-care or supervisory care by a physician for a person who is mentally or physically disabled.

D

Dental implants into, across, or just above the bone and related appliances. Services or expenses to prepare the mouth for dental implants such as those to increase the upper and lower jaws or their borders, sinus lift process, guided tissue regrowth or any other surgery, bone grafts, hydroxyapatite and similar materials. These services, supplies or expenses are not covered even if they are needed to treat conditions existing at birth, while growing, or resulting from an accident. These services, supplies or expenses are excluded even if they are medically or dentally necessary.

Services for or related to a **dependent pregnancy**, including the six-week period after delivery. A dependent pregnancy means the pregnancy of any dependent other than the subscriber's wife.

E

Services, care, or treatment you receive after the **ending date of your coverage**. This means, for example, that if you are in the hospital when your coverage ends, PEEHIP will not pay for any more hospital days. PEEHIP does not insure against any condition such as pregnancy or injury. PEEHIP provides benefits only for services and expenses furnished while this plan is in effect.

Eyeglasses or contact lenses or related examinations or fittings, except under the limited circumstances set forth in the section of this booklet called *Other Covered Services*.

Services or expenses for **eye** exercises, eye refractions, visual training orthoptics, shaping the cornea with contact lenses, or any surgery on the eye to improve vision including radial keratotomy.

F

Services or expenses in any **federal hospital or facility** except as required by federal law.

Services or expenses for routine **foot care** such as removal of corns or calluses or the trimming of nails (except mycotic nails).

G

Unless otherwise required by applicable law, services or expenses covered in whole or in part under the laws of the United States, any state, county, city, town or other **governmental** agency that provides or pays for care, through insurance or any other means.

H

Hearing aids or examinations or fittings for them.

I

Investigational treatment, procedures, facilities, drugs, drug usage, equipment, or supplies, including services that are part of a clinical trial.

L

Services or expenses that you are not **legally obligated to pay**, or for which no charge would be made if you had no health coverage.

Services or expenses for treatment which does not require a **licensed provider**, given the level of simplicity and the patient's condition, will not further restore or improve the patient's bodily functions, or is not reasonable as to number, frequency, or duration.

M

Services or expenses Blue Cross determines are not **medically necessary**.

Services or supplies to the extent that a member is, or would be, entitled to reimbursement under **Medicare**, regardless of whether the member properly and timely applied for, or submitted claims to Medicare, except as otherwise required by federal law.

N

Services or expenses of any kind for **nicotine addiction** such as smoking cessation treatment.

Services, care or treatment you receive during any period of time with respect to which Blue Cross has **not been paid for your coverage** and that **nonpayment** results in termination.

Services or expenses rendered by out-of-network Certified Registered **Nurse Practitioners** (CRNP) or out-of-network Certified **Nurse Midwives** (CNM).

Services or expenses rendered by an out-of-state Certified Registered **Nurse Anesthetist** (CRNA).

Services or expenses of any kind for **nicotine addiction** such as smoking cessation treatment.

O

Services or expenses for treatment of any condition including, but not limited to, **obesity**, diabetes, or heart disease, which is based upon weight reduction or dietary control or services or expenses of any kind to treat obesity, weight reduction or dietary control. This exclusion does not apply to surgery for morbid obesity if medically necessary and in compliance with guidelines of Blue Cross. Benefits will only be provided for one surgical procedure for obesity (morbid) in a lifetime. Benefits will not be provided for subsequent surgery for complications related to a covered surgical procedure for obesity (morbid) if the complications arise from non-compliance with medical recommendations regarding patient activity and lifestyle following the procedure.

Services or expenses provided by an **out-of-network provider** for any benefits under this plan, unless otherwise specifically stated in the plan.

P

Expenses for **prescription drugs**. PEEHIP provides the prescription drug coverage through MedImpact and not Blue Cross. See specific prescription drug exclusions on page 44.

Private duty nursing.

R

Services or expenses for **recreational** or educational therapy.

Hospital admissions in whole or in part when the patient primarily receives services to **rehabilitate** such as physical therapy, speech therapy, or occupational therapy.

Services or expenses any provider rendered to a member who is **related** to the provider by blood or marriage or who regularly resides in the provider's household. Examples of a provider include a physician, a licensed registered nurse (R.N.), a licensed practical nurse (L.P.N.), or a licensed physical therapist.

Room and board for hospital admissions in whole or in part when the patient primarily receives services that could have been provided on an outpatient basis based upon the patient's condition and the services provided.

Routine well child care and routine immunizations except for the services described in *Physician Preventive Benefits*.

Routine physical examinations except for the services described in *Physician Preventive Benefits*.

S

School setting: Health care services provided at the schools unless specifically provided under the contract between PEEHIP and the Department of Public Health. Any programs to provide health care services at the schools must be approved in writing by PEEHIP for specific schools.

Services or expenses for, or related to, **sexual dysfunctions** or inadequacies not related to organic disease or which are related to surgical sex transformations.

Sleep studies performed outside of a health care facility, such as home sleep studies, whether or not supervised or attended.

Services or expenses for **speech** therapy (except as previously stated covered).

Services or expenses of any kind for or related to reverse **sterilizations**.

T

Services or expenses to care for, treat, fill, extract, remove or replace **teeth** or to increase the periodontium. The periodontium includes the gums, the membrane surrounding the root of a tooth, the layer of bone covering the root of a tooth and the upper and lower jaws and their borders, which contain the sockets for the teeth. Care to treat the periodontium, dental pulp or "dead" teeth, irregularities in the position of the teeth, artificial dental structures such as crowns, bridges or dentures, or any other type of dental procedure is excluded. Hydroxyapatite or any other material to make the gums rigid is excluded. It does not matter whether their purpose is to improve conditions inside or outside the mouth (oral cavity). These services, supplies or expenses are not covered even if they are used to prepare a patient for services or procedures that are plan benefits. For example, braces on the teeth are excluded for any purpose, even to prepare a person with a cleft palate for surgery on the bones of the jaw or because of injury of natural teeth. This exclusion does not apply, except as indicated above for braces or other orthodontic appliances, to those services by a physician to treat or replace natural teeth which are harmed by accidental injury covered under *Other Covered Services*.

Services provided through **teleconsultation**.

Dental treatment for or related to **temporomandibular joint (TMJ) disorders**. This includes Phase II according to the guidelines approved by the Academy of Craniomandibular Disorders. These treatments permanently alter the teeth or the way they meet and include such services as balancing the teeth, shaping the teeth, reshaping the teeth, restorative treatment, treatment involving artificial dental structures such as crowns, bridges or dentures, full mouth rehabilitation, dental implants, treatment for irregularities in the position of the teeth (such as braces or other orthodontic appliances) or a combination of these treatments.

Services, supplies, implantable devices, equipment and accessories billed by any **third party vendor** that are used in surgery or any operative setting. This exclusion does not apply to services and supplies

provided to a member for use in their home pursuant to a physician's prescription.

Travel, even if prescribed by your physician (not including ambulance services otherwise covered under the plan).

Services or expenses for or related to organ, tissue or cell **transplants** except specifically as allowed by this plan.

W

Services or expenses for an accident or illness resulting from active participation in **war**, or any act of war, declared or undeclared, or from active participation in riot or civil commotion.

Services or expenses rendered for any disease, injury or condition arising out of and in the course of employment for which benefits and/or compensation is available in whole or in part under the provisions of any workers' compensation or employers' liability laws, state or federal. This applies whether you fail to file a claim under that law. It applies whether the law is enforced against or assumed by the group. It applies whether the law provides for hospital or medical services as such. It applies whether the provider of those services was authorized as required by the law. Finally, it applies whether your group has insurance coverage for benefits under the law.

Claims and Appeals

Claims for benefits under the plan can be post-service, pre-service, or concurrent. This section of your booklet explains how Blue Cross processes these different types of claims and how you can appeal a partial or complete denial of a claim.

You must act on your own behalf or through an authorized representative if you wish to exercise your rights under this section of your booklet. An authorized representative is someone you designate in writing to act on your behalf. Blue Cross has developed a form that you must use if you wish to designate an authorized representative. You can obtain the form by calling the Blue Cross customer service department. You can also go to the Blue Cross Internet web site at www.bcbsal.com and ask Blue Cross to mail you a copy of the form. If a person is not properly designated as your authorized representative, Blue Cross will not be able to deal with him or her in connection with the exercise of your rights under this section of your booklet.

For urgent pre-service claims, Blue Cross will presume that your provider is your authorized representative unless you tell Blue Cross otherwise in writing.

Post-Service Claims

What Constitutes a Claim: For you to obtain benefits after medical services have been rendered or supplies purchased (a post-service claim), Blue Cross must receive a properly completed and filed claim from you or your provider.

In order for Blue Cross to treat a submission by you or your provider as a post-service claim, it must be submitted on a properly completed standardized claim form or, in the case of electronically filed claims, must provide them with the data elements that Blue Cross specifies in advance. Most providers are aware of our claim filing requirements and will file claims for you. If your provider does not file your claim for you, you should call the customer service department and ask for a claim form. Tell Blue Cross the type of service or supply for which you wish to file a claim (for example, hospital, physician, or pharmacy), and they will send you the proper type of claim form. When you receive the form, complete it, attach an itemized bill, and send it to Blue Cross at 450 Riverchase Parkway East, Birmingham, Alabama 35244-2858. Claims must be submitted and received by Blue Cross within 365 days after the service takes place to be eligible for benefits.

If Blue Cross receives a submission that does not qualify as a claim, they will notify you or your provider of the additional information we need. Once they receive that information, they will process the submission as a claim.

Processing of Claims: Even if Blue Cross has received all of the information that they need in order to treat a submission as a claim, from time to time they might need additional information in order to determine whether the claim is payable. If they need additional information, we will ask you to furnish it to Blue Cross, and they will suspend further processing of your claim until the information is received. You will have 90 days to provide the information to them. In order to expedite our receipt of the information, Blue Cross may request it directly from your provider. If they do this, they will send you a copy of our request. However, you will remain responsible for seeing that they get the information on time.

Ordinarily, Blue Cross will notify you of their decision within 30 days of the date on which your claim is filed. If it is necessary for them to ask for additional information, they will notify you of their decision within 15 days after they receive the requested information. If they do not receive the information, your claim will be considered denied at the expiration of the 90-day period they gave you for furnishing the information to them.

In some cases, Blue Cross may ask for additional time to process your claim. If you do not wish to give them additional time, they will go ahead and process your claim based on the information they have. This may result in a denial of your claim.

Pre-Service Claims

A pre-service claim is one in which you are required to obtain approval from Blue Cross before services or supplies are rendered. For example, you may be required to obtain preadmission certification of inpatient hospital benefits. Or you may be required to obtain a pre-procedure review of other medical services or supplies in order to obtain coverage under the plan.

In order to file a pre-service claim you or your provider must call the Health Management Department at 205.988.2245 or 800.248.2342 (toll-free). You must tell them your contract number, the name of the facility in which you are being admitted (if applicable), the name of a person we can call back, and a phone number to reach that person. You may also, if you wish, submit pre-service claims in writing. Written pre-service claims should be sent to us at 450 Riverchase Parkway East, Birmingham, Alabama 35244-2858.

Non-urgent pre-service claims (for example, those relating to elective services and supplies) must be submitted to Blue Cross during our regular business hours. Urgent pre-service claims can be submitted at any time. Emergency admissions to a hospital do not require you to file a pre-service claim so long as you provide notice to Blue Cross within 48 hours of the admission and they certify the admission as both medically necessary and as an emergency admission. You are not required to precertify an inpatient hospital admission if you are admitted to a Concurrent Utilization Review Program (CURP) hospital by a Preferred Medical Doctor (PMD Physician). If your plan provides chiropractic, physical therapy, or occupational therapy benefits and you receive covered treatment from an in-network chiropractor, in-network physical therapist, or in-network occupational therapist, your provider is responsible for initiating the precertification process for you. For home health care and hospice benefits (if covered by your plan), see the previous sections of this booklet for instructions on how to precertify treatment.

If you attempt to file a pre-service claim but fail to follow our procedures for doing so, they will notify you of the failure within 24 hours (for urgent pre-service claims) or five days (for non-urgent pre-service claims). Our notification may be oral, unless you ask for it in writing. They will provide this notification to you only if (1) your attempt to submit a pre-service claim was received by a person or organizational unit of our company that is customarily responsible for handling benefit matters, and (2), your submission contains the name of a member, a specific medical condition or symptom, and a specific treatment or service for which approval is being requested.

Urgent Pre-Service Claims: Blue Cross will treat your claim as urgent if a delay in processing your claim could seriously jeopardize your life, health, or ability to regain maximum function or, in the opinion of your treating physician, a delay would subject you to severe pain that cannot be managed without the care or treatment that is the subject of your claim. If your treating physician tells Blue Cross that your claim is urgent, they will treat it as such.

If your claim is urgent, Blue Cross will notify you of their decision within 72 hours. If they need more information, they will let you know within 24 hours of your claim. They will tell you what further information they need. You will then have 48 hours to provide this information to them. They will notify you of their decision within 48 hours after they receive the requested information. Their response may be oral; if it is, they will follow it up in writing within three days. If they do not receive the information, your claim will be considered denied at the expiration of the 48-hour period they gave you for furnishing the information to them.

Non-Urgent Pre-Service Claims: If your claim is not urgent, they will notify you of their decision within 15 days. If they need more information, they will let you know before the 15-day period expires. They will tell you what further information they need. You will then have 90 days to provide this information to them. In order to expedite their receipt of the information, they may request it directly from your provider. If they do this, they will send you a copy of our request. However, you will remain responsible for seeing that they get the information on time. They will notify you of their decision within 15 days after they receive the requested information. If they do not receive the information, your claim will be considered denied at the expiration of the 90-day period they gave you for furnishing the information to them.

Courtesy Pre-Determinations: For some procedures Blue Cross encourage, but does not require, you to contact them before you have the procedure. For example, if you or your physician thinks a procedure might be excluded as cosmetic, you can ask Blue Cross to determine beforehand whether the procedure is cosmetic or reconstructive. We call this type of review a courtesy pre-determination. If you ask for a courtesy pre-determination, they will do their best to provide you with a timely response. If they decide that

they cannot provide you with a courtesy pre-determination (for example, they cannot get the information they need to make an informed decision), they will let you know. In either case, courtesy pre-determinations are not pre-service claims under the plan. When they process requests for courtesy pre-determinations, they are not bound by the time frames and standards that apply to pre-service claims. In order to request a courtesy pre-determination, you or your provider should call the customer service department.

Concurrent Care Determinations

Determinations by Us to Limit or Reduce Previously Approved Care: If they have previously approved a hospital stay or course of treatment to be provided over a period of time or number of treatments, and they later decide to limit or reduce the previously approved stay or course of treatment, they will give you enough advance written notice to permit you to initiate an appeal and obtain a decision before the date on which care or treatments are no longer approved. You must follow any reasonable rules they establish for the filing of your appeal, such as time limits within which the appeal must be filed.

Requests by You to Extend Previously Approved Care: If a previously approved hospital stay or course of treatment is about to expire, you may submit a request to extend your approved care. You may make this request in writing or orally either directly to Blue Cross or through your treating physician or a hospital representative. The phone numbers to call in order to request an extension of care are as follows:

- For inpatient hospital care, call 205.988.2245 or 800.248.2342 (toll-free).
- For in-network physical therapy or occupational therapy (if covered by your plan) call 205.220.7202.
- For care from an in-network chiropractor (if covered by your plan) call 205.220.7202.

If your request for additional care is urgent, and if you submit it no later than 24 hours before the end of your pre-approved stay or course of treatment, they will give you their decision within 24 hours of when your request is submitted. If your request is not made before this 24-hour time frame, and your request is urgent, they will give you our determination within 72 hours. If your request is not urgent, they will treat it as a new claim for benefits, and will make a determination on your claim within the pre-service or post-service time frames discussed above, as appropriate.

Your Right To Information

You have the right, upon request, to receive copies of any documents that they relied on in reaching their decision and any documents that were submitted, considered, or generated by them in the course of reaching their decision. You also have the right to receive copies of any internal rules, guidelines, or protocols that they may have relied upon in reaching our decision. If their decision was based on a medical or scientific determination (such as medical necessity), you may also request that they provide you with a statement explaining their application of those medical and scientific principles to you. If they obtained advice from a health care professional (regardless of whether they relied on that advice), you may request that we give you the name of that person. Any request that you make for information under this paragraph must be in writing. Blue Cross will not charge you for any information that you request under this paragraph.

Appeals

The rules in this section of this booklet allow you or your authorized representative to appeal any adverse benefit determination. An adverse benefit determination includes any one or more of the following:

- Any determination Blue Cross makes with respect to a post-service claim that results in your owing any money to your provider other than copayments you make, or are required to make, to your provider;
- Our denial of a pre-service claim; or,
- An adverse concurrent care determination (for example, we deny your request to extend previously approved care).

In all cases other than determinations by them to limit or reduce previously approved care, you have 180 days following their adverse benefit determination within which to submit an appeal.

How to Appeal Post-Service Adverse Benefit Determinations: If you wish to file an appeal of an adverse benefit determination relating to a post-service claim Blue Cross recommends that you use a form that they have developed for this purpose. The form will help you provide them with the information that they need to consider your appeal. To get the form, you may call the customer service department. You may also go to the Internet web site at www.bcbsal.com. Once there, you may request a copy of the form.

If you choose not to use the appeal form, you may send a letter. Your letter must contain at least the following information:

- The patient's name;
- The patient's contract number;
- Sufficient information to reasonably identify the claim or claims being appealed, such as date of service, provider name, procedure (if known), and claim number (if available). (The best way to satisfy this requirement is to include a copy of your claims report with your appeal.); and,
- A statement that you are filing an appeal.

You must send your appeal to the following address:

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Alabama
Attention: Customer Service Appeals
P.O. Box 12185
Birmingham, Alabama 35202-2185

Please note that if you call or write Blue Cross without following the rules just described for filing an appeal, they will not treat your inquiry as an appeal. They will, of course, do everything they can to resolve your questions or concerns.

How to Appeal Pre-Service Adverse Benefit Determinations: You may appeal an adverse benefit determination relating to a pre-service claim in writing or over the phone.

- If over the phone, you should call the appropriate phone number listed below:
- For inpatient hospital care and admissions, call 205.988.2245 or 800.248.2342 (toll-free).
- For in-network physical therapy or occupational therapy (if covered by your plan) call 205.220.7202.
- For care from an in-network chiropractor (if covered by your plan) call 205.220.7202. If in writing, you should send your letter to the appropriate address listed below:

For inpatient hospital care and admissions:

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Alabama
Attention: Health Management – Appeals
P.O. Box 2504
Birmingham, Alabama 35201-2504

or

For in-network physical therapy, occupational therapy, or care from an in-network chiropractor (when covered by your plan):

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Alabama
Attention: Health Management – Appeals
P.O. Box 362025
Birmingham, Alabama 35236

Your written appeal should provide them with your name, contract number, the name of the facility or provider involved, and the date or dates of service.

Please note that if you call or write them without following the rules just described for filing an appeal, they

will not treat your inquiry as an appeal. Blue Cross will, of course, do everything they can to resolve your questions or concerns.

Conduct of the Appeal: They will assign your appeal to one or more persons within our organization who are neither the persons who made the initial determination nor subordinates of those persons. If resolution of your appeal requires us to make a medical judgment (such as whether services or supplies are medically necessary), they will consult a health care professional who has appropriate expertise. If they consulted a health care professional during our initial decision, they will not consult that same person or a subordinate of that person during their consideration of your appeal.

If they need more information, they will ask you to provide it to them. In some cases they may ask your provider to furnish that information directly to them. If they do this, they will send you a copy of their request. However, you will remain responsible for seeing that they get the information. If they do not get the information, it may be necessary for them to deny your appeal.

Time Limits for Our Consideration of Your Appeal: If your appeal arises from their denial of a post-service claim, they will notify you of their decision within 60 days of the date on which you filed your appeal.

If your appeal arises from our denial of a pre-service claim, and if your claim is urgent, they will consider your appeal and notify you of their decision within 72 hours. If your pre-service claim is not urgent, they will give you a response within 30 days.

If your appeal arises out of a determination by them to limit or reduce a hospital stay or course of treatment that they previously approved for a period of time or number of treatments, (see *Concurrent Care Determinations* above), they will make a decision on your appeal as soon as possible, but in any event before we impose the limit or reduction.

If your appeal relates to our decision not to extend a previously approved length of stay or course of treatment (see *Concurrent Care Determinations* above), they will make a decision on your appeal within 72 hours (in urgent pre-service cases), 30 days (in non-urgent pre-service cases), or 60 days (in post-service cases).

In some cases, they may ask for additional time to process your appeal. If you do not wish to give us additional time, they will go ahead and decide your appeal based on the information they have. This may result in a denial of your appeal.

If You Are Dissatisfied After Exhausting Your Mandatory Plan Administrative Remedies: If you have filed an appeal and are dissatisfied with our response, you may do one or more of the following:

- You may ask our customer service department for further help;
- You may file a voluntary appeal (discussed below); or,

Voluntary Appeals: If they have given you our appeal decision and you are still dissatisfied, you may file a second appeal (called a voluntary appeal). If your voluntary appeal relates to a pre-service adverse benefit determination, you may file your appeal in writing or over the phone. If over the phone, you should call the phone number you called to submit your first appeal. If in writing, you should send your letter to the same address you used when you submitted your first appeal.

Your written appeal must state that you are filing a voluntary appeal.

If you file a voluntary appeal (whether oral or written), they will not assert in court a failure to exhaust administrative remedies if you fail to exhaust the voluntary appeal. They will also agree that any defense based upon timeliness or statutes of limitations will be tolled during the time that your voluntary appeal is pending. In addition, they will not impose any fees or costs on you as part of your voluntary appeal.

You may ask them to provide you with more information about voluntary appeals. This additional information will allow you to make an informed judgment about whether to request a voluntary appeal.

Claim Hold Provision: PEEHIP may place your account on hold (i.e., suspend your account, thus suspending payment of medical and prescription drug claims under your account) for either of the following reasons:

- Non-payment of an amount owed PEEHIP (including failure to pay premiums or refunds due PEEHIP and payment by check drawn on an account which had insufficient funds or chargebacks for credit cards);
- Failure to provide required documentation to PEEHIP (including documentation relating to the eligibility of you or any of your dependents, as well as subrogation documentation).

If your account is placed on claims hold, your claims will not be processed by Blue Cross until PEEHIP notifies Blue Cross that the account has been returned to active status. In the event your account is placed on claims hold, please contact PEEHIP at 877.517.0020 immediately so that PEEHIP may work with you to return your account to active status.

Respecting Your Privacy

The confidentiality of your personal health information is important to us. Under a federal law called the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA), plans such as this one are generally required to limit the use and disclosure of your protected health information to treatment, payment, and health care operations and to put in place appropriate safeguards to protect your protected health information. This section of this booklet explains some of HIPAA's requirements. Additional information is contained in the plan's notice of privacy practices.

Disclosures of Protected Health Information to the Plan Sponsor:

In order for your benefits to be properly administered, the plan needs to share your protected health information with the plan sponsor (your group). Following are circumstances under which the plan may disclose your protected health information to the plan sponsor:

- The plan may inform the plan sponsor whether you are enrolled in the plan.
- The plan may disclose summary health information to the plan sponsor. The plan sponsor must limit its use of that information to obtaining quotes from insurers or modifying, amending, or terminating the plan. Summary health information is information that summarizes claims history, claims expenses, or types of claims without identifying you.
- The plan may disclose your protected health information to the plan sponsor for plan administrative purposes. This is because employees of the plan sponsor perform some of the administrative functions necessary for the management and operation of the plan.

Following are the restrictions that apply to the plan sponsor's use and disclosure of your protected health information:

- The plan sponsor will only use or disclose your protected health information for plan administrative purposes, as required by law, or as permitted under the HIPAA regulations. See the plan's privacy notice for more information about permitted uses and disclosures of protected health information under HIPAA.
- If the plan sponsor discloses any of your protected health information to any of its agents or subcontractors, the plan sponsor will require the agent or subcontractor to keep your protected health information as required by the HIPAA regulations.
- The plan sponsor will not use or disclose your protected health information for employment-related actions or decisions or in connection with any other benefit or benefit plan of the plan sponsor.
- The plan sponsor will promptly report to the plan any use or disclosure of your protected health information that is inconsistent with the uses or disclosures allowed in this section of this booklet.
- The plan sponsor will allow you or the plan to inspect and copy any protected health information about you that is in the plan sponsor's custody and control. The HIPAA regulations set forth the rules that you and the plan must follow in this regard. There are some exceptions.
- The plan sponsor will amend, or allow the plan to amend, any portion of your protected health information to the extent permitted or required under the HIPAA regulations.
- With respect to some types of disclosures, the plan sponsor will keep a disclosure log. The disclosure log will go back for six years (but not before April 14, 2003). You have a right to see the disclosure log. The plan sponsor does not have to maintain the log if disclosures are for certain plan related purposes, such as payment of benefits or health care operations.
- The plan sponsor will make its internal practices, books, and records, relating to its use and disclosure of your protected health information available to the plan and to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, or its designee.
- The plan sponsor will, if feasible, return or destroy all of your protected health information in the plan sponsor's custody or control that the plan sponsor has received from the plan or from any

business associate when the plan sponsor no longer needs your protected health information to administer the plan. If it is not feasible for the plan sponsor to return or destroy your protected health information, the plan sponsor will limit the use or disclosure of any protected health information that it cannot feasibly return or destroy to those purposes that make return or destruction of the information infeasible.

The following classes of employees or other workforce members under the control of the plan sponsor may use or disclose your protected health information in accordance with the HIPAA regulations that have just been explained:

- If any of the foregoing employees or workforce members of the plan sponsor use or disclose your protected health information in violation of the rules that are explained above, the employees or workforce members will be subject to disciplinary action and sanctions – which may include termination of employment.
- If the plan sponsor becomes aware of any such violation, the plan sponsor will promptly report the violation to the plan and will cooperate with the plan to correct the violation, to impose appropriate sanctions, and to relieve any harmful effects to you.

Security of Your Personal Health Information:

Following are restrictions that will apply to the plan sponsor's storage and transmission of your electronic protected health information:

- The plan sponsor will have in place appropriate administrative, physical and technical safeguards to protect the confidentiality, integrity and availability of your electronic protected health information, as well as to ensure that only those classes of employees or other workforce members of the plan sponsor described above have access to use or disclose your electronic protected health information in accordance with the HIPAA regulations.
- If the plan sponsor discloses any of your electronic protected health information to any of its agents or subcontractors, the plan sponsor will require the agent or subcontractor to have in place the appropriate safeguards as required by the HIPAA regulations.

The plan sponsor will report to the plan any security incident of which it becomes aware in accordance with the HIPAA regulations.

Our Use and Disclosure of Your Personal Health Information:

As a business associate of the plan, we (Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Alabama) have an agreement with the plan that allows us to use your personal health information for treatment, payment, health care operations, and other purposes permitted or required by HIPAA. In addition, by applying for coverage and participating in the plan, you agree that we may obtain, use and release all records about you and your minor dependents that we need to administer the plan or to perform any function authorized or permitted by law. You further direct all persons to release all records to us about you and your minor dependents that we need in order to administer the plan.

Privacy Notice

This notice describes how medical information about you may be used and disclosed and how you can get access to this information. Please review this notice carefully.

The Public Education Employees' Health Insurance Plan (the "Plan") considers personal information to be confidential. The Plan protects the privacy of that information in accordance with applicable privacy laws, as well as its own privacy policies.

The Plan is required by law to take reasonable steps to ensure the privacy of your health information and to inform you about:

- the Plan's uses and disclosures of your health information
- your privacy rights with respect to your health information
- the Plan's obligations with respect to your health information

- your right to file a complaint with the Plan and to the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
- the person or office to contact for further information about the Plan's privacy practices

Effective Date of Notice: This notice was effective as of April 14, 2003.

How the Plan Uses and Discloses Health Information This section of the notice describes uses and disclosures that the Plan may make of your health information for certain purposes without first obtaining your permission as well as instances in which we may request your written permission to use or disclose your health information. The Plan also requires their business associates to protect the privacy of your health information through written agreements.

Uses and disclosures related to payment, health care operations and treatment The Plan and its business associates may use your health information without your permission to carry out payment or health care operations. The Plan may also disclose health information to the Plan Sponsor, PEEHIP, for purposes related to payment or health care operations.

Payment includes but is not limited to actions to make coverage determinations and payment (including billing, claims management, subrogation, plan reimbursement, review for medical necessity and appropriateness of care and utilization review and preauthorizations). For example, the Plan may tell an insurer what percentage of a bill will be paid by the Plan.

Health care operations include but are not limited to underwriting, premium rating and other insurance activities relating to creating or renewing insurance contracts, disease management, case management, conducting or arrangement for medical review, legal services and auditing functions, including fraud and abuse programs, business planning and development, business management and general administrative activities. It also includes quality assessment and improvement and reviewing competence or qualifications of health care professionals. For example, the Plan may use medical benefit claims information to conduct a review of the accuracy of how benefit claims are being paid.

Other uses and disclosures that do not require your written authorization The Plan may disclose your health information to persons and entities that provide services to the Plan and assure the Plan they will protect the information or if it:

Constitutes summary health information and is used only for modifying, amending or terminating a group health plan or obtaining premium bids from health plans providing coverage under the group health plan

- Constitutes de-identified information
- Relates to workers' compensation programs
- Is for judicial and administrative proceedings
- Is about decedents
- Is for law enforcement purposes
- Is for public health activities
- Is for health oversight activities
- Is about victims of abuse, neglect or domestic violence
- Is for cadaveric organ, eye or tissue donation purposes
- Is for certain limited research purposes
- Is to avert a serious threat to health or safety
- Is for specialized government functions
- Is for limited marketing activities

Additional disclosures to others without your written authorization The Plan may disclose your health information to a relative, a friend or any other person you identify, provided the information is directly relevant to that person's involvement with your health care or payment for that care. For example, the Plan

may confirm whether or not a claim has been received and paid. You have the right to request that this kind of disclosure be limited or stopped by contacting the Plan's Privacy Official.

Uses and Disclosures Requiring Your Written Authorization In all situations other than those described above, the Plan will ask for your written authorization before using or disclosing your health information. If you have given the Plan an authorization, you may revoke it at any time, if the Plan has not already acted on it. If you have questions regarding authorizations, contact the Plan's Privacy Official.

Your Privacy Rights

This section of the notice describes your rights with respect to your health information and a brief description of how you may exercise these rights. To exercise your rights, you must contact the Plan's Privacy Official at 877.517.0020.

Restrict Uses and Disclosures You have the right to request that the Plan restricts uses and disclosure of your health information for activities related to payment, health care operations and treatment. The Plan will consider, but may not agree to, such requests.

Alternative Communication The Plan will accommodate reasonable requests to communicate with you at a certain location or in a certain way. For example, if you are covered as an adult dependent, you may want the Plan to send health information to a different address than that of the Employee.

Copy of Health Information You have a right to obtain a copy of health information that is contained in a "designated record set" –records used in making enrollment, payment, claims adjudication, and other decisions. The Plan may provide you with a summary of the health information if you agree in advance to the summary. You may also be asked to pay a fee of \$1.00 per page based on the Plan's copying, mailing, and other preparation costs.

Amend Health Information You have the right to request an amendment to health information that is in a "designated record set." The Plan may deny your request to amend your health information if the Plan did not create the health information, if the information is not part of the Plan's records, if the information was not available for inspection or the information is accurate and complete.

List of Certain Disclosures You have the right to receive a list of certain disclosures of your health information. The Plan or its business associates will provide you with one free accounting each year. For subsequent requests, you may be charged a reasonable fee.

Right to A Copy of Privacy Notice You have the right to receive a paper copy of this notice upon request, even if you agreed to receive the notice electronically.

Complaints You may complain to the Plan or the Secretary of HHS if you believe your privacy rights have been violated. You will not be penalized for filing a complaint.

The Plan's Responsibilities The Plan is required by a federal law to keep your health information private, to give you notice of the Plan's legal duties and privacy practices, and to follow the terms of the notice currently in effect.

This Notice is Subject to Change The terms of this notice and the Plan's privacy policies may be changed at any time. If changes are made, the new terms and policies will then apply to all health information maintained by the Plan. If any material changes are made, the Plan will distribute a new notice to participants and beneficiaries.

Your Questions and Comments If you have questions regarding this notice, please contact the Plan's Privacy Official at 877.517.0020.

General Information

Delegation of Discretionary Authority to Blue Cross

The group has delegated to Blue Cross the discretionary responsibility and authority to determine claims under the plan, to construe, interpret, and administer the plan, and to perform every other act necessary or appropriate in connection with our provision of benefits and/or administrative services under the plan. Whenever they make reasonable determinations that are neither arbitrary nor capricious in our administration of the plan, those determinations will be final and binding on you, subject only to your right of review under the plan.

Notice

Blue Cross gives you notice when they mail it or send it electronically to you or your group at the latest address we have. You and your group are assumed to receive notice three days after we mail it. Your group is your agent to receive notices from us about the plan. The group is responsible for giving you all notices from us. We are not responsible if your group fails to do so.

Unless otherwise specified in this booklet, if you are required to provide notice to us, you should do so in writing, including your full name and contract number, and mail the notice to us at 450 Riverchase Parkway East, P.O. Box 995, Birmingham, Alabama 35298-0001.

Correcting Payments

While Blue Cross tries to pay all claims quickly and correctly, they can make mistakes. If Blue Cross pays you or a provider in error, the payee must repay Blue Cross. If he does not, they may deduct the amount paid in error from any future amount paid to you or the provider. If Blue Cross deducts it from an amount paid to you, it will be reflected in your claims report.

Responsibility for Providers

Blue Cross is not responsible for what providers do or fail to do. If they refuse to treat you or give you poor or dangerous care, they are not responsible. They need not do anything to enable them to treat you.

Misrepresentation

If you make any material misrepresentation in applying for coverage, when Blue Cross or PEEHIP learns of this they may terminate your coverage back to the effective date on which your coverage began as listed in the records. PEEHIP need not refund any payment for your coverage. If your group materially misrepresents its application it will be as though the plan never took effect, and they need not refund any payment for any member.

Termination of Benefits and Termination of the Plan

Blue Cross' obligation to provide or administer benefits under the plan may be terminated at any time by either the group or by blue Cross by giving written notice to the other as provided for in the contract.

If the group fails to pay Blue Cross the amounts due under the contract within the time period specified therein, Blue Cross' obligation to provide or administer benefits under the plan will terminate automatically and without notice to you or the group as of the date due for payment. The fiduciary obligation, if any, to notify you of this termination belongs to the group, not to Blue Cross.

Subject to any conditions or restrictions in our contract with the group, the group may terminate the plan at any time through action by its authorized officers. In the event of termination of the plan, all benefit payments by Blue Cross will cease as of the effective date of termination, regardless of whether notice of the termination has been provided to you by the group or Blue Cross. The fiduciary obligation, if any, to notify you of this termination belongs to the group, not to Blue Cross.

If for any reason our services are terminated under the contract, you will cease to receive any benefits by Blue Cross for any and all claims incurred after the effective date of termination. In some cases, this may mean retroactive cancellation by PEEHIP of your plan benefits. This is true for active subscribers, retirees, COBRA beneficiaries and dependents of either.

Changes in the Plan

Subject to any conditions or restrictions in our contract with the group, any and all of the provisions of the plan may be amended by the group at any time by an instrument in writing. In many cases, this instrument will consist of a new booklet (including any riders or supplements to the booklet) that Blue Cross has prepared and sent to the group in draft format. This means that from time to time the benefit booklet you have in your possession may not be the most current. If you have any question whether your booklet is up to date, you should contact your group. Any fiduciary obligation to notify you of changes in the plan belongs to the group, not to Blue Cross.

The new benefit booklet (including any riders or supplements to the booklet) will state the effective date applicable to it. In some cases, this effective date may be retroactive to the first day of the plan year to which the changes relate. The changes will apply to all benefits for services you receive on or after the stated effective date.

Except as otherwise provided in the contract, no representative, employee, or agent of Blue Cross is authorized to amend or vary the terms and conditions of the plan or to make any agreement or promise not specifically contained in the plan documents or to waive any provision of the plan documents.

Out-of-Area Co-Pay and Co-Insurance

When you obtain health care services through the BlueCard Program outside of the Alabama service area, the amount you pay for covered services is calculated on the lower of:

- The billed charges for your covered services, or
- The negotiated price that the on-site Blue Cross and/or Blue Shield plan (“Host Plan”) passes on to Blue Cross.

Often, this “negotiated price” will consist of a simple discount which reflects the actual price paid by the Host Plan. But sometimes it is an estimated price that factors into the actual price expected settlements, withholds, any other contingent payment arrangements and non-claims transactions with your health care provider or with a specified group of providers. The negotiated price may also be billed charges reduced to reflect an average expected savings with your health care provider or with a specified group of providers. The price that reflects average savings may result in greater variation (more or less) from the actual price paid than will the estimated price. The negotiated price may also be adjusted in the future to correct for over-or underestimation of past prices. However, the amount you pay is considered a final price.

Statutes in a small number of states may require the Host Plan to use a basis for calculating your payment for covered services that does not reflect the entire savings realized, or expected to be realized, on a particular claim or to add a surcharge. Should any state statutes mandate payment calculation methods that differ from the usual BlueCard method noted above in paragraph one of this section or require a surcharge, Blue Cross would then calculate your liability for any covered health care services in accordance with the applicable state statute in effect at the time you received your care.

Definitions

Accidental Injury: A traumatic injury to you caused solely by an accident.

Allowed Amount: Benefit payments for covered services are based on the amount of the provider's charge that Blue Cross recognizes for payment of benefits. This amount is limited to the lesser of the provider's charge for care or the amount of that charge that is determined by Blue Cross to be allowable depending on the type of provider utilized and the state in which services are rendered, as described below:

In-Network Providers: Blue Cross and/or Blue Shield plans contract with providers to furnish care for a negotiated price. This negotiated price is often a discounted rate, and the in-network provider normally accepts this rate (subject to any applicable copayments, coinsurance, or deductibles that are the responsibility of the patient) as payment in full for covered care. The negotiated price applies only to services that are covered under the plan and also covered under the contract that has been signed with the in-network provider.

Each local Blue Cross and/or Blue Shield plan determines which of the providers in its service area will be considered in-network providers.

See [Out-of-Area Copayments and Coinsurance](#), earlier in this booklet, for a description of the contracting arrangements that exist outside the state of Alabama.

Out-of-Network Providers: The allowed amount for care rendered by out-of-network providers is often determined by the Blue Cross and/or Blue Shield plan where services are rendered. This amount may be based on the negotiated rate payable to in-network providers or may be based on the average charge for the care in the area. In other cases, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Alabama determines the allowed amount using historical data and information from various sources such as, but not limited to:

- The charge or average charge for the same or a similar service;
- Pricing data from the local Blue Cross and/or Blue Shield plan where services are rendered;
- The relative complexity of the service;
- The in-network allowance in Alabama for the same or a similar service;
- Applicable state health care factors;
- The rate of inflation using a recognized measure; and,
- Other reasonable limits, as may be required with respect to outpatient prescription drug costs.

For services provided by an out-of-network provider, the provider may bill the member for charges in excess of the allowed amount. The allowed amount will not exceed the amount of the provider's charge.

Ambulatory Surgical Center: A facility that provides surgical services on an outpatient basis for patients who do not need to occupy an inpatient, acute care hospital bed. In order to be considered an ambulatory surgical facility under the plan, the facility must meet the conditions for participation in Medicare.

Application: The subscriber's original application form and any written supplemental application accepted by PEEHIP.

Assisted Reproductive Technology (ART): Any combination of chemical and/or mechanical means of obtaining gametes and placing them into a medium (whether internal or external to the human body) to enhance the chance that reproduction will occur. Examples of ART include, but are not limited to, in vitro fertilization, gamete intrafallopian transfer, zygote intrafallopian transfer and pronuclear stage tubal transfer.

Blue Cross: Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Alabama, except where the context designates otherwise.

BlueCard Program: An arrangement among Blue Cross Plans by which a member of one Blue Cross Plan receives benefits available through another Blue Cross Plan located in the area where services occur.

Concurrent Utilization Review Program (CURP): A program implemented by us and in-network hospitals in the Alabama service area to simplify the administration of preadmission certifications and concurrent utilization reviews.

Contract: Unless the context requires otherwise, the terms "contract" and "plan" are used interchangeably. The contract includes Blue Cross' financial agreement or administrative services agreement with the PEEHIP.

Cosmetic Surgery: Any surgery done primarily to improve or change the way one appears, cosmetic surgery does not primarily improve the way the body works or correct deformities resulting from disease, trauma, or birth defect. For important information on cosmetic surgery, see the exclusion under [Health Benefit Exclusions](#) for cosmetic surgery.

Custodial Care: Care primarily to provide room and board for a person who is mentally or physically disabled.

Diagnostic: Services performed in response to signs or symptoms of illness, condition, or disease or in some cases where there is family history of illness, condition, or disease.

Durable Medical Equipment (DME): Equipment we approve as medically necessary to diagnose or treat an illness or injury or to prevent a condition from becoming worse. To be durable medical equipment an item must be made to withstand repeated use, be for a medical purpose rather than for comfort or convenience, be useful only if you are sick or injured, and be related to your condition and prescribed by your physician to use in your home.

Elective Abortion: An abortion performed for reasons other than the compromised physical health of the mother, severe chromosomal or fetal deformity, or conception due to incest or rape.

Employer: Unless the context otherwise requires, the terms "employer" and "group" have the same meaning.

Family Coverage: Coverage for a subscriber and one or more dependents.

Group: PEEHIP which contracts with Blue Cross and through which you have coverage.

Home Health Coverage: Skilled nursing visits ordered by a physician, rendered in a patient's home by a Registered Nurse or Licensed Practical Nurse and billed by a home health agency. Any pre-certification requirements and/or any specified benefit maximums are applicable to the skilled nursing visits only. Other services included are home infusion therapy and medications administered by a home health agency. Service such as speech therapy, occupational therapy and physical therapy may be billed by a home health agency; however, they are considered under the major medical/other covered services portion of the contract and not considered under the major/other covered services portion of the contract and not considered under home health coverage.

Hospice Coverage: Hospice service includes supplies or drugs included in the daily fee for hospice care rendered by a hospice provider to a terminally ill member when a physician certifies the member's life expectancy to be less than six months.

Hospital: Any institution that is classified by us as a "general" hospital using, as we deem applicable, generally available sources of information.

Implantables: An implantable device is a biocompatible mechanical device, biomedical material, or therapeutic agent that is implanted in whole or in part and serves to support or replace a biological structure, support and/or enhance the command and control of a biological process, or provides a therapeutic effect. Examples include, but are not limited to, cochlear implants, neurostimulators, indwelling orthopedic devices, cultured tissues, tissue makers, radioactive seeds, and infusion pumps.

In-Network Provider: A provider is considered to be an in-network provider if, and only to the extent that, the provider is furnishing a service or supply that is specified as an in-network benefit under the terms of the contract between the provider and the Blue Cross and/or Blue Shield plan (or its affiliates). Examples include BlueCard PPO providers, Preferred Medical Doctors (PMD physicians). A provider will be

considered an in-network provider only if the local Blue Cross and/or Blue Shield plan designates the provider as a BlueCard PPO provider for the service or supply being furnished. This means that if you receive a service or supply from a provider that has a contractual relationship with a Blue Cross and/or Blue Shield plan but is not designated by the local Blue Cross and/or Blue Shield plan as a BlueCard PPO provider, Blue Cross will pay at the out-of-network level of benefits.

Inpatient: A registered bed patient in a hospital.

Investigational: Any treatment, procedure, facility, equipment, drugs, drug usage, or supplies that either Blue Cross has not recognized as having scientifically established medical value, or that does not meet generally accepted standards of medical practice. When possible, they develop written criteria (called medical criteria) concerning services or supplies that they consider to be investigational. They base these criteria on peer-reviewed literature, recognized standards of medical practice, and technology assessments. They put these medical criteria in policies that they make available to the medical community and our members. They do this so that you and your providers will know in advance, when possible, what they will pay for. If a service or supply is considered investigational according to one of our published medical criteria policies, they will not pay for it. If the investigational nature of a service or supply is not addressed by one of our published medical criteria policies, they will consider it to be non-investigational only if the following requirements are met:

- The technology must have final approval from the appropriate government regulatory bodies;
- The scientific evidence must permit conclusions concerning the effect of the technology on health outcomes;
- The technology must improve the net health outcome;
- The technology must be as beneficial as any established alternatives; and,
- The improvement must be attainable outside the investigational setting.

It is important for you to remember that when they make determinations about the investigational nature of a service or supply they are making them solely for the purpose of determining whether to pay for the service or supply. All decisions concerning your treatment must be made solely by your attending physician and other medical providers.

Medical Emergency: A medical condition that occurs suddenly and without warning with symptoms which are so acute and severe as to require immediate medical attention to prevent permanent damage to the health, other serious medical results, serious impairment to bodily function, or serious and permanent lack of function of any bodily organ or part.

Medically Necessary or Medical Necessity: Blue Cross uses these terms to help them determine whether a particular service or supply will be covered. When possible, Blue Cross develops written criteria (called medical criteria) that are used to determine medical necessity. Blue Cross bases these criteria on peer-reviewed literature, recognized standards of medical practice, and technology assessments. Blue Cross puts these medical criteria in policies that are made available to the medical community and members. We do this so that you and your providers will know in advance, when possible, what they will pay for. If a service or supply is not medically necessary according to one of the published medical criteria policies, Blue Cross will not pay for it. If a service or supply is not addressed by one of the published medical criteria policies, Blue Cross will consider it to be medically necessary only if they determine that it is:

- Appropriate and necessary for the symptoms, diagnosis, or treatment of your medical condition;
- Provided for the diagnosis or direct care and treatment of your medical condition;
- In accordance with standards of good medical practice accepted by the organized medical community;
- Not primarily for the convenience and/or comfort of you, your family, your physician, or another provider of services;
- Not “investigational”; and,
- Performed in the least costly setting, method, or manner, or with the least costly supplies, required

by your medical condition. A "setting" may be your home, a physician's office, an ambulatory surgical facility, a hospital's outpatient department, a hospital when you are an inpatient, or another type of facility providing a lesser level of care. Only your medical condition is considered in deciding which setting is medically necessary. Your financial or family situation, the distance you live from a hospital or other facility, or any other non-medical factor is not considered. As your medical condition changes, the setting you need may also change. Ask your physician if any of your services can be performed on an outpatient basis or in a less costly setting.

It is important for you to remember that when we make medical necessity determinations, they are making them solely for the purpose of determining whether to pay for a medical service or supply. All decisions concerning your treatment must be made solely by your attending physician and other medical providers.

Member: A subscriber or eligible dependent who has coverage under the plan.

Mental Health Disorders and Substance Abuse: These are mental disorders, mental illness, psychiatric illness, mental conditions, and psychiatric conditions. These disorders, illnesses, and conditions are considered mental health disorders and substance abuse whether they are of organic, biological, chemical, or genetic origin. They are considered mental health disorders and substance abuse regardless of how they are caused, based, or brought on. Mental health disorders and substance abuse include, but are not limited to, psychoses, neuroses, schizophrenic-affective disorders, personality disorders, and psychological or behavioral abnormalities associated with temporary or permanent dysfunction of the brain or related system of hormones controlled by nerves. They are intended to include disorders, conditions, and illnesses listed in the current Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders.

Out-of-Network Provider: A provider who is not an in-network provider.

Outpatient: A patient who is not a registered bed patient of a hospital. For example, a patient receiving services in the outpatient department of a hospital or in a physician's office is an outpatient; provided that Blue Cross reserves the right in appropriate cases to reclassify outpatient services as inpatient stays, as explained above in *Inpatient Hospital Benefits* and *Outpatient Hospital Benefits*.

Physician: One of the following when licensed and acting within the scope of that license at the time and place you are treated or receive services: Doctor of Medicine (M.D.), Doctor of Osteopathy (D.O.), Doctor of Dental Surgery (D.D.S.), Doctor of Medical Dentistry (D.M.D.), Doctor of Chiropractic (D.C.), Doctor of Podiatry (D.P.M.), Doctor of Optometry (O.D.).

With respect to the following non-physicians, Blue Cross will treat professional services as though they have been provided by a physician, subject to the terms of any applicable contracts with providers:

- Psychologists who are licensed by the state in which they practice (Ph.D., Psy.D. or Ed.D.), as defined in Section 27-1-18 of the Alabama Code or other applicable state law.

Plan: The plan is the group health benefit plan of the employer, as amended from time to time. The plan documents consist of the following:

- This benefit booklet, as amended;
- The Blue Cross contract with the PEEHIP, as amended;
- Any benefit matrices upon which BlueCross has relied with respect to the administration of the plan.

If there is any conflict between any of the foregoing documents, Blue Cross will resolve that conflict in a manner that best reflects the intent of the group and Blue Cross as of the date on which claims were incurred. Unless the context requires otherwise, the terms "plan" and "contract" have the same meaning.

Plan Administrator: The group that sponsors the plan and is responsible for its overall administration.

Preadmission Certification: The procedures used to determine whether a member requires treatment as a hospital inpatient prior to a member's admission, or within 48 hours or the next business day after the admission in the case of an emergency admission, based upon medically recognized criteria.

Preferred Medical Doctor: A physician who has an agreement with Blue Cross and Blue Shield to provide surgical and medical services to members entitled to benefits under the PPO program.

Pregnancy: The condition of and complications arising from a woman having a fertilized ovum, embryo or fetus in her body – usually, but not always, in the uterus – and lasting from the time of conception to the time of childbirth, abortion, miscarriage or other termination.

Preventive or Routine: Services performed prior to the onset of signs or symptoms of illness, condition or disease or services which are not diagnostic.

Private Duty Nursing: A session of four or more hours during which continuous skilled nursing care is furnished to you alone. Nursing care provided in the patient's home by a licensed professional nurse (R.N.) or a licensed practical nurse (LPN) who does not reside in the patient's home and is not related to the patient by blood or marriage.

Subscriber: The employee whose application for coverage under the contract is made and accepted by Blue Cross and/or the group – depending upon which organization is responsible for making eligibility determinations.

Teleconsultation: Consultation, evaluation, and management services provided to patients via telecommunication systems without personal face-to-face interaction between the patient and health care provider. Teleconsultations include consultations by e-mail or other electronic means.

We, Us, Our: Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Alabama.

You, Your: The subscriber or member as shown by the context.

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