



**BCBSNC
Introduction to the
Companion Guide
for
eSolutions Transactions**

Version 5.6

**Electronic Solutions
Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina**

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This is Table of Contents reflects only the chapter *Introduction to the BCBSNC Companion Guide to EDI Transactions*. The complete guide includes 8 chapters (one for each transaction implemented by BCBSNC and the introductory chapter), appendices (which include tables of the BCBSNC Business Edits for the 837 transactions), and a glossary. Each transaction chapter includes its own Table of Contents. Subsequent chapters of the guide are posted online at www.bcbsnc.com/providers/edi/hipainfo.cfm. A change log at the end of each chapter documents any changes made since its initial publication date.

Introduction to the Companion Guide

Overview

Purpose

This Companion Guide provides BCBSNC trading partners with guidelines for submitting electronic batch transactions. The BCBSNC Companion Guide to eSolutions Transactions documents any assumptions, conventions, or data issues that may be specific to BCBSNC business processes when implementing the HIPAA ASC X12N 4010A1 Implementation Guides. As such, this Companion Guide is unique to BCBSNC.

This document does NOT replace the HIPAA ASC X12N Implementation Guides for eSolutions transactions, nor does it attempt to amend any of the rules therein or impose any mandates on any trading partners of BCBSNC. This document provides information on BCBSNC specific code handling and situation handling that is within the parameters of the HIPAA Administrative Simplification rules. Readers of this Companion Guide should be acquainted with the HIPAA Implementation Guides, their structure and content. Information contained within the HIPAA Implementation Guides (IGs) has not been repeated here although the IGs have been referenced when necessary.

The Companion Guide is also designed to replace prior releases of technical manuals governing asynchronous connectivity, such as CONNECT:Enterprise Gateway (formerly Connect:Mailbox) and Internet-based connectivity modes. Connectivity information contained in these technical manuals is repeated in the Rules of Exchange section of the Introduction to the Companion Guide.

This Companion Guide provides supplemental information to the Trading Partner Agreement (TPA) that exists between BCBSNC and its trading partners. Refer to the TPA for guidelines pertaining to BCBSNC legal conditions surrounding the implementation of the eSolutions transactions and code sets. Refer to the Companion Guide for information on BCBSNC business rules or technical requirements regarding the implementation of HIPAA compliant EDI transactions and code sets.

Nothing contained in this Guide is intended to amend, revoke, contradict, or otherwise alter the terms and conditions of the Trading Partner Agreement. **If there is an inconsistency with the terms of this guide and the terms of the Trading Partner Agreement, the terms of the Trading Partner Agreement shall govern.**

Content

The BCBSNC Companion Guide to HIPAA Transactions contains an introductory chapter, and a chapter for each ASC X12N 4010A1 transaction used by BCBSNC. Each of the transaction chapters in this document contains one or more tables that explain BCBSNC business rules within the context of the HIPAA ASC X12N Implementation Guides. The tables reference the Loop, Segment, and Element designations and page numbers of the Implementation Guides so that users can easily access the relevant sections of the guides as needed.

Document Structure

The Companion Guide contains the following major components:

- Introductory chapter includes information relevant to the implementation of HIPAA regulations for BCBSNC processes generally and connectivity information for asynchronous, secure FTP, and HTTPS data transmissions.
- Transaction Chapters: The Transaction chapters of this document serve the needs of two different areas of expertise among BCBSNC trading partner employees: information systems specialists and business process specialists. Each group should access the material relevant to its work area. The transaction chapters include introductory material covering a variety of system and business processes, as well as tables identifying specific HIPAA IG segment elements and the BCBSNC business rules relevant to those elements.
- Each transaction chapter provides sample scenarios that may be typical for most trading partners using that transaction. The scenarios present the same data set in three different ways: unformatted transaction data, data string samples, and mapping tables that illustrate the data as it relates to the HIPAA IGs. The samples are modeled on those found in the HIPAA Implementation Guides (See *Sections 4: EDI Transmission Examples for Different Uses*) but are specific to BCBSNC business processes.
- Appendix A contains Health Care Claims Adjustment Reason Codes as published by Washington Publishing Company online at http://www.wpc-edi.com/Organizations_40.asp.
- Appendices B and C contain the BCBSNC Business Edits for 837 Professional and Institutional Claims (respectively).
- A glossary of terms specific to BCBSNC business rules within the context of implementing the ANSI transactions. Note that this glossary does not include the HIPAA glossary of terms, which is freely available to the public at http://www.wedi.org/public/articles/HIPAA_GLOSSARY.pdf.

Term Usage

The Companion Guide's usage of ASC X12N Transaction terms complies with the description of terms as presented in *Appendix A (ASC X12N Nomenclature)* of each ASC X12N Implementation Guide for Transaction and Code Set rules. Definitions are also given in *Section 3 (Transaction Set)* of each ASC X12N Implementation Guide. Please refer to the HIPAA Implementation Guides for definitions of terms.

Terms used in this Companion Guide that are specific to BCBSNC will be defined as presented within each transaction chapter or included in the Glossary section.

Transactions Available

The Companion Guide contains chapters for each transaction currently in production at Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina. The following transactions, and their accompanying BCBSNC Companion Guide chapter, are available:

- Chapter 1: 837 Institutional Health Care Claim (004010X096A1)
- Chapter 2: 837 Professional Health Care Claim (004010X098A1)
- Chapter 3: 270/271 Health Care Eligibility Benefit Inquiry and Response (004010X092A1)
- Chapter 4: 835 Health Care Claim Payment Advice (004010X091A1)
- Chapter 5: 276/277 Health Care Claim Status Request and Response (004010X093A1)
- Chapter 6: 278 HC Services Review – Request for Review and Response (004010X094 A1)
- Chapter 7: 834 Benefit Enrollment and Maintenance (004010X095A1)

Contact Information



Important Notice:

HIPAA regulations require all covered entities to ensure privacy and security in conducting business. Consequently, when calling the eSolutions HelpDesk, be prepared to provide your National Provider Identifier (NPI) so that our staff can assist you.

Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) Services

Electronic Solutions (eSolutions) develops, produces, and supports applications for the electronic exchange of health care claims, remittance, enrollment, and inquiries and responses. Electronic Solutions provides support for health care providers, and their vendors, that conduct business electronically with BCBSNC. The eSolutions HelpDesk, in addition to field offices and representatives throughout the State, provides this support. For a list of field offices and numbers nearest you, go to <http://www.bcbsnc.com/providers/edi>.

Requests for Service

Entities that wish to exchange electronic transmissions with BCBSNC must complete a Trading Partner Agreement and/or Electronic Connectivity Request form(s). (See Trading Partner Requirements for more details.) Copies of the BCBSNC Trading Partner Agreement and the various Electronic Connectivity Request forms are available online. For information regarding connectivity, or eSolutions transmissions, or for copies of these documents, access the Electronic Solutions pages on the Web at www.bcbsnc.com/providers/edi/hipaainfo.cfm. Information is also available through the eSolutions HelpDesk at (919) 765-3514 or (888) 333-8594.

Companion Guide

The BCBSNC Companion Guide to eSolutions Transactions is freely available for downloading to all BCBSNC trading partners via the Web at www.bcbsnc.com/providers/edi/hipaainfo.cfm. Each chapter of the guide is a separate Acrobat PDF file. The Introduction chapter is essential for all trading partners and should be reviewed prior to implementing any transactions. Subsequent chapters that cover each of the ASC X12N Transactions should be downloaded or reviewed as needed. Appendices, which include business edits for the 837 Health Care Claims transactions, and the glossary, should also be downloaded as needed.

Because this document is subject to revision, notification of new releases will be posted at BCBSNC's Web site, www.bcbsnc.com/providers/edi/hipaainfo.cfm. Trading partners of BCBSNC are advised to access the Web site regularly for notification of updates to the guide. Upon downloading PDF files from the Web site, you will be asked to provide contact information if you want to be notified when a new version of the document is posted online. Trading partners are advised to complete this information, as it is the best way to ensure receipt of document change notification; however, providing contact information is not required to download any of the documents at the eSolutions Web site. Trading partners wishing to provide feedback on the Companion Guide may do so by e-mailing Companion.Guide@BCBSNC.com with comments or queries.

Network Management

BCBSNC Network Management Division supports the relationship of health care providers with BCBSNC. Network Management establishes new business relationships and loads the NPI identifiers for each provider, as well as maintaining field office support throughout North Carolina to assist providers with questions. Trading partners should access their BCBSNC Network Management Provider Manuals (Professional, Hospital, or Ancillary) for listings of field offices, or view contact information at <http://www.bcbsnc.com/providers/contacts.cfm>.

Rules of Exchange

The Rules of Exchange section details the responsibilities of trading partners in submitting or receiving EDI transactions with BCBSNC.

Trading Partner Requirements

Health care providers, clearinghouses, or billing services wishing to send or receive electronic transmissions directly to BCBSNC must sign a BCBSNC Trading Partner Agreement and submit the original copy to Electronic Solutions. The BCBSNC Trading Partner Agreement establishes the formal relationship between BCBSNC and the trading partner. Health care providers who submit their transmissions indirectly to BCBSNC, via a clearinghouse or service bureau, do not need to complete the Trading Partner Agreement; however, all health care providers must complete the appropriate Electronic Connectivity Request form(s) for the transaction(s) to be sent or received.

All trading partners and health care providers must submit an Electronic Connectivity Request (ECR) form, or forms, to BCBSNC Electronic Solutions. The ECR form identifies the type of transaction(s) to be sent, the mode of connectivity to be used for transmission, and contact names/numbers. If you are a health care provider that does not submit directly to BCBSNC, the ECR form identifies which clearinghouse is authorized to transmit for you. After trading partners submit the completed ECR form, Electronic Solutions sends written notification that approves the electronic transmission and provides a start of service date.

Copies of the Trading Partner Agreement and the different Electronic Connectivity Request (ECR) forms are available online at www.bcbsnc.com/providers/edi/hipaainfo.cfm. Instructions for completing the forms are also available.

Testing

Testing for transaction compliance and connectivity is required with each vendor or health care provider that directly sends/receives electronic transactions to/from BCBSNC. BCBSNC offers free testing for its trading partners through a Web-based application for HIPAA transaction testing using a product developed by EDIFECs. This testing tool provides analysis of test files, specific information on errors, and a history of files tested.

Trading partners must submit a TPA and ECR to BCBSNC before testing can begin. eSolutions Production Support will contact the trading partner when they have been set up for testing in the different environments. For detailed information about registering and submitting test files, download the **Instructions for HIPAA Testing with BCBSNC-EDIFECs** from the Testing section of www.bcbsnc.com/providers/edi/hipaainfo.cfm. These instructions provide all information needed to register and start testing.

Testing is performed for each type of ASC X12N transaction sent. Electronic Solutions and EDIFEC's Technical Support team provide trading partners with support and information throughout the testing process to ensure a smooth transition to production. After you have successfully tested in the BCBSNC EDIFEC site, you will be notified by email. For more information about the BCBSNC implementation of testing for trading partners, see our testing information online at <http://www.bcbsnc.com/providers/edi/hipaainfo.cfm> or contact the eSolutions HelpDesk at (919) 765-3514 or (888) 333-8594.

Frequency of Data Exchange

Response or 'turn-around' time for transactions can vary, depending upon the sender's hardware, the connectivity mode, and the transaction in question. This document provides guidelines for senders' expectations on turn-around time on transaction exchanges, but these guidelines are subject to the variances of connectivity modes and hardware.

Confirmations of transmissions, in the form of TA1 or 997 transactions, should be received within one hour of batch submissions, and often sooner. Senders of transmissions should check for confirmations within this time frame. See chapters on the individual transactions for time ranges for transaction exchanges.

Transmission Confirmation

Transmission confirmation may be received through one of two possible transactions: the TA1 Interchange Acknowledgement or the 997 Functional Acknowledgement. A TA1 Acknowledgement is used at the ISA level of the transmission envelope structure, to confirm a positive transmission or indicate an error at the ISA level of the transmission. The 997 Acknowledgement may be used to verify a successful transmission or to indicate various types of errors. The Error Reporting section (below) and the individual transaction chapters contain additional information about acknowledgement and error messaging.

Retrieving Files (Accessing Your Mailbox)

All senders of electronic transmissions have been assigned an electronic 'mailbox' or 'bulletin board' to submit and retrieve transactions and reports. For security reasons, detailed guidelines on accessing your mailbox are sent upon receipt of the completed ECR forms (see Requests for Service).

Trading partners are responsible for the timely retrieval and verification of file transmission reports and transaction responses. This includes retrieval of the BCBSNC Claims Audit Report, as well as the 997 Functional and the TA1 Interchange Acknowledgements. BCBSNC recommends that trading partners review the transmission confirmations the first business day after transactions have been submitted. If no confirmation of a transmission has been received, contact the eSolutions HelpDesk at (919) 765-3514 or (888) 333-8594 to verify its receipt or to make an inquiry. Trading partners making inquiries should know their Sender ID (ISA06) to expedite research in file transmissions.

Acknowledgements

Acknowledgements are performed at the ISA (Interchange Control) level, the GS (Functional Group) level, and the ST/SE (Transaction Set) level for each transaction. Trading partners receive a TA1 Interchange Acknowledgement for each ISA/IEA transmitted. A 997 Acknowledgement is used for all other control segments subordinate to the ISA envelope – namely the GS/GE Functional Group and ST/SE Transaction Set. Senders should expect to receive a confirmation of receipt within an hour of submitting a transaction.

BCBSNC expects to receive TA1 and 997 Acknowledgements for transactions sent to a trading partner: 835, 271, 277, and 278. Trading partners that do not use the TA1 and 997 transactions should inform the eSolutions HelpDesk of their process for acknowledgement and error handling.

Batch Matching

Senders of batch transmissions should note that transactions are unbundled during processing, and re-bundled so that the original bundle is not replicated. Trace numbers or patient account numbers

should be used for batch matching or batch balancing. More detailed information is contained within each transaction chapter of the Companion Guide about matching batch transmissions with returns.

Batch File Acceptance

Batch files are accepted for processing upon verification of the sender’s identification number. Batch transactions with invalid sender identifiers return a TA1 Interchange Acknowledgement that indicates the error (TA105 value of 006). If you have received this error on a batch transmission, validate that the Sender ID transmitted in the Interchange Sender Identifier (ISA06) is the same as that on your BCBSNC Electronic Solutions notification letter before contacting the eSolutions HelpDesk at (888) 333-8594 or (919) 765-3514.

Error Reporting

Error reporting occurs through a variety of transactions or reports, depending on the type of error being reported, in which transaction it occurs, and where the error occurs in the transmission. Editing for errors is broadly organized into two categories: X12N Implementation Guide edits and BCBSNC business edits, which include proprietary Security Validation edits.

Implementation Guide (IG) errors are possible at all levels of the transmission – from the Interchange Control portion of the transmission to the detailed segments within the Transaction Set. Implementation Guide errors within the Interchange Control (ISA/IEA) are reported with a TA1 transaction. Implementation Guide errors within the Functional Group (GS/GE) or any portion of the Transaction Set (ST/SE) are reported with a 997 Transaction, although the 997 Transaction provides only a high-level description of the error. Implementation Guide errors are reported in greater detail in the *BCBSNC Claims Audit Report*¹ and on the **Blue e 837 (Claim) Denial Listing**. The *BCBSNC Claims Audit Report* is returned to each sender transmitting 837 Health Care Claims directly to BCBSNC. The **Blue e 837 (Claim) Denial Listing** is available to all providers accessing the **Blue e** application free of charge.

BCBSNC business edit reporting is dependent upon the type of transaction in question. Paired transactions, such as the 270/271 Benefit Inquiry/Response and the 276/277 Claim Status Request/Response, contain error-reporting capabilities for business errors in the responding transactions. Claims transactions receive business edit information via the Claims Audit Report.

The following table illustrates the responses received for various levels of error or denial handling.

| Submitted Transaction | Transaction Structure Level of Error | Type of Error | Transaction or Report Returned |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|--------------------------------|
| 270, 276, 278, 837-I, 837-P, 820, 834 | ISA/IEA Interchange Control | HIPAA Implementation Guide Violations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invalid Message or Information • Invalid Identifiers • Inactive Message • Improper Batch Structure | TA1 Acknowledgment |

¹ A sample copy of the BCBSNC Claims Audit Report (CAR) and an explanation of its design are available online at www.bcbsnc.com/providers/edi/hipaainfo.cfm. Note that the display of HIPAA Implementation Guide errors on the BCBSNC Claims Audit Report is effective December 15, 2004.

| Submitted Transaction | Transaction Structure Level of Error | Type of Error | Transaction or Report Returned |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|---|
| 270, 276, 278, 837-I, 837-P, 820, 834 | GS/GE Segment ST/SE Segment Detail Segments | HIPAA Implementation Guide Violations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 997 Acknowledgment BCBSNC Claims Audit Report (effective 12/15/04) |
| 837 Institutional, 837 Professional | Detail Segments | BCBSNC Business Edits (see respective 837 Data Element Tables for details) Security Validation Messages | BCBSNC Claims Audit Report |
| 270, 276, 278 | Detail Segments | BCBSNC Business Edits (see respective 271, 277, and 278 Companion Guide chapters and their Data Element Tables for details) Security Validation Messages | 271, 277, 278 (respectively) |

Table 1: Error Reporting for Various Transactions

To review BCBSNC business errors or HIPAA Implementation Guide errors within Health Care Claims, senders should retrieve the Claims Audit Reports from their electronic mailboxes. Providers may also access the *HIPAA 837 Claims Denial Listing* via **Blue e**, BCBSNC's Internet-based direct data entry application. Contact the eSolutions HelpDesk or your regional eSolutions Field Consultant for assistance with **Blue e**.



Important Notice:

The Claims Audit Report contains narrative explanations of errors, error codes, and the provider-assigned patient account number. It also includes Security Validation messages as described in each transaction chapter of this guide.

TA1 Interchange Acknowledgement

The TA1 Interchange Acknowledgement provides senders a positive or negative confirmation of the transmission of the ISA /IEA Interchange Control. The TA1 responds to the ISA/IEA Interchange, except for cases where the Functional Group is too corrupted to allow the creation of a 997 response.² A positive TA1 is followed by a 997 Acknowledgement, reporting on the Implementation Guide edits from the Functional Group level and below. The TA1 negative response indicates the rejection of the ISA, and by extension, the Functional Group (GS/GE) and Transaction Sets (ST/SE) below it. If a negative TA1 (TA104 = R) is received, the sender receives no 997 Acknowledgement. The TA105 provides a note code identifying why the transmission was rejected.

BCBSNC uses only two values for the Interchange Acknowledgement Code (TA104): "A" (the ISA/IEA accepted and have no errors) or "R" (the ISA/IEA was rejected for errors).

² A TA1 can be returned for errors at the Functional Group level (GS/GE) if that level of the interchange is too corrupted to produce a 997 Functional Acknowledgement. If the Functional Group is corrupted, senders receive a TA105 with a value of "24" (Invalid Interchange Content).

997 Functional Acknowledgement

The 997 Functional Acknowledgement reports on all Implementation Guide edits from the Functional Group and Transaction Sets. Errors detected within the Functional Group (GS/GE) portion of the transmission may result in the rejection of the entire Functional Group. If the GS/GE is so corrupted that a 997 Functional Acknowledgement cannot be generated, a TA1 Interchange Acknowledgement is returned instead, with a TA1-05 value of 024.

If trading partners receive a 997 identifying Implementation Guide errors within a Transaction Set, the Transaction Set containing those errors is rejected. Other Transaction Sets within the Functional Group that do not contain Implementation Guide errors are accepted.

BCBSNC uses only the following code values in AK5-01 and AK9-01:

- **“A”** – (Accepted - no error detected) all Transaction Sets (ST/SE) within the Functional Group have been accepted.
- **“R”** – (Rejected - errors detected) all Transaction Sets (ST/SE) within the Functional Group have been rejected.
- **“E”** – (Accepted, but errors were noted.) Some portion of a Transaction Set (AK5) or a Functional Group (AK9) contains errors that did NOT warrant rejection.
- **“P”** – (Partially Accepted) This value is used at the AK9 level only and is relevant to the acceptance or rejection of whole transaction sets. At least one Transaction Set (ST/SE) within the Functional Group has been accepted and one Transaction Set has been rejected.



Important Notice:

Implementation Guide violations cause the rejection of the Transaction Set containing the violation. Multiple Transaction Sets within a single transmission are evaluated independently and accepted or rejected based upon Implementation Guide violations.

For Implementation Guide violations, BCBSNC returns the TA1 or 997 Transaction ONLY. Trading partners who are unable to accept a 997 or TA1 Transaction are not provided with alternative Implementation Guide error reporting mechanisms.

Duplicate Batch Check

To ensure that duplicate transmissions have not been sent, BCBSNC checks five values within the ISA, for redundancy:

- ISA06 Interchange Sender ID
- ISA08 Interchange Receiver ID
- ISA09 Interchange Date
- ISA10 Interchange Time
- ISA13 Interchange Control Number

Collectively, these numbers should be unique for each transmission. A duplicate ISA/IEA receives a TA105 response of “025” (Duplicate Interchange Control Number).

To ensure that Transaction Sets (ST/SE) have not been duplicated within a transmission, BCBSNC checks the ST02 value (the Transaction Set Control Number), which should be a unique ST02 within the Functional Group transmitted. Duplicate Transaction Sets (ST/SE) return a 997 Functional Acknowledgement with an AK502 value of “23” (Transaction Set Control Number not unique within the Functional Group).

Security Validation Messages

BCBSNC has a variety of edits to ensure the security of data transmission. These edits involve validating information that has been exchanged between BCBSNC and its business partners via the Electronic Connectivity Request form and a notification letter, returned by BCBSNC to verify security information. These edits take precedence over the business edits³ described in the table above and stop the processing of a transaction. However, senders receive reports of validation errors via the same medium as they receive business error reports. For errors in health care claims, this is the Claims Audit Report. For paired transactions, the returned transaction contains validation error messages in the form of a code number derived from an AAA loop or the Health Care Claim Status and Category Codes.

The identifier that is validated through the Security Validation edit could be the National Provider Identifier (NPI), the Federal Tax Identifier, or the Employer Group Number ID, depending upon which type of transaction is being validated and the role of the business partner. For example, health care providers would have a National Provider Identifier (NPI), while employers would use their Employer Group Number ID.

Each transaction chapter in this Companion Guide contains specific information about the validation messages returned for that transaction, with suggested actions to rectify the transmission should a denial be received. Consult the relevant transaction chapter for more information about the message you have received.

Identifiers

Federal Tax Identifiers

Any Federal Tax Identifier (Employer ID or Social Security Number) used in a transmission should omit dashes or hyphens. BCBSNC sends and receives only numeric values for all tax identifiers.

Sender Identifier

The Sender Identifier is presented at the Interchange Control (ISA06) of a transmission. BCBSNC expects to see the sender's Federal Tax Identifier (ISA05, qualifier 30) for this value. In special circumstances, BCBSNC will accept a "Mutually Defined" (ZZ) value. Senders wishing to submit a ZZ value must confirm this identifier with BCBSNC Electronic Solutions. Contact the eSolutions HelpDesk at (919) 765-3514 or (888) 333-8594 for more information.



Important Notice about Shared Federal Tax Identifiers

BCBSNC modifies the Identifiers of Senders that share their Federal Tax Identifier with other entities. The modification consists of an additional alpha character/s as a suffix to the original number. Senders are notified of this modification via written notification by Electronic Solutions, and asked to use the "ZZ" qualifier for ISA05.

Information Receiver Identifier

The Information Receiver Identifier is used for the 270/271, 276/277, and the 278 Transactions to identify the entity that is receiving the information of the inquiry. For trading partners of BCBSNC, this is the BCBSNC Provider Identifier, the Social Security Number, or the Federal Tax ID. See

³ For a complete list of business edits for the 837 Professional and Institutional Health Care Claims, see Appendices B and C, respectively.

individual transaction chapters for specific information about the Information Receiver Identifier used for that transaction.

National Provider Identifiers (NPI)

The Center for Medical Services (CMS) has mandated the use of an NPI, to replace all proprietary identifiers, by May 23, 2008. After May 23, 2008, providers must use their NPI for all electronic transactions, and BCBSNC will no longer accept the BCBSNC Provider ID for processing. The NPI is used at the record level (ST/SE) of all HIPAA transactions. See the chapter of the Companion Guide related to a specific transaction to obtain detailed information about NPI placement and other requirements about submitting the NPI.

Provider Identifiers

BCBSNC requires the use of the National Provider Identifier (NPI) for all 837 Health Care Claim transactions. Please see the Data Element tables within each transaction chapter for guidance on placement and code identifiers regarding the provider identifiers. Health care providers must indicate the NPI they are using for transactions on the BCBSNC Electronic Connectivity Form (ECR) to ensure acceptance of transmissions. The ECR form is completed prior to any transmission activity between a business partner and BCBSNC.

Subscriber Identifiers

Submitters should be careful to use the member's identification number as it appears on the BCBSNC Member ID card, including prefixes and suffixes. Nearly all BCBSNC members have a three (3) character alpha prefix, followed by either a nine (9) or eleven (11) digit number. Some exceptions are employees of the State of North Carolina, who do not have an alpha prefix on their cards, and Federal employees, who have only one (1) alpha prefix and eight (8) numeric characters to their member number. Blue Card members have a three (3) character alpha prefix and anywhere from 4 to 16 alphanumeric characters following. The alpha prefix must be included when providing the subscriber identifier in the transaction, using upper case for the letters.

Suffixes are limited to numeric identifiers to indicate unique members carried under the same subscriber. The most common example of these suffixes is for family members listed on the same card, sharing preliminary alpha prefixes and membership number, but also having a unique numeric identifier such as 01, 02, or 03 that should be considered part of that member's identification number.

Claim Identifiers

BCBSNC issues a claim identification number upon receipt of any accepted claim. The ASC X12N Implementation Guides may refer to this number as the Internal Control Number (ICN), the Document Control Number (DCN), or the Claim Control Number (CCN). Individual transaction chapters explain the usage of this number as it relates to the transaction. The Claim Identifier created by BCBSNC is returned to the sender via the Claims Audit Report and the 835 Health Care Claim Payment/Advice.

Data Formats

Delimiters

Delimiters are characters used to separate data elements within a data string. Delimiters used by BCBSNC are specified in the Interchange Header segment (the ISA level) of a transmission; these include the tilde (~) for segment separation, the asterisk (*) for element separation, and the colon (:) for composite separation.

Transmission Senders must identify the delimiters they are using in the ISA16 element of any transmission. BCBSNC accepts all delimiters within the Basic and Extended Character Sets, listed in Section A.1.2.3 of each Implementation Guide. In responding transactions, BCBSNC uses most characters from the Basic Character Set, but only the tilde from the Extended Character Set. The asterisk and the colon are from the Basic Character Set.

Dates (Format and Content)

The following statements apply to dates contained in any of the transactions:

- All dates should be formatted according to Year 2000 compliance, CCYYMMDD, except for ISA segments where the date format is YYMMDD.
- The only values acceptable for “CC” (century) are 18, 19, or 20.
- Dates that include hours should use the following format: CCYYMMDDHHMM.
- Use military format, or numbers from 00 to 23, to indicate hours and 00 to 59 to indicate minutes. For example, an admission date of 200206262115 defines the date and time of June 26, 2002 at 9:15 p.m.
- No spaces or character delimiters should be used in presenting dates or times.
- Dates that are logically invalid (e.g. 20011301) are rejected.
- Dates must be valid within the context of the transaction. For example, a patient’s birth date cannot be after a patient’s service date.

Decimals

No decimals should be used in a diagnosis code.

All percentages should be presented in decimal format. For example, a 12.5% value should be presented as .125.

Dollar amounts should be presented with decimals to indicate portions of a dollar; however, no more than two positions should follow the decimal point. Dollar amounts containing more than two positions after the decimal point are rejected.

Phone Numbers

Phone numbers should be presented as contiguous number strings, without dashes or parenthesis markers. Area codes should always be included.

Control Segments

The Control Segments section applies to all transactions as it includes the ISA and GS Segments, which are part of every transmission structure.

Interchange Control (ISA/IEA)

The Interchange Control (ISA/IEA) identifies both the sender and receiver's identifiers, the time of the file transfer, and the segment terminators/delimiters used by the sender. Any Implementation Guide errors found within the Interchange Control are reported via a TA1 Interchange Acknowledgement. Senders should note that if Implementation Guide errors are found at the ISA Interchange Control, the entire ISA/IEA Interchange and the Functional Group within it are rejected.

ISA/IEA Data Elements Table*

* Only those elements that required commentary are presented in the table. Note that the table reflects the BCBSNC business rules for both incoming and outgoing ISA/IEA.

| Segment Type | Segment Designator | Element ID | Data Element | BCBSNC Business Rules |
|--------------|----------------------------|------------|-------------------------------------|---|
| ISA | Interchange Control Header | | | |
| | | | Authorization Information Qualifier | BCBSNC expects a value of "00". |
| | | ISA02 | Authorization Information | Use 10 blank spaces. |
| | | ISA03 | Security Information Qualifier | BCBSNC expects to receive a value of "00". |
| | | ISA04 | Security Information | Use 10 blank spaces. |
| | | ISA05 | Interchange ID Qualifier | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For Inbound ISA, BCBSNC expects to see a value of "30" (Federal Tax ID). A value of "ZZ" (Mutually Defined) can be used if this has been indicated on the Electronic Connectivity Request (ECR) form completed by business partners for BCBSNC. For Outbound, BCBSNC returns a value of 30 (Federal Tax Identifier). |
| | | ISA06 | Interchange Sender ID | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For Inbound ISA, use the identifier established with BCBSNC Electronic Solutions via the Electronic Connectivity Request (ECR) Form – usually the Federal Tax ID. <p>NOTE: Some Provider entities that share a Federal Tax ID may have their number modified by BCBSNC to ensure a unique identifier. Entities that fall into this category are notified by BCBSNC prior to transmission schedule implementation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For Outbound, BCBSNC uses the BCBSNC Federal Tax ID. |

| Segment Type | Segment Designator | Element ID | Data Element | BCBSNC Business Rules |
|--------------|-----------------------------|------------|-----------------------------|--|
| | | ISA07 | Interchange ID Qualifier | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For Inbound ISA, BCBSNC expects to see a value of "30" (Federal Tax ID); a value of "ZZ" (Mutually Defined) may be used if this has been indicated on Electronic Connectivity Request (ECR) form completed for BCBSNC. For Outbound ISA, BCBSNC returns a value of "30" or "ZZ" |
| | | ISA08 | Interchange Receiver ID | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For Inbound ISA, use the BCBSNC tax ID. For Outbound ISA, BCSBNC returns the trading partner's identifier, established with BCBSNC Electronic Solutions via the ECR Form. |
| | | | Interchange Control Numbers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No qualifiers indicating negative (-) or positive (+) should precede the Interchange Control Number. The ISA 13 should be a fixed length of only 9 characters. This value is used to check for duplicate ISA transmissions. Duplicate transmissions return a TA105 value of 025. |
| | | | Acknowledgement Requested | BCBSNC strongly recommends a value of "1" (Acknowledgement Requested). NOTE: Use of the value "0", requesting that no Acknowledgement is given, results in the absence of a TA1 response. The 997 Acknowledgement is returned regardless of the value sent in ISA14. |
| | | | Usage Indicator | BCBSNC accepts only a value of "P" (Production), regardless of the environment. |
| IEA | Interchange Control Trailer | | | |
| | | IEA02 | Interchange Control Number | This value must match ISA13. |

Functional Group (GS/GE)

The Functional Group (GS/GE) identifies the type of transaction being sent, identifiers for the sender and receiver of the transactions, as well as the sender's Group Control Number.

Implementation Guide errors found within the Functional Group are reported via a 997 Functional Acknowledgement Transaction. If Implementation Guide errors are found within the GS01, 02, 03, or 08 elements, the entire Functional Group is rejected with a TA1 Interchange Acknowledgement. Errors within the GS 04, 05, 06, or 07 receive a response within the 997 Functional Acknowledgement.

Functional Group: Data Elements Table*

*Only those elements requiring commentary are presented in the table. Note that the table reflects the BCBSNC business rules for both incoming and outgoing GS/GE.

| Segment Type | Segment Designator | Element ID | Data Element | BCBSNC Business Rules |
|--------------|--------------------------|------------|-----------------------------|---|
| GS | Functional Group Header | | | |
| | | GS02 | Application Sender's Code | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For Inbound GS segments, this sender code must be consistent with the ISA06 For Outbound GS segments, BCBSNC returns the same value as ISA08, the trading partner's identifier as established with BCBSNC Electronic Solutions via the ECR Form. |
| | | GS03 | Application Receiver's Code | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For Inbound GS segments, use a value consistent with ISA08 For Outbound GS segments, BCBSNC returns the sender's Federal Tax ID. |
| | | GS06 | Group Control Number | Group control number should match GE02. |
| GE | Functional Group Trailer | | | |
| | | GE02 | Group Control Number | Group control number should match GS06. |

Connectivity Media for Batch Transactions

Trading partners wishing to exchange data electronically with BCBSNC must complete an Electronic Connectivity Request (ECR) form. The ECR form identifies the transaction to be sent and mode of connectivity to be used for the transmission. ECR forms are available at www.bcbsnc.com/providers/edi/hipaainfo.cfm. For information regarding connectivity, ECR forms, or EDI transmissions, contact your local BCBSNC eSolutions field representative or call the eSolutions HelpDesk at (919) 765-3514 or (888) 333-8594.

Environment

BCBSNC uses electronic bulletin boards or 'mailboxes' to manage the senders or trading partners file transmissions. Electronic mailboxes allow remote sites with the proper identification to access the BCBSNC network's capabilities in the user's mailbox. Trading partners are each assigned a secure electronic 'mailbox' for submission and retrieval of batch data files.



Important Notice:

BCBSNC does NOT accept 9-track (round) tape, .ZIP files, or CD-ROM discs.

Secure File Transfer Protocol (FTP)

BCBSNC encourages trading partners to consider a secure File Transfer Protocol (FTP) transmission option. BCBSNC offers a secure FTP solution using Sterling software's Connect:Enterprise. The ***Connect:Enterprise Command Line Client - Installation and User's Guide*** outlines hardware, software, and firewall requirements, as well as support guidelines. For a copy of the ***Installation and User's Guide*** or additional information about getting started, contact your BCBSNC Electronic Solutions field consultant or the eSolutions HelpDesk at (919) 765-3514 or (888) 333-8594.

HTTPS: Web-Based File Transfer

Trading partners may also submit files via https protocol. As in the FTP solution, BCBSNC uses the Connect: Enterprise client. Internet Explorer is the only browser supported for this solution. For more information, contact your BCBSNC Electronic Solutions field consultant or the eSolutions HelpDesk at (919) 765-3514 or (888) 333-8594.

SOAP File Transfer for Eligibility

SOAP (Simple Object Access Protocol) is an XML-based protocol for the invocation of Web services over various communications channels (including, but not limited to HTTPS). Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina is implementing SOAP file transfer for Eligibility (270-271) transactions as part of an enhancement project for that transaction. Trading partners interested in using SOAP as part of their connectivity mode should contact the eSolutions HelpDesk at (919) 765-3514 or (888) 333-8594.

Asynchronous Communication

Asynchronous communication allows the transfer of electronic files to or from a device that occurs without a regular or predictable time relationship following execution of an I/O request.

Asynchronous transmissions requires a modem at both ends of the transmission and does not offer the same ease of transmission as FTP or Web-based file transfer, both of which use the Internet.

Because asynchronous transfer requires additional hardware, BCBSNC discourages new trading partners from choosing this mode of connectivity.

Change Log

| Introduction to the Companion Guide - CHANGE LOG | | |
|--|---|------------------------------------|
| Section | Type of Edit Change (Modified, Added, Deleted) | Effective Date of Change |
| Rules of Exchange: Identifiers - Subscriber ID | Modified | July 2003 |
| Connectivity Mode: RJE | Deleted | July 2003 |
| Control Segments: Interchange Control (ISA/IEA) | Modified Important Notice | July 2003 |
| Control Segments: Functional Group (GS/GE) | Deleted Important Notice | July 2003 |
| Connectivity Modes | Modified Asynchronous Communications description and added to Secure FTP solution | October 2003 |
| Error Reporting | Modified | October 2003 |
| Interchange Control | Deleted Important Notice | November 2003 |
| Testing | Expanded | November 2003 |
| Functional Group | Expanded | November 2003 |
| Secure File Transfer Protocol (FTP) | Expanded | November 2003 |
| Control Segments: Interchange Control (ISA/IEA) | Note added to ISA14 table entry. | November 2003 |
| TA1 Interchange Acknowledgement | Expanded | November 2003 |
| 997 Functional Acknowledgement | Expanded | March 2004 |
| Asynchronous Communication: Record Format/Length | Binary code command capitalized | March 2004 |
| Duplicate Batch Check | Multiple values added for validation in ISA | June 2004 |
| Asynchronous Communication | Revised to reflect the change of Sterling's product name change from Connect:Mailbox to Connect:Enterprise Gateway. | December 2004 |
| Transactions Available | Added section | December 2004 |
| Error Reporting | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revised to reflect the modification to BCBSNC processing that rejects individual claim records, instead of entire ST/SE batches for HIPAA Implementation Guide Errors Revised to reflect the inclusion of HIPAA Implementation Guide edit errors on the <i>BCBSNC Claims Audit Report</i> and the Blue e 837 Claims Denial Listing. | Change Effective December 15, 2004 |
| National Provider Identifiers (NPI) | Added section | November 2005 |

| Introduction to the Companion Guide - CHANGE LOG | | |
|--|---|---------------------------------|
| Section | Type of Edit Change (Modified, Added, Deleted) | Effective Date of Change |
| Entire Document | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revise for Eei3 and CAQH impact • Remove portions of Asynchronous Connectivity section • Added SOAP to Connectivity section • Replace EDI Services with eSolutions | March 2007 |
| Modification of NPI acceptance based on CMS extension of compliance date to May 2008. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NPI | May 2007 |
| Testing | Added "Trading partners must submit a TPA and ECR to BCBSNC before testing can begin." | February 2008 |
| Removal of any references to BCBSNC Proprietary Identifiers which will no longer be used for X12 transactions. | | February 2008 |
| Global | Replaced "customer support" with "eSolutions HelpDesk". | May 2009 |