

## 2026 Blue Cross and Blue Shield Service Benefit Plan - FEP Blue Focus

### Section 10. Definitions of Terms We Use in This Brochure

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- **Non-participating providers** (Non-preferred provider) – We have no agreements with these providers to limit what they can bill you for their services. This means that using Non-participating providers for exceptions listed in Section 3 could result in your having to pay significantly greater amounts for the services you receive. We determine our allowance as follows:
  - For inpatient services at hospitals, and other facilities that do not contract with your local Blue Cross and Blue Shield Plan (“Non-member facilities”), our allowance is based on the Local Plan Allowance. The Local Plan Allowance varies by region and is determined by each Plan. If you would like additional information, or to obtain the current allowed amount, please call the customer service phone number on the back of your ID card. For inpatient stays resulting from medical emergencies or accidental injuries, or for emergency deliveries, our allowance is the lesser of the billed amount or the qualifying payment amount (QPA) determined in accordance with federal laws and regulations;
  - For outpatient services resulting from a medical emergency or accidental injury that are billed by Non-member facilities, our allowance is the lesser of the billed amount or the qualifying payment amount (QPA) determined in accordance with federal laws and regulations (minus any amount for noncovered services);
  - For physicians and other covered healthcare professionals that do not contract with your local Blue Cross and Blue Shield Plan, our allowance is equal to the greater of (1) the Medicare participating fee schedule amount or the Medicare Part B Drug Average Sale Price (ASP) for the service, drug, or supply in the geographic area in which it was performed or obtained or (2) 100% of the Local Plan Allowance. In the absence of a Medicare participating fee schedule amount or ASP for any service, drug, or supply, our allowance is the Local Plan Allowance. Contact your Local Plan if you need more information. We may refer to our allowance for Non-participating providers as the “NPA” (for “Non-participating Provider Allowance”);
  - For non-emergency medical services performed in Preferred hospitals provided by physicians and other covered healthcare professionals identified under the NSA (see Section 4) that do not contract with your local Blue Cross and Blue Shield Plan and cannot balance bill you under this regulation, our allowance is equal to the lesser of the billed amount or the qualifying payment amount (QPA) determined in accordance with federal laws and regulations;
  - For emergency medical and mental health and substance use disorders services performed in the emergency department of a hospital provided by physicians and other covered healthcare professionals, and air ambulance providers that do not contract with your local Blue Cross and Blue Shield Plan, our allowance is equal to the lesser of the billed amount or the qualifying payment amount (QPA) determined in accordance with

federal laws and regulations;

- For services you receive outside of the United States, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands from providers that do not contract with us or with the Overseas Assistance Center (provided by Geo-Blue), we use our Overseas Fee Schedule to determine our allowance. Our fee schedule is based on a percentage of the amounts we allow for Non-participating providers in the Washington, D.C., area, or a customary percent of billed charge, whichever is higher.

### **Important notice about using Non-participating providers!**

**(These providers are only covered on an exception basis)**

Note: **Using Non-participating or Non-member providers (Non-preferred) when an exception is granted (see Section 3) could result in your having to pay significantly greater amounts for the services you receive.** Non-participating and Non-member providers are under no obligation to accept our allowance as payment in full. If you use Non-participating and/or Non-member providers, you will be responsible for any difference between our payment and the billed amount (except in certain circumstances involving covered Non-participating professional care – see below). In addition, you will be responsible for any applicable deductible, coinsurance, or copayment. You can reduce your out-of-pocket expenses by using Preferred providers whenever possible. To locate a Preferred provider, visit [www.fepblue.org/provider](http://www.fepblue.org/provider) to use our National Doctor & Hospital Finder, or call us at the customer service phone number on the back of your ID card. We encourage you to always use Preferred providers for your care.

Note: For **certain** covered services from Non-participating professional providers, your responsibility for the difference between the Non-participating Provider Allowance (NPA) and the billed amount may be limited. See Section 4, *Important Notice About Surprise Billing*.