



Inpatient/Outpatient Authorization Guide

Our authorization process ensures members receive the highest level of benefits to which they are entitled, and that the most appropriate setting and level of care are provided.

Always verify the member's eligibility, benefits and limitations prior to providing services to ensure if an authorization is required. Our provider manuals and network speed guides include the list of services that require an authorization and are available at www.BCBSLA.com/providers > Resources.

Blue Cross requires providers to submit prior authorization requests, including new and extensions through our online BCBSLA Authorizations tool. Exceptions include transplants, dental services covered under medical, and out-of-state services.

Ways to request an authorization:



Electronically Through iLinkBlue

Facilities and professional providers are required to electronically submit authorization requests for BCBSLA and HMO Louisiana members through the authorization tools available through iLinkBlue:

- Inpatient/Outpatient Services (BCBSLA Authorizations tool)
- Utilization Management Programs such as high-tech diagnostic imaging, musculoskeletal (MSK), cardiology and radiation (AIM's **ProviderPortal_{SM}**)
- Behavioral Health Services (New Directions' WebPass)

www.BCBSLA.com/ilinkblue

Via Fax

Providers can fax requests for those services excluded from being completed through the BCBSLA Authorizations tool. See above for online tool exclusion. Faxes for services that are not excluded will be directed to the portal. Faxed requests should be sent to 1-800-586-2299. Submitting an authorization form with your fax will help to expedite your request. A copy of the authorization form is available online on our Provider page, www.BCBSLA.com/providers > Resources > Forms.

Call the Authorization Department

Providers can directly call the member's authorization department at the phone number listed on the back of the member ID card for services excluded from being completed through the BCBSLA Authorizations tool. See above for excluded list.

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This publication is provided by the Network Administration Division of Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Louisiana. If you have a question regarding this communication, please email providercommunications@bcbsla.com or call 1-800-922-8866. Please reference the Tidbit number and title listed of this publication.

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Louisiana is an independent licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association and incorporated as Louisiana Health Service & Indemnity Company. HMO Louisiana, Inc. offers Blue Advantage (HMO). Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Louisiana, incorporated as Louisiana Health Service & Indemnity Co., offers Blue Advantage (PPO). Both are independent licensees of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association.

Blue Advantage from HMO Louisiana, Inc. is an HMO plan with a Medicare contract. Blue Advantage from Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Louisiana is a PPO plan with a Medicare contract. Enrollment in either Blue Advantage plan depends on contract renewal.

AIM is an independent company that serves as an authorization manager for Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Louisiana and HMO Louisiana, Inc.

New Directions is an independent company that serves as the behavioral health manager for Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Louisiana and HMO Louisiana, Inc.

We also offer a tool through iLinkBlue for BlueCard® member authorization inquiries.

Prepare, organize and document all necessary information before requesting an authorization and have the following information handy for your authorization request:

- NPI number
- Patient's full name
- Diagnosis and procedure codes
- Office address
- Patient's date of birth
- Place of service
- Office telephone number
- Member ID number

Turnaround time is within three to five calendar days for non-urgent authorization requests. Promptly respond when additional medical information is requested to prevent delays.

Help us serve you faster by requesting an authorization extension before the current authorization expires.

Accessing Online Authorization Tools

Through iLinkBlue, providers can access various authorization tools and resources under the "Authorizations" menu option.

The screenshot shows the iLinkBlue navigation menu. The 'Authorizations' menu item is highlighted with an orange box. Below it, there are two columns of links:

- Authorizations - BCBSLA Members**
 1. Authorizations Guidelines - Do I need an authorization?
 2. BCBSLA Authorizations
 3. Behavioral Health Authorizations
 4. AIM Specialty Health Authorizations
 5. Authorizations/Pre-Certification Inquiry
 6. Medical Policy Guidelines
- Authorizations - Out of Area Members**
 7. Authorizations Guidelines - Do I need an authorization?
 8. Out of Area (Pre Service Review - EPA)
 9. Medical Policy Guidelines

Explanation of the numbered tools listed above is as follows:

1. & 7. Authorizations Guidelines – Do I Need an Authorization? – Research general pre-authorization/pre-certification information with the first three characters of the member's identification number on the member ID card. These links both access the same tool.

2. BCBSLA Authorizations – Submit and manage authorization requests electronically for Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Louisiana members. The application includes McKesson's InterQual® clinical guidelines so providers can perform their own clinical reviews.

3. Behavioral Health Authorizations – New Direction's electronic authorization tool is available on iLinkBlue. Facilities must use the Behavioral Health Authorizations portal to request authorizations for behavioral health services.

4. AIM Specialty Health Authorizations – The following require prior authorization through AIM Specialty Health®. Use iLinkBlue to access the AIM web-based application, *ProviderPortal_{SM}* for authorization requests.

- Outpatient High-tech Diagnostic Services
 - Computerized Tomography (CT) Scans, Computerized Tomographic Angiography (CTA), Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI), Magnetic Resonance Angiography (MRA), Nuclear Cardiology Procedures and Positron Emission Tomography (PET) Scans

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4. AIM Speciality Health Authorizations (cont.)

- Musculoskeletal (MSK) Services
 - Interventional Pain Management
 - Spine Surgery
 - Joint Surgery
- Radiation Oncology
- Cardiology

5. Authorization/Pre-certification Inquiry – View inpatient or outpatient authorizations on file with Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Louisiana via iLinkBlue/BCBSLA Authorizations tool.

6. Medical Policy Guidelines – Research current Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Louisiana medical policies in an index that lists policies in alphabetical order or search by policy number or procedure code.

8. Out of Area (Pre-Service Review) – This application allows BCBSLA providers access to pre-service information offered by out-of-area Blue Plans. Enter the first three characters of the member's identification number on the member ID card to be routed to the member's Blue Plan.

9. Medical Policy Guidelines – Providers may search medical policy guidelines for BlueCard® members by entering the first three characters of the member ID to be routed to the member's Blue Plan.

Who are in these programs?

- Fully insured members are a part of all programs.
 - Fully insured members can be identified by the words "Fully Insured" on the member ID card.
- Self-funded members have an option to be in these programs or not.
 - Self-funded member ID cards will include the group name but will NOT include the words "Fully Insured."
- Small Business Funded (SBF) members are a part of all programs
 - SBF members have "SBF" in the group number in the Group/Subgroup section of their ID card.
- Office of Group Benefits (OGB) members are in the high-tech, MSK, Cardiology and Radiation Oncology Programs.
- Federal Employee Program (FEP) members are not included in any AIM programs at this time.

Always confirm member benefits prior to rendering services.

Note:

Clinical guidelines, including a listing of impacted services for high-tech, MSK, Radiation Oncology and Cardiology authorization programs are available online at www.aimspecialtyhealth.com/ClinicalGuidelines.html.

Authorization Resources Available Online

- Our list of specialty drugs that require authorization is available at www.BCBSLA.com/providers >Pharmacy.
- Medical policies are available on iLinkBlue.
- Our network speed guides and provider manuals include lists of services that require authorization and are available online at www.BCBSLA.com/providers >Resources.

Blue Advantage Authorizations

Blue Advantage (HMO) and Blue Advantage (PPO) network providers can access member eligibility, benefits, claims and authorization requirements through the Blue Advantage Provider Portal, which is accessible through iLinkBlue by clicking on "Blue Advantage" under the "Other Sites" section.

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