

The Reopening Process – Updated

NHIC, Corp. often receives requests to correct a claim as a result of a billing error, carrier error, or a change in a fee schedule which is retroactive to an earlier part of the year. These are referred to as reopenings. Reopenings may be requested within one year of the initial claim decision (date of remittance), and are granted at the carrier's discretion. Reopenings may be pursued as a:

1. Telephone reopening
2. Written request for a reopening

Telephone Reopenings

Telephone reopenings can be performed on the following:

- Mathematical/computational errors (e.g., obvious errors of miscoding the allowed amount as \$10.00 vs. \$100.00)
- Transposed diagnosis and procedure codes
- Inaccurate data entry (e.g., scanner errors, billed amounts, dates of service, place of service)
- Carrier Errors
- Addition of an add-on procedure code (e.g., codes with global days of ZZZ)
- Misapplication of fee schedule (generally due to changes in the fee schedule amounts)
- Inaccurate duplicate denial (not a true duplicate)
- Incorrect performing provider identification number in Item 24K (Missing performing provider PIN's are rejected, and must be resubmitted)
- Ambulance (correct transposed zip code; correct origin/destination modifiers for obvious errors such as HS)
- Modifier additions: limited to modifiers 24, 25, 26, 57, 78, 79, TC, KX, GV, GW, QW, QB, QU, AR, AQ, AT, SG (Note: All other modifier additions must be sent to Redeterminations).
 - **If the claim is rejected/unprocessable due to provider error, then the provider must resubmit their claim.**
 - **Reopenings that are too complex to be corrected over the phone or that require substantial additional medical documentation to resolve, may be submitted in writing to the carrier.**
 - **Due to CMS telephone inquiry service level requirements, the number of corrections handled during a phone call may be limited. If you have a large volume of corrections, for example an error repeated for numerous claims in the same billing cycle, the request is best handled in writing.**

To request a telephone reopening, providers must:

1. Contact Medicare Customer Service between 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. local time.
 - Provider Customer Service for California: 1-877-527-6613
 - Provider Customer Service for Massachusetts: 1-877-527-6594
 - Provider Customer Service for Maine, New Hampshire and Vermont: 1-877-258-4442
2. Adhere to the Privacy Act by:
 - Verifying the provider's/physician's/ supplier's name and identification number
 - Providing the beneficiary last name, first initial; and Medicare HICN

3. Provide the reason for the correction and supply the information needed to correct the item or service in question.

Written Reopenings

Written reopenings can be performed on the following:

- All of the items listed under the “Telephone Reopenings” section above
- Incorrect procedure codes and quantity billed.

To request a reopening in writing, providers may:

1. Submit the remittance advice(s) with the claim(s) in question identified, along with supporting documentation and the reason for the change.
2. Submit a list that contains the beneficiary name, HIC number, ICN number, and date of service, along with a request to correct the item incorrectly billed or that paid incorrectly and the reason for the change.

Send to the appropriate address for your area:

For New England:

NHIC, Corp.
Medicare Written Inquiries
PO Box 1000
Hingham, MA 02044

For Northern California:

NHIC, Corp.
Medicare Written Inquiries
PO Box 2006
Chico, CA 95927-2006.

For Southern California:

NHIC, Corp.
Medicare Written Inquiries
PO Box 272857
Chico, CA 95927-2857

Telephone and Written reopenings are inappropriate for the following issues:

- Limitation on liability;
- Medical necessity denials and reductions; or
- Analysis of documents such as operative reports and clinical summaries.
- Claims requiring the input of medical staff or other entities outside of the reopening department.

Claims issues referenced in the immediate list above would be submitted as Redetermination requests to the proper address for your area.

8/30/2007

Reference: CR 4147