Blue Cross and Blue Shield
of New Mexico

Taxonomy Codes: What They Are and How They Are Used

The Health Care Provider Taxonomy code set is a comprehensive listing of unique ten-character alphanumeric codes. The code set is structured into three levels—provider type, classification, and area of specialization—to enable individual, group, or institutional providers to clearly identify their specialty category or categories in HIPAA transactions.

Where do I get one?
You do not need to apply for a Health Care Provider Taxonomy code. Rather, taxonomy codes are self-selected by the provider. The entire Health Care Provider Taxonomy code set can be found within the HIPAA-Related Code Lists section of the Washington Publishing Company (WPC) Web site, at http://www.wpc-edi.com/products/codelists/alertservice. If you do not have online access, you may contact the WPC at 1-425-562-2245 to find out how to purchase a printed code list.

The WPC Web site includes complete instructions on how to use the online code list to determine which code you should choose to identify yourself, where taxonomy codes are used, what each of the levels mean, and more. Basically, the code set levels are organized to allow for drilling down to a provider's precise level of specialization.

Listed below is a random sampling of taxonomy codes to show you what they may look like:

ALLERGY IMMUNOLOGY	207K00000X
DURABLE MEDICAL EQUIPMENT	332B00000X
FAMILY PRACTICE	207Q00000X
OPHTHALMOLOGY	207W00000X
URGENT CARE	261QU0200X

It is important to note that selection of a taxonomy code does not replace any required credentialing or validation processes for your specialty. Some of the code definitions make reference to specialty or certifying boards as a source of information; however, simply choosing a code to identify yourself does not mean that you have automatically met the requirements of the specialty or certifying board.

Why do I need to know my taxonomy code(s)?
Taxonomy codes serve as a secondary identifier to ensure that a provider is accurately recognized in HIPAA standard transactions.
- Taxonomy codes are required on National Provider Identifier (NPI) applications to designate provider type or specialty.
- Taxonomy codes are required for Medicaid claims for BlueSalud/BlueSCI.
- Taxonomy codes are used to select the correct record in the BCBSNM claims processing database. This is important especially when contract pricing differs based on the provider type and specialty.
- Use of taxonomy codes is encouraged by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS).