



CareFirst Billing Dispute External Review Process (BDERP) Information

The Thomas Settlement Agreement requires CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield (CareFirst) and CareFirst BlueChoice, Inc. (CareFirst BlueChoice) to establish an external review process for specific types of billing disputes. The external review process for CareFirst and CareFirst BlueChoice is now in place. CareFirst/CareFirst BlueChoice has contracted with MES Solutions (MES) to act as its External Reviewer.

If you have received a final billing dispute decision letter from CareFirst or CareFirst BlueChoice or if you feel that your claim may qualify for external review based on the information below, please visit the [MES Website](#) for more details on how to file your billing dispute. **All external billing disputes and applicable fees must be submitted directly to MES.**

Billing Dispute Category Example List

Below are examples that may help you determine if your billing dispute will be covered under the Thomas Settlement Agreement. These examples include but are not limited to:

- Bundling;
- Downcoding;
- Application of a CPT[®] modifier;
- Other reassignment of a code by CareFirst or CareFirst BlueChoice;
- Payment when two or more CPT[®] Codes are billed together; and/or
- Whether a payment-enhancing modifier is appropriate.

The following are **NOT** included:

- Billing disputes for providers who are not Medical Doctors (MDs) or Doctors of Osteopathy (DOs).
- Disputes regarding Allowed Benefit;
- Medical necessity appeals;
- FEP claims;
- BlueCard claims; and/or
- Billing disputes for physicians who have opted-out of the Thomas Settlement Agreement.

CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield is the shared business name of CareFirst of Maryland, Inc. and Group Hospitalization and Medical Services, Inc. CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield and CareFirst BlueChoice, Inc. are independent licensees of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association. ® Registered trademark of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association. ® Registered trademark of CareFirst of Maryland, Inc.



Timely Filing Requirements

The following are the timely filing requirements for filing your billing dispute:

For those billing disputes in which a final decision was rendered by CareFirst or CareFirst BlueChoice between August 21, 2008 and November 20, 2008, you will have until December 21, 2008 to file an external billing dispute with MES.

- For participating physicians, the final decision date is equivalent to the date of notification from CareFirst or CareFirst BlueChoice that the internal billing dispute decision was upheld.
- For non-participating physicians, the final decision date is defined as the date of payment for the claim in dispute.

For those billing disputes in which a final decision is rendered by CareFirst or CareFirst BlueChoice on or after November 21, 2008, you will have ninety (90) calendar days to file an external billing dispute with MES.

- For participating physicians, the ninety (90) day time period will begin on the date of notification from CareFirst or CareFirst BlueChoice that the internal billing dispute decision was upheld.
- For non-participating physicians, the ninety (90) day time period will begin on the date of payment for the claim in dispute.