

Aetna External Billing Dispute Procedure

Disputes over coding, payment rules, reimbursement methodologies and the submission of records requests

This summary has been prepared by the American Medical Association (AMA) Private Sector Advocacy unit from information provided to the AMA. While efforts have been made to include information likely to be of interest to most physicians, the actual settlement documents are much more extensive, contain the definitive settlement terms and should be consulted in the event of questions or if a specific situation is not addressed. Questions about the settlement may be directed to Milberg Weiss Bershad & Schulman LLP at (866) 809-8003 or visit www.hmosettlements.com.

Who Can File an External Billing Dispute?

Any physician who has not opted-out of the Aetna Settlement or any Signatory Medical Society may file a billing dispute.

What is an External Billing Dispute?

This process is available to resolve disputes over the application of coding, payment rules and reimbursement methodologies to the patient's specific factual situations and submission of records requests that cause a demonstrable undue burden on the practice.

What Claims Can be Included in this Dispute?

Claims for services performed on or after November 6, 2003 are eligible for review (including claims that were still in the pipeline on November 6, 2003.) All claims that have exhausted the internal appeal process before January 5, 2004 must be received by IMEDECS no later than thirty (30) calendar days after the internal appeal process is completed. This process cannot be utilized until a physician or physician group has completed the internal appeals process.

Where do I Begin?

- Step One: Go to <http://www.hmosettlements.com>, click on **Settlements** located in the tool bar on the left side and then click on **Aetna**.
- Step Two: Review the Aetna Settlement document. **Aetna Settlement Agreement (1 of 4)** contains Section 7.10 that highlights the dispute resolution process for physician billing disputes.
- Step Three: Download and review the **Aetna External Billing Dispute Resolution Process Step-by-Step** document for information on filing a billing dispute.
- Step Four: Complete the **Aetna Billing Dispute Resolution Request Form**, since the External Billing Dispute Resolution Request Form is under development.

How do I Submit an External Billing Dispute?

Request Form

Submit a completed Aetna request form, all supporting documentation and the filing fee **within (1) ninety (90) calendar days of the date of notification that an internal appeal was denied; or (2) after exhaustion has been implied (Aetna does not communicate a notice of decision within forty-five (45) calendar days from the receipt of all documentation needed to complete the internal appeal) to:**

IMEDECS
157 S. Broad Street, Suite 400
Lansdale, PA 19446
Phone: 215.855.4633 Fax: 215.855.5318

Supporting documentation

The inclusion of a cover letter stating the specific dispute(s) in question is recommended, in addition to any relevant supporting documentation.

Filing Fees

The claim or batch of claims must equal \$500 or more. There is a \$50 filing fee for claim(s) under \$1,000.00 and a filing fee of \$50 plus 5% of the amount of the claim(s) dispute that exceeds \$1,000. For example, a claim dispute in the amount of \$5,000 would require a filing fee of \$250 ($\$50 + (\$4000 \times .05)$). Please refer to the Request Form for the specific filing fee for your claim submission.

Decision

The decision of the External Review Officer (ERO) is final and binding on Aetna and the physician and/or physician group only with respect to the specific case being reviewed by the ERO. Participating providers may access Aetna's physician Web site for further information.