

# HOT TOPIC

## COMING SOON: MEMBER ID PREFIX TO INCLUDE NUMBERS

### AVOID PAYMENT DELAYS: ENSURE YOUR TRADING PARTNER IS PREPARED FOR NEW PREFIXES

The Blue Cross Blue Shield Association will begin issuing prefixes containing alpha-numeric characters as early as April 2018. This change is a result of diminishing options for solely alphabetical character combinations. As you know, the alpha prefixes, now called “**Prefixes**” due to inclusion of numeric characters, are used to appropriately route claims across the BlueCard network to the correct Home plan, and are primarily visible on member ID cards.

Although April of 2018 is the effective date for the new Blue Cross Blue Shield Association prefixes, you may not begin seeing the alpha-numeric prefixes until later in 2018 or even 2019.

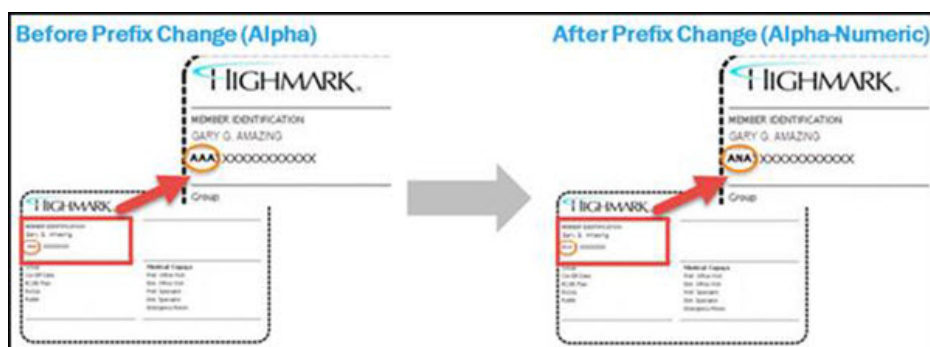
#### This is why:

- No existing member prefixes will change.
- The change will occur only when health plans, like Highmark, request new prefixes. New prefixes, assigned by the Blue Cross Blue Shield Association, will then contain alpha-numeric characters. These prefixes will be assigned to **new** client accounts throughout the year or during open enrollment.

Highmark wants to ensure you and your trading partners are prepared to submit and accept this new prefix on electronic transactions and that documentation/communications reflect “Prefix” instead of “Alpha-Prefix”. **Note:** This includes the 837I and 837P Health Care Claim and the 835 Electronic Remittance Advice (ERA) transactions.

Please talk to your clearinghouse, vendor, or billing service immediately so that you experience no electronic payment or transaction delays.

To follow is an example of the member ID card and number sequence changes, where A=Alpha and N=Number:



Number sequence for new prefix:

- Zero (0) and one (1) will **not** be used in the prefixes.
- Two (2) through nine (9) will be used in the prefixes.
- Notes:
  - A prefix will never include all numeric values for example, 111.
  - R22 – R99 will not be used as that number sequence overlaps with the Federal Employee Program.