



Phase I CORE 152: Eligibility and Benefit Real Time Companion Guide Rule
version 1.1.0 March 2011

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BACKGROUND

Health plans or information sources have the option of creating a "companion guide" that describes the specifics of how they will implement the HIPAA transactions. The companion guide is in addition to and supplements the ASC X12 v5010 Implementation Guide adopted for use under HIPAA.

Currently health plans or information sources have independently created companion guides that vary in format and structure. Such variance can be confusing to trading partners/providers who must review numerous companion guides along with the ASC X12 v5010 Implementation Guides. To address this issue, CORE developed the CORE v5010 Master Companion Guide Template for health plans or information sources. Using this template, health plans or information sources can ensure that the structure of their companion guide is similar to other health plan's documents, making it easier for providers to find information quickly as they consult each health plan's document on these important industry EDI transactions.

Developed with input from multiple health plans, system vendors, provider representatives and healthcare/HIPAA industry experts, this template organizes information into several simple sections – General Information (Sections 1-9) and Transaction-Specific Information (Section 10) – accompanied by an appendix. Note that the companion guide template is presented in the form of an example of a fictitious Acme Health Plan viewpoint.

Although CORE participants believe that a standard template/common structure is desirable, they recognize that different health plans may have different requirements. The CORE v5010 Master Companion Guide Template gives health plans the flexibility to tailor the document to meet their particular needs.

Note: The CORE v5010 Master Companion Guide Template has been adapted from the CAQH/WEDI Best Practices Companion Guide Template originally published January 1, 2003.

RULE

All CORE-certified entities' Companion Guides covering the ASC X12 005010X279A1 Eligibility Benefit Request and Response (270/271) (hereafter v5010 270/271) transactions must follow the format/flow as defined in the CORE v5010 Master Companion Guide Template (See CORE v5010 Master Companion Guide Template).

Note: This rule does not require any CORE-certified entity to modify any other existing companion guides that cover other HIPAA-adopted transaction implementation guides.

CONFORMANCE

Conformance with this rule is considered achieved by health plans (or information sources) if all of the following criteria are achieved:

1. *Publication to its trading partner community of its detailed companion guide specifying all requirements for submitting and processing the v5010 270 and returning the v5010 271 transaction in accordance with this rule.*
2. *Submission to a CORE-authorized testing vendor the following:*
 - a) *A copy of the table of contents of its official v5010 270/271 companion guide.*
 - b) *A copy of a page of its official v5010 270/271 companion guide depicting its conformance with the format for specifying the v5010 270/271 data content requirements.*
 - c) *Such submission may be in the form of a hard copy paper document, an electronic document, or a URL where the table of contents and an example of the v5010 270/271 data content requirements of the companion guide is located.*

Conformance with this rule must be demonstrated through successful completion of the approved CORE test suite for this rule with a CORE-authorized testing vendor.