

# Northern Nevada Operating Engineers Health & Welfare Trust Fund

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## YOUR RIGHTS AND PROTECTIONS AGAINST SURPRISE MEDICAL BILLS

When you get emergency care or are treated by an out-of-network provider at an in-network hospital or ambulatory surgical center, you are protected from balance billing. In these cases, you shouldn't be charged more than your plan's copayments, coinsurance and/or deductible.

### **WHAT IS "BALANCE BILLING" (SOMETIMES CALLED "SURPRISE BILLING")?**

When you see a doctor or other health care provider, you may owe certain [out-of-pocket costs](#), like a [copayment](#), [coinsurance](#), or [deductible](#). You may have additional costs or have to pay the entire bill if you see a provider or visit a health care facility that isn't in your health plan's network.

"Out-of-network" means providers and facilities that haven't signed a contract with your health plan to provide services. Out-of-network providers may be allowed to bill you for the difference between what your plan pays and the full amount charged for a service. This is called "**balance billing**." This amount is likely more than in-network costs for the same service and might not count toward your plan's deductible or annual out-of-pocket limit.

"Surprise billing" is an unexpected balance bill. This can happen when you can't control who is involved in your care—like when you have an emergency or when you schedule a visit at an in-network facility but are unexpectedly treated by an out-of-network provider. Surprise medical bills could cost thousands of dollars depending on the procedure or service.

### **You're protected from balance billing for:**

#### **Emergency services**

If you have an emergency medical condition and get emergency services from an out-of-network provider or facility, the most they can bill you is your plan's in-network cost-sharing amount (such as copayments, coinsurance, and deductibles). You **can't** be balance billed for these emergency services. This includes services you may get after you're in stable condition, unless you give written consent and give up your protections not to be balance billed for these post-stabilization services.

#### **Certain services at an in-network hospital or ambulatory surgical center**

When you get services from an in-network hospital or ambulatory surgical center, certain providers there may be out-of-network. In these cases, the most those providers can bill you is your plan's in-network cost-sharing amount. This applies to emergency medicine, anesthesia, pathology, radiology, laboratory, neonatology, assistant surgeon, hospitalist, or intensivist services. These providers **can't** balance bill you

and may not ask you to give up your protections not to be balance billed.

If you get other types of services at these in-network facilities, out-of-network providers **can't** balance bill you, unless you give written consent and give up your protections.

**You're never required to give up your protections from balance billing. You also aren't required to get out-of-network care. You can choose a provider or facility in your plan's network.**

**When balance billing isn't allowed, you also have these protections:**

- You're only responsible for paying your share of the cost (like the copayments, coinsurance, and deductible that you would pay if the provider or facility was in-network). Your health plan will pay any additional costs to out-of-network providers and facilities directly.
- Generally, your health plan must:
  - Cover emergency services without requiring you to get approval for services in advance (also known as "prior authorization").
  - Cover emergency services by out-of-network providers.
  - Base what you owe the provider or facility (cost-sharing) on what it would pay an in-network provider or facility and show that amount in your explanation of benefits.
  - Count any amount you pay for emergency services or out-of-network services toward your in-network deductible and out-of-pocket limit.

**If you think you've been wrongly billed**, you may contact the Department of Health and Human Services at 1-800-985-3059 to submit a complaint regarding potential violations of the No Surprises Act for enforcement issues related to federally regulated plans such as a self-funded group health plan (like this Plan). You may contact 1-888-466-2219 for enforcement issues related to state regulated plans.

Visit <https://www.cms.gov/nosurprises/consumers> for more information about your rights under federal law.

You can find information about your rights under your state's law at <https://www.commonwealthfund.org/publications/maps-and-interactives/2021/feb/state-balance-billing-protections>. For the State of Nevada law information, please visit [https://doi.nv.gov/Consumers/Health\\_and\\_Accident\\_Insurance/Balance\\_Billing\\_FAQs/](https://doi.nv.gov/Consumers/Health_and_Accident_Insurance/Balance_Billing_FAQs/).

**GRANDFATHERED HEALTH PLAN REMINDER**

**The Board of Trustees believes that the Northern Nevada Operating Engineers Health & Welfare Trust Fund is a "grandfathered health plan" under the Affordable Care Act ("ACA").** As permitted by the ACA, a grandfathered health plan can preserve certain basic health coverage that was already in effect when

that ACA was enacted. Being a grandfathered health plan means that your Plan is not required to include certain consumer protections of the ACA that apply to other plans (known as a Non-Grandfathered plan), for example, requiring the provision of preventive health services without any cost sharing. Grandfathered health plans must comply, however, with certain other consumer protections in the Act, such as the elimination of annual and lifetime limits on Plan's essential health benefits. (For a definition of what constitutes as Essential Health Benefits, please visit [www.healthcare.gov/glossary/essential-health-benefits](http://www.healthcare.gov/glossary/essential-health-benefits).)

Questions regarding which protections apply and which protections do not apply to a grandfathered health plan and what might cause a plan to change from grandfathered health plan status can be directed to the Plan Office at (775) 826-7200. You may also contact the Employee Benefits Security Administration, U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) at 1-866-444-3272 or [www.dol.gov/ebsa/healthreform](http://www.dol.gov/ebsa/healthreform). This website has a table summarizing which protections do and do not apply to grandfathered health plans.