

AN ACT

relating to the relationship between dentists and certain employee benefit plans and health insurers.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Section 1451.206, Insurance Code, is amended by adding Subsections (d) and (e) to read as follows:

(d) An employee benefit plan or health insurance policy provider or issuer may not recover an overpayment made to a dentist unless:

(1) not later than the 180th day after the date the dentist receives the payment, the provider or issuer provides written notice of the overpayment to the dentist that includes the basis and specific reasons for the request for recovery of funds; and

(2) the dentist:

(A) fails to provide a written objection to the request for recovery of funds and does not make arrangements for repayment of the requested funds on or before the 45th day after the date the dentist receives the notice; or

(B) objects to the request in accordance with the procedure described by Subsection (e) and exhausts all rights of appeal.

(e) An employee benefit plan or health insurance policy provider or issuer shall provide a dentist with the opportunity to

1 challenge an overpayment recovery request and establish written
2 policies and procedures for a dentist to object to an overpayment
3 recovery request. The procedures must allow the dentist to access
4 the claims information in dispute.

5 SECTION 2. Section 1451.2065, Insurance Code, is amended to
6 read as follows:

7 Sec. 1451.2065. CONTRACTS WITH DENTISTS. (a) In this
8 section:

9 (1) "Covered [~~,~~ "covered] service" means a dental care
10 service for which reimbursement is available under a patient's
11 employee benefit plan or health insurance policy, or for which
12 reimbursement is available subject to a contractual limitation,
13 including:

- 14 (A) [~~(1)~~] a deductible;
15 (B) [~~(2)~~] a copayment;
16 (C) [~~(3)~~] coinsurance;
17 (D) [~~(4)~~] a waiting period;
18 (E) [~~(5)~~] an annual or lifetime maximum limit;
19 (F) [~~(6)~~] a frequency limitation; [~~or~~]
20 (G) [~~(7)~~] an alternative benefit payment; or
21 (H) any other limitation.

22 (2) "Insurer" means a provider or issuer of an
23 employee benefit plan or health insurance policy.

24 (b) A contract between an insurer and a dentist may not:

25 (1) limit the fee the dentist may charge for a service
26 that is not a covered service; or

27 (2) include a provision that both:

1 (A) allows the insurer to disallow a service,
2 resulting in denial of payment to the dentist for a service that
3 ordinarily would have been covered; and

4 (B) prohibits the dentist from billing for and
5 collecting the amount owed from the patient for that service if
6 there is a dental necessity, as defined by Section 32.054, Human
7 Resources Code, for that service.

8 SECTION 3. Subchapter E, Chapter 1451, Insurance Code, is
9 amended by adding Section 1451.209 to read as follows:

10 Sec. 1451.209. REQUIREMENTS FOR THIRD PARTY ACCESS TO
11 PROVIDER NETWORKS. (a) At the time a provider network contract is
12 entered into or when material modifications are made to the
13 contract relevant to granting a third party access to the contract,
14 an employee benefit plan or health insurance policy provider or
15 issuer shall allow any dentist that is part of the provider network
16 to elect not to participate in the third party access to the
17 contract and to elect not to enter into a contract directly with the
18 third party that will obtain access to the provider network. This
19 subsection does not permit the plan or policy provider or issuer to
20 cancel or otherwise end a contractual relationship with a dentist
21 if the dentist elects to not participate in or agree to third party
22 access to the provider network contract.

23 (b) An employee benefit plan or health insurance policy
24 provider or issuer that enters into a provider network contract
25 with a dentist, or a contracting entity that has leased or acquired
26 the provider network contract, may grant a third party access to the
27 provider network contract or to a dentist's dental care services or

1 contractual discounts provided under the contract only if:

2 (1) the provider network contract conspicuously
3 states that the provider or issuer or contracting entity may enter
4 into an agreement with a third party that allows the third party to
5 obtain the provider's, issuer's, or contracting entity's rights and
6 responsibilities as if the third party were the provider, issuer,
7 or contracting entity;

8 (2) if the contracting entity is an employee benefit
9 plan or health insurance policy provider or issuer, the provider
10 network contract conspicuously states, in addition to the language
11 required by Subdivision (1), that the dentist may elect not to
12 participate in third party access to the provider network contract:

13 (A) at the time the provider network contract is
14 entered into; or

15 (B) when there are material modifications to the
16 provider network contract relevant to granting a third party access
17 to the provider network contract;

18 (3) the third party accessing the provider network
19 contract agrees to comply with all of the original contract's
20 terms, including the contracted fee schedule and obligations
21 concerning patient steerage;

22 (4) the provider, issuer, or other contracting entity
23 provides in writing to the dentist the names of all third parties
24 with access to the provider network in existence as of the date the
25 contract is entered into;

26 (5) the provider, issuer, or other contracting entity
27 identifies all current third parties with access to the provider

1 network on its Internet website with a list updated at least once
2 every 90 days;

3 (6) the provider, issuer, or other contracting entity
4 requires a third party with access to the provider network to
5 identify the source of any discount on all remittance advices or
6 explanations of payment under which a discount is taken, provided
7 that this subsection does not apply to electronic transactions
8 mandated by the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act
9 of 1996 (Pub. L. No. 104-191);

10 (7) the provider, issuer, or other contracting entity
11 provides written or electronic notice to network dentists that a
12 third party will lease, acquire, or obtain access to the provider
13 network at least 30 days before the lease or access takes effect;

14 (8) the provider, issuer, or other contracting entity
15 provides written or electronic notice to network dentists of the
16 termination of the provider network contract at least 30 days
17 before the termination date;

18 (9) a third party's right to a dentist's discounted
19 rate ceases as of the termination date of the provider network
20 contract; and

21 (10) the provider, issuer, or other contracting entity
22 makes available a copy of the provider network contract relied on in
23 the adjudication of a claim to a network dentist not later than the
24 30th day after the date the dentist requests a copy of that
25 contract.

26 (c) Subsections (b)(7) and (8) do not apply to a contracting
27 entity that only organizes and leases networks but does not engage

1 in the business of insurance.

2 (d) A person may not bind or require a dentist to perform
3 dental care services under a provider network contract that has
4 been sold, leased, or assigned to a third party or for which a third
5 party has otherwise obtained provider network access in violation
6 of this section.

7 (e) This section does not apply:

8 (1) if access to a provider network contract is
9 granted to:

10 (A) a third party operating in accordance with
11 the same brand licensee program as the employee benefit plan
12 provider, health insurance policy issuer, or other contracting
13 entity selling or leasing the provider network contract, provided
14 that the third party accessing the provider network contract agrees
15 to comply with all of the original contract's terms, including the
16 contracted fee schedule and obligations concerning patient
17 steerage; or

18 (B) an entity that is an affiliate of the
19 employee benefit plan provider, health insurance policy issuer, or
20 other contracting entity selling or leasing the provider network
21 contract, provided that:

22 (i) the provider, issuer, or entity
23 publicly discloses the names of the affiliates on its Internet
24 website; and

25 (ii) the affiliate accessing the provider
26 network contract agrees to comply with all of the original
27 contract's terms, including the contracted fee schedule and

1 obligations concerning patient steerage;
2 (2) to the child health plan program under Chapter 62,
3 Health and Safety Code, or the health benefits plan for children
4 under Chapter 63, Health and Safety Code; or
5 (3) to a Medicaid managed care program operated under
6 Chapter 533, Government Code, or a Medicaid program operated under
7 Chapter 32, Human Resources Code.

8 SECTION 4. The changes in law made by this Act apply only to
9 an employee benefit plan for a plan year that commences on or after
10 January 1, 2024, or a health insurance policy delivered, issued for
11 delivery, or renewed on or after January 1, 2024, and any provider
12 network contract entered into on or after the effective date of this
13 Act in connection with one of those plans or policies. An employee
14 benefit plan for a plan year that commenced before January 1, 2024,
15 or a health insurance policy delivered, issued for delivery, or
16 renewed before January 1, 2024, and any provider network contract
17 entered into before, on, or after the effective date of this Act in
18 connection with one of those plans or policies is governed by the
19 law as it existed immediately before the effective date of this Act,
20 and that law is continued in effect for that purpose.

21 SECTION 5. This Act takes effect September 1, 2023.

President of the Senate

Speaker of the House

I certify that H.B. No. 1527 was passed by the House on April 28, 2023, by the following vote: Yeas 139, Nays 5, 2 present, not voting; and that the House concurred in Senate amendments to H.B. No. 1527 on May 24, 2023, by the following vote: Yeas 143, Nays 0, 1 present, not voting.

Chief Clerk of the House

I certify that H.B. No. 1527 was passed by the Senate, with amendments, on May 18, 2023, by the following vote: Yeas 31, Nays 0.

Secretary of the Senate

APPROVED: _____

Date

Governor