

January 2017

Empire BlueCross BlueShield  
NEW System Changes

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**IMPORTANT**  
**MEMBER INFORMATION FACT SHEET**  
Dutchess Educational Health Insurance Consortium

*What system change is occurring within Empire BCBS (Empire)?*

Empire is moving their employer groups to a new processing system called 'WGS'. The new system is intended to improve customer service and claims processing for all groups and members.

*Who is affected by this change, and when will it occur?*

All members enrolled in the Empire BCBS coverage offered by the Dutchess Educational Health Insurance Consortium (DEHIC) will be affected. This includes school districts, BOCES, and Dutchess Community College.

The change will become effective on July 1, 2017 for all DEHIC groups.

*What changes will directly impact me and my dependents?*

In addition to the improved level of service mentioned above. . .

- you will receive a new identification card;
- your new card will include a new group number;
- your new card will include a new member identification number; and,
- your new card will include a new customer service telephone number

Finally, the **Explanation of Benefits** form (EOB) that Empire sends to you after you've received medical services, will be simplified to provide an easier to read layout of the provider's billed charges, Empire's payment, and your out of pocket cost (e.g., copayment).

*When will my new identification card arrive in the mail, and what action must I take?*

- Your new card will arrive *sometime prior to* July 1, 2017.
- Empire will enclose an insert advising that this is your new card.
- Place the card in your wallet for use when you receive services beginning July 1<sup>st</sup> and later.

- Ensure that you inform all of your providers of your new identification card when you receive services beginning July 1<sup>st</sup> and later (hospital, medical or prescription drug).

**Important Note: You and your dependents must begin using the new identification card beginning July 1, 2017, but not sooner. If you use your old identification card beginning July 1<sup>st</sup>, your services will be denied until you present your new identification card.**

***Will there be any changes to my benefit plan?***

No, as it relates to your hospital, medical, and prescription drug coverage. These benefits and the participating provider network of your current plan will remain unchanged.

Yes, as it relates to routine vision coverage. The benefits for routine vision care are currently provided through Empire’s relationship with Davis Vision. This will end on June 30, 2017.

Beginning on July 1, 2017, Empire will be providing routine vision benefits through their vision vendor, *BlueView Vision*. The benefits that you have today will be equivalent to the benefits under BlueView Vision, and will also include an expanded vision provider network.

To view the vision providers that can be used for routine vision care, go to [www.empireblue.com](http://www.empireblue.com) . . .

- Enter the home page, and scroll down to ‘Find a Doctor’, then select the link
- Under ‘Search as Guest’, select ‘Search by Selecting a Plan or Network’
- Under ‘What type of care are you searching for’, select *Vision*
- Under ‘What state do you want to search in’, select *New York*
- Under ‘Select a plan/network’, select *Blue View Vision* and continue

You can also call Empire’s customer service unit by using the telephone number on the back of your new identification card.

***If I previously set up a personal account on Empire’s website, will I need to change my username and password (i.e., my log-in information)?***

No, you will be able to continue using your previously established log-in information.

***Does my provider know that the system change is occurring?***

Yes, Empire has taken steps to notify their participating provider offices, but you should also notify your provider when you obtain services. Again, please be sure that you use your new identification card for services beginning on July 1<sup>st</sup>.

***Who Should I call if I have additional questions related to the system change or my health insurance benefits?***

Please call the Empire BCBS customer service unit by using the telephone number appearing on the back of your new identification card.