

coverage terminates if premiums are not paid by the end of the grace period.

(c) *Group billing arrangement.* CMS may send a single notice for the premiums due from a group of enrollees if the following conditions are met:

(1) The group payer—

(i) Uses funds other than the enrollees' to pay all or a substantial part of the premiums; or

(ii) Deducts the premiums from periodic payments it makes to the enrollees in the group.

(2) The enrollee's rights are protected and enrollees are not required to pay the costs of having their premiums paid on a group basis.

§ 408.82 Conditions for group billing.

CMS agrees to a group billing arrangement only if the following conditions are met:

(a) Conditions the group payer must meet. The group payer submits a written request for group billing—

(1) Showing that all or part of the payments are made from the payer's funds or from funds due the enrollees and in the payer's possession; and

(2) Agreeing not to charge the enrollees for the service of paying the premiums or for the administrative costs such as recordkeeping and postage.

(b) *Enrollees eligible for group payment.*

(1) Group payment may be made only on behalf of individuals who are already enrolled and are being billed for direct remittance.

(2) Group payment may not be made for enrollees whose premiums are being deducted from monthly benefits in accordance with Subpart C of this part or being paid by the State under a buy-in agreement.

(c) *Protection of enrollee's rights.* The use of group billing must not jeopardize the enrollees' right—

(1) To confidentiality of personal information;

(2) To terminate enrollment;

(3) To resume individual payment of premiums if he or she wishes; and

(4) To receive notice of any action that affects the SMI benefits.

(d) *Authorization by the enrollee.* (1) To ensure maximum feasible protection of the rights specified in paragraph (c) of this section, each enrollee must give

written authorization as specified in § 408.84(a)(2).

(2) A group payer that is not an entity of State or local government must submit all enrollee authorizations to CMS.

(3) A group payer that is an entity of State or local government may retain the authorizations and certify to CMS that it has on file an authorization for each enrollee included in the group.

(4) It is on the basis of the enrollee's authorization that CMS sends the group payer information about each enrollee, as necessary to carry out the group payment function.

(e) *Size of group.* The number of enrollees must be at least 20, which is the minimum size sufficient to make group billing efficient. (Smaller groups may use the informal procedure described in § 408.80(b).)

§ 408.84 Billing and payment procedures.

(a) *Initial premium notice.* (1) CMS or its agent always sends the initial premium notice to the enrollee.

(2) An enrollee who wishes to have the premiums paid on a group basis must give the notice to the group payer, along with written authorization for sending subsequent notices to the group payer and for release of the information required for the group payment process.

(b) *Monthly billings.* Group premiums are billed on a monthly basis. However, the group payer may pay up to 12 months in advance.

(c) Group payers must make their payments within 30 days after billing, to avoid infringing on the 90-day grace period during which the premiums may be paid by the enrollee if he or she is dropped from the group.

(d) *Effect of group payment.* Payment by a group payer is considered payment by the enrollee.

§ 408.86 Responsibilities under group billing arrangement.

(a) *Enrollee responsibilities.* (1) The enrollee is still responsible for premium payments; the group payer simply acts as his agent. If the agent fails to pay, or identifies the payment incorrectly,

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SSA notifies both the agent and the enrollee that the enrollee's account is delinquent. If an enrollee fails to take action on that notice, entitlement is terminated for nonpayment of premiums.

(2) The enrollee must promptly notify both SSA and the group payer of any change of address.

(b) *Group payer's responsibilities.* The group payer must—

(1) Make premium payments promptly upon receipt of notices;

(2) Promptly notify both CMS and the enrollee when it drops an enrollee from the group;

(3) Make payments in a way that facilitates efficient and economical processing; and

(4) Maintain the confidentiality of the personal information obtained from CMS for the group payment process.

(c) *CMS responsibilities.* CMS—

(1) Sends the bill to the group payer upon authorization from the enrollee;

(2) Notifies both the payer and the enrollee if the payer fails to make timely payments; and

(3) Refunds excess premiums in accordance with § 408.88.

§ 408.88 Refund of group payments.

(a) *Basis for refund.* Group payments are refunded only in the following circumstances:

(1) The premium was for a month after the month in which the enrollee's SMI coverage terminated or the enrollee died.

(2) The premium was for a month after the month in which the group payer gave notice (before the 26th day of that month) that the enrollee was no longer eligible for group payment and was being dropped from the group.

(b) *Example.* F is the wife of J who is a retiree of Corporation X. That corporation pays premiums on behalf of all of its retirees and their dependents. F obtains a divorce from J on October 20 and thus disqualifies herself for further premium payments by the corporation. The corporation gives notice on November 10 that a refund is due because F has been dropped from the list of persons for whom it has agreed to pay premiums. The premium paid for

December would be refunded to the group payer.

(c) *To whom refund is made.* (1) CMS ordinarily refunds to the group payer the premiums specified in paragraph (a) of this section.

(2) However, if CMS has information that clearly shows those premiums were paid from the enrollee's funds, it sends the refund to the enrollee.

§ 408.90 Termination of group billing arrangement.

(a) A group billing arrangement may be terminated either by the group payer or by CMS upon 30 days' notice.

(b) CMS may terminate the arrangement if it finds that the group payer is not acting in the best interest of the enrollees or that, for any other reason, the arrangement has proved inconvenient for CMS.

§ 408.92 Change from group payment to deduction or individual payment.

(a) *Enrollee excluded from group payment arrangement because of entitlement to monthly benefits.* (1) When an enrollee becomes entitled to monthly benefits from which premiums can be deducted as specified in subpart C of this part, CMS notifies the group payer to discontinue payment for that enrollee.

(2) In order to maintain confidentiality, CMS does not explain to the group payer the reason for excluding the enrollee from the group payment arrangement.

(3) The enrollee's premiums are thereafter deducted from the monthly benefits, in accordance with subpart C of this part.

(b) *Enrollee no longer eligible for the group.* (1) When an enrollee is no longer eligible to be included in the group (for instance because he or she is no longer employed by the group payer or has terminated union or lodge membership), the group payer must promptly notify CMS and the enrollee.

(2) CMS or its agents resume sending individual bills to the enrollee, for direct remittance subject to the grace period and termination dates specified in § 408.8.