



## General Use of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Names and Symbols

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of  
Illinois,  
Blue Cross and Blue Shield of  
Montana,  
Blue Cross and Blue Shield of  
New Mexico,  
Blue Cross and Blue Shield of  
Oklahoma, and  
Blue Cross and Blue Shield of  
Texas

Divisions of Health Care Service Corporation, a Mutual  
Legal Reserve Company, an Independent Licensee of the  
Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association

# Brand Use Rules

## *for Authorized Producers\**

Thank you for being a valued Blue Cross and Blue Shield (BCBS) producer. We're proud of our brand and want to make sure that you know the proper rules and regulations for usage of our company name, brand, logo, symbols and marks. We require that they be used appropriately in all communications. A "Communication" means any communication from the Producer using a mark of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association (BCBSA), including, without limitation, advertising, brochures, informational materials, newsletters, stationery, envelopes, business cards, websites, social media and electronic mail.

Communications may not in any way imply that a producer and BCBS are the same entity, that the producer is employed by BCBS or that the producer is a sales or claims office of BCBS.

The words "blue," "cross," and "shield," or their visual, phonetic or numeric equivalents or any variant thereof, or the letters "b," "c," or "s" in reference to the same, may not be used in the producer's name, phone number, or Internet address, including, without limitation, website URLs, domain-name registrations, email accounts or any social media, account, name or identifier.

### **BCBS Producer Requirements for Brand Use:**

- ▶ Must have a valid producer license from the state where the producer works, be an appointed and/or authorized producer and have met any requirements as defined in your contract
- ▶ Must adhere to the brand guidelines outlined in this document
- ▶ Individual Markets Producers: Must have a minimum of 25 individual policies within a 12 month period or have prior approval from Blue Cross and Blue Shield management to use our information or logo.

\*Blue Cross and Blue Shield reserves the right to audit and revoke any usage. Failure to follow these Brand Use Rules may result in termination of your BCBS producer agreement.



## General Use of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Names and Symbols

*Identifying ownership of  
The Blue Cross and Blue  
Shield name is required  
whenever the symbol  
is displayed.*

### Obtaining BCBS Review and Approval

Use of the brands in any communication medium must be reviewed and approved to ensure compliance with BCBS Brand Use Rules and BCBSA Brand Regulations.

### Use of BCBS Company Name

(How to use the BCBS name in text)

- Correct:**
- Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois or “BCBSIL,”
  - Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Montana or “BCBSMT,”
  - Blue Cross and Blue Shield of New Mexico or “BCBSNM,”
  - Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Oklahoma or “BCBSOK,”
  - Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Texas or “BCBSTX” after first reference to full name
- Incorrect:**
- Blue Cross, Blue Cross and Blue Shield,
  - Blue Cross Blue Shield, Blue Cross/Blue Shield,
  - BlueCross and BlueShield of Illinois,
  - Blue Cross Blue Shield of Illinois,
  - BLUECROSS AND BLUESHIELD OF ILLINOIS

As you know, our company issues insurance policies within Illinois, Montana, Oklahoma, New Mexico and Texas. To avoid possible confusion by the reader, always refer to the appropriate state brand at the beginning of any lead generating ad or communication.

After the state identity is established, you may use the names without the reference to the state, as in “Blue Cross and Blue Shield health plans.”

Always use the Blue Cross and Blue Shield brand if you are also using the brand or logo of other companies.

The acceptable brand is Blue Cross®, Blue Shield®. The Cross and Shield symbols are registered service marks of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association, an association of Independent Blue Cross and Blue Shield Plans.



## General Use of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Names and Symbols

*Only use logos supplied by  
BCBS to ensure correct  
use of the logo.*

### Symbols (also known as the Plan signature)

Examples:



**BlueCross BlueShield  
of Illinois**

Producers are not allowed to download logos from the BCBS website. Only use logos supplied by BCBS to ensure correct use of the logo. To ensure you have the highest quality logo, contact your BCBS sales consultant or account rep to obtain logo graphics.

### Tagline

You must include the tagline shown below at least once in each communication whenever you display the BCBS logo.

*“An Independent Licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association”*

## Advertising

### General

Individual Markets BCBS ads are available to qualifying independent Producers. Producers must ensure that they are using the most recent advertising materials. (See BCBS Producer Requirements for Brand Use on page 1.) Producers are required to specify that they are “An Independent, Authorized Agent of Blue Cross and Blue Shield.” Producers are not authorized to re-use or modify previously approved lead generating ads or other documents.

### Basic rules for use of the brand:

- ▶ Always make sure that the name of the producer agency is larger than the BCBS logo.
- ▶ Always use the agency name first in the ad.
- ▶ The words “Independent, Authorized Agent for” must appear immediately above the logo (See example on page 4) to clearly identify that the agency is not BCBS.



## General Use of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Names and Symbols

*Ads cannot begin with the words Blue Cross and Blue Shield, BCBS, BCBSIL, BCBSMT, BCBSNM, BCBSOK or BCBSTX.*

### Basic rules for use of the brand *continued*:

- Ads should not begin with the words Blue Cross and Blue Shield, or BCBS or BCBSIL, BCBSMT, BCBSNM, BCBSOK or BCBSTX
- Phone numbers should not read - 800 251-BCBS or in any form with the initials of BCBS
- URLs cannot include “b”, “c”, “s” or the BCBS(IL) initials such as bcbsagents.com or ILBCBSAGENT.COM or BCBSILAGENCY.COM
- If selling across state lines, check the rules of the state’s Department of Insurance you sell within. Sometimes, ads include copy that will need to be filed and approved by a state’s Department of Insurance.
- Pre-approved Individual Markets display ads are available for use. Contact your BCBS representative for details. Remember, custom ads need to be submitted for approval prior to use.

### Signage

Posting or erecting signage with the Blue Cross and Blue Shield name is not permitted.

### Independent, Authorized Producer/Agent for Blue Cross and Blue Shield

When the Blue Cross and Blue Shield logo is used in Producer Communications, the words “Independent, Authorized Producer for” or “Independent, Authorized Agent for” must appear above the logo, and the tagline “An Independent Licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association” should be included beneath the logo. (See example below).





## General Use of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Names and Symbols

*There must be enough space  
between the Producer's  
logo and/or the BCBS  
plan name.*

### Business Cards

Identify yourself clearly with the words, “Independent, Authorized Producer” or “Independent, Authorized Agent.” Your name or the name of your agency must be clearly and prominently displayed and must be placed above or before any use of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield name/logo.

- The Producer's logo and/or company name must be the dominant element on the business card to avoid any confusion.
- There must be adequate space between the Producer's logo and/or the BCBS plan name.
- The display of the logo and/or company name should not imply that the producer's company and BCBS are affiliated/integrated.
- The BCBS logo and/or name should be the same size as the logo/name of other insurance companies that the Producer represents.



**Note:** This is one example of an accepted business card format you can use.



## General Use of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Names and Symbols

*It is not appropriate for a third party to own a Blue domain name, even if the third party is an independent, authorized producer. All content on social media sites must be in compliance with the brand rules.*

# Electronic Communication

## Domain Names, Email addresses and URLs

All use of the BCBS logos/name, tagline, product names, and information on the Internet must comply with BCBS Brand Use Rules and BCBSA brand regulations. It is unacceptable for domain names, email addresses or URLs to use the words “blue,” “cross,” “shield,” or their visual, phonetic or numeric equivalents or any variant thereof, or the letters “b,” “c,” or “s.”

Avoid using any key words or phrases with the Blue Cross and Blue Shield names in your domain names, URLs or in registering with or purchasing from an Internet search engine. It is not appropriate for a third party to own a Blue domain name, even if the third party is an independent, authorized producer.

**Correct:** ABCAgency.com

**Incorrect:** Blue Cross of Geography New Enrollment;  
Blue Shield of Geography Group Sales;  
BlueCross@agent.com; BSEnrollment@agent.com;  
BlueCrossAgent.com.

These are only examples of prohibited names, listings, email addresses, and URLs; any implication that the agency and a Plan are connected in any manner other than as an authorized agent is prohibited.

Do not use words or graphics that could mislead an Internet user to think the Producer website is a BCBS website or the BCBSA website. For example, it is unacceptable to use “BCBSLeadGenerator.com.”

## Social Media (e.g. Facebook and Twitter)

If you are using social media, all content must be in compliance with these BCBS Brand Use Rules and BCBSA brand regulations. Producers are not allowed to post the logo on social media sites.



## General Use of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Names and Symbols

*The Producer's logo and/or  
company name must be  
the dominant element on  
the Web page to avoid  
any confusion.*

### **Producer Marketing on the Internet**

Producers who are marketing their services or websites online and displaying BCBS logo/name or product/company information must display the BCBS logo/name or product/company information so that the BCBS name has the same emphasis as other names or brands being promoted.

- Producers cannot mislead the viewer to think the producer advertisement/promotional information is from BCBS or the BCBSA.
- Products promoted with the BCBS logo must be products offered by BCBS.

In addition:

- The Producer's logo and/or company name must be the dominant element on the web page to avoid any confusion.
- Any use of the BCBS logo on any producer web page must include both the our logo and tagline.
- There must be enough space between the producer's logo and the BCBS logo/name. (See example on page 8.)
- The BCBS logo/name should be the same size as the logo/name of other listed companies whom the producer represents.



## General Use of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Names and Symbols

*The BCBS logo must be the same size as the logo of any other listed company the producer represents.*

### Producer Marketing on the Internet *continued*

**Correct:** A producer’s Internet site offering rate quotes for various health plans displays the correct BCBS logo and tagline. The producer’s logo is the dominant graphic and a text disclaimer tells viewers that the producer is an independent agent. The BCBS logo is the same size as the logos of other listed companies the Producer represents. (See example below.)



For example purposes only. Not an actual producer Internet site or company.

It is incorrect if a producer’s Internet site displays a BCBS logo without the required tagline. In addition, if the BCBS logo used is distorted or larger than the producer’s logo, this is incorrect and could mislead viewers to think they are on a BCBS website.





## General Use of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Names and Symbols

*Your website must  
clearly state that you  
serve "State" only.*

# Geo-Targeted Advertising

## Geo-Targeted Advertising:

Because producers serve a specific geographic area, cautious use of the Internet must be maintained to avoid confusion. It is important that your website clearly states that you serve one or more of the states below and that you identify who is eligible for coverage.

- › Illinois
- › Montana
- › New Mexico
- › Oklahoma
- › Texas

Suggested language includes:

- › Serving Illinois
- › Serving Montana
- › Serving New Mexico
- › Serving Oklahoma
- › Serving Texas
- › or "Serving residents and businesses in Illinois / New Mexico / Oklahoma / Texas."

This language is required only on your home page. After initial use of the words below, you no longer have to use them.

- › of Illinois
- › of Montana
- › of New Mexico
- › of Oklahoma
- › of Texas

## BCBS Term Definitions

- › Company name means any reference to Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Montana, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of New Mexico, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Oklahoma and Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Texas.
- › Brand means any usage of the company name, logo, symbols and/or marks
- › Logo means the BCBS company name and symbols shown together (also known as the Plan signature)
- › Symbols and Marks means the BCBS Cross and Shield graphics