

Important disclosure information

Kaiser Foundation Health Plan of Washington | Kaiser Foundation Health Plan of Washington Options, Inc.

Understanding your health plan

RCW.48.43.510 and WAC 284-43-5130

Your health plan is designed to help you live your healthiest life. To achieve that, it's important that you understand your plan's benefits, coverage, and policies. Upon request, Kaiser Foundation Health Plan of Washington or Kaiser Foundation Health Plan of Washington Options, Inc. (collectively referred to as "Kaiser Permanente" within this document) will provide you with the following information:

- A list of covered benefits, including prescription drug benefits, if any; exclusions, reductions, and limitations to covered benefits, and any definition of medical necessity on which they may be based
- Information on how members may be involved in decisions about benefits
- A list of coverage policies for pharmacy benefits, including how drugs are added or removed from the drug formulary
- Information on policies for protecting the confidentiality of health information
- Information on premiums and enrollee cost-sharing requirements
- A summary explanation of the complaints and appeals processes
- Point-of-service plan availability and how the plan operates
- A copy of the plan's current drug formulary for prescription drug coverage
- A list of participating primary care and specialty care providers, including network arrangements that restrict access to providers within the plan network
- A list of all available disclosure items, in addition to the above, as required by law

Pharmacy benefit information

WAC 284-43-5110 and WAC 284-43-5170

The following information applies only to health plans that have pharmacy benefits. This information is detailed in your plan's Evidence of Coverage.

Your right to safe and effective pharmacy services

State and federal laws establish standards to ensure safe and effective pharmacy services, and to guarantee your right to know what drugs are covered under this plan and what coverage limitations are in your contract. If you would like more information about the drug coverage policies under your plan, or if you have a question or a concern about your pharmacy benefit, please contact Member Services.

If you would like to know more about your rights under the law, or if you think anything you received from your plan may not conform to the terms of your contract, you may contact the Washington State Office of the Insurance Commissioner toll-free at 1-800-562-6900. If you have a concern about the pharmacists or pharmacies serving you, please call the Washington State Department of Health toll-free at 1-800-525-0127.

Does this plan limit or exclude certain drugs my health care provider may prescribe, or encourage substitutions for some drugs?

Kaiser Permanente, working with pharmacists and physicians, has developed a drug formulary. A drug formulary is a list of preferred pharmaceutical products, supplies, and devices. Nonformulary drugs are not covered unless approved by your health plan as medically necessary or may be subject to a higher cost than formulary drugs, depending on the benefits of your specific plan.

Generic drugs will be dispensed unless a suitable generic is not available. If you elect to purchase a brand-name drug instead of the generic equivalent

(if available), and it is not medically necessary, you will be responsible for payment of the additional cost above the generic drug charge in addition to your plan pharmacy cost share.

Over-the-counter drugs, supplies and devices not requiring a prescription under state law or regulations, drugs and injections for anticipated illness while traveling, drugs and injections for cosmetic purposes, and vitamins – including most prescription vitamins – are generally excluded from all plans. Exclusion of other categories of drugs will depend on your specific coverage plan. For example, drugs for treatment of sexual dysfunction are not covered unless your health plan covers treatment of sexual dysfunction. Contact Member Services to request a copy of the drug formulary for your specific plan. The drug formulary is also available at kp.org/wa/formulary.

When can my plan change the approved drug list (formulary)? If a change occurs, will I have to pay more to use a drug I had been using?

Changes to the plan's drug formulary are implemented on an ongoing basis, based on an established evaluation process. The evaluation process includes review of scientific studies. The scientific studies reviewed must have been published in health care journals or other publications in which original manuscripts are published only after having been critically reviewed for scientific accuracy, validity, and reliability by unbiased independent experts.

Your care provider or pharmacist will notify you when you refill a prescription if the prescribed drug is no longer included in the plan's drug formulary. When a drug has been removed from the plan formulary, it will not be covered unless your plan, at its discretion, elects to cover the drug for a limited time, or the drug may be subject to a higher cost depending on the benefits of your specific plan.

What should I do if I want a change from limitations, exclusions, substitutions, or cost increases for drugs specified in this plan?

- **Benefit changes** – Customization of your drug benefit occurs only through the contract process. Employer groups may choose to purchase higher or lower drug benefits each year when they renew their group contract. Individual and family contract benefits are renewed each year.

- **Formulary substitution** – Although individuals are not allowed to customize any plan drug formularies, health care providers can prescribe nonformulary medications for patients through a pharmacy exception process. The plan health care provider, in coordination with the plan pharmacy, will determine the medical appropriateness of substitutions. If a medical exception (substitution) is not approved, the patient is responsible for the full charge for the drug. Nonformulary drugs may be subject to a higher cost.

How much do I have to pay to get a prescription filled?

The amount of your out-of-pocket expense (cost share) depends on the specific pharmacy coverage you or your employer has purchased and on the medication prescribed. In general, the prescription copay or coinsurance amount applies for up to a 30-day supply of each covered prescription. If the actual charge for the drug is less than your cost share, you will pay only the actual charge for the drug. If your provider prescribes a noncovered medication, you will pay the actual charge for the drug.

If you have pharmacy coverage with a tiered cost share benefit, you will pay a lower cost share for generic drugs, and higher cost share for brand-name drugs. In addition, nonformulary drugs may be subject to a higher cost share.

Do I have to use certain pharmacies to pay the least out of my own pocket under this health plan?

Yes, you need to have your prescriptions filled at a Kaiser Permanente-designated pharmacy except for drugs dispensed for emergency services. Most Kaiser Permanente medical locations have pharmacies located within the facility. Additional retail pharmacies are also under contract to provide covered prescription drugs for members. When you use Kaiser Permanente-designated pharmacies, covered drugs are subject to the plan cost share. If you elect to purchase a noncovered drug, you will pay the actual charge for the drug. The plan directory of providers available at kp.org/wa lists pharmacies in your area.

You may be eligible to receive an emergency fill for certain prescription drugs filled outside of Kaiser Permanente's business hours or when Kaiser Permanente cannot reach the prescriber for consultation. You will pay a cost share for

your emergency prescription drug fill. Refer to your Evidence of Coverage for more information. A list of prescription drugs eligible for emergency fills is available on the pharmacy website at kp.org/wa/formulary. Members can request an emergency fill by calling 1-855-505-8107.

Call Member Services to find out which pharmacies are in your area, or if you anticipate needing to fill a prescription when you are traveling.

How many days' supply of most medications can I get without paying another copay or other repeating charge?

Your plan contract allows up to a 30-day supply of prescription or refill per cost share amount. If you get a 3-month supply of a maintenance drug, you will be charged 3 pharmacy cost share amounts. Depending on your plan, additional savings may be available for maintenance drugs through Kaiser Permanente mail-order services.

What other pharmacy services does my health plan cover?

A mail-order prescription refill service is available. Contact Member Services for your plan's specific mail-order pharmacy benefits. At Kaiser Foundation Health Plan of Washington, the Pharmacy Department is involved in the development of clinical road maps and clinical guidelines. The Pharmacy Department participates in, or plays a role in, medication use and disease management programs for smoking cessation and for conditions such as diabetes, HIV/AIDS, asthma, depression, migraine headache, GERD (gastroesophageal reflux disease), and heart problems.

How we protect your personal information

Your health is our number one priority, and part of caring for you is keeping your personal information safe. Our policies and procedures are designed to protect your personal information in written, verbal, and electronic forms. Specifically:

- We'll protect your right to access, review, amend, and receive copies of your medical records.
- We'll protect the confidentiality of your health care information by instituting physical, technical, and administrative controls throughout the

organization to protect the use and disclosure of oral, hard copy, and electronic personal health information. We train our employees on these policies and procedures. Employees who violate our confidentiality and security policies are subject to disciplinary action.

- We use and share your personal information to provide treatment, receive and provide payment for health care services, and conduct health care operations.
- We won't release patient-identifiable health information to third parties without your written permission or authorization except as permitted or required by law.
- We may use health information to support utilization review, quality assessment and measurement, billing, claims management, audits, accreditation, and other health care operations.
- We won't release detailed utilization information to employers when it might identify individual patients unless permitted or required by law.

For information regarding our privacy practices, you can view our *Notice of Privacy Practices* at kp.org/wa or call Member Services at 1-888-901-4636. If you are deaf or hard of hearing, please call the TTY WA Relay at 1-800-833-6388 or 711.

Understanding your plan coverage

Treatment coverage

Your treatment and service coverage is determined by your specific health plan. If you ever have any concerns or questions regarding your coverage, contact Member Services for assistance.

For a particular treatment or service to be covered, it must be:

- Provided or arranged by a Kaiser Foundation Health Plan of Washington or Kaiser Foundation Health Plan of Washington Options, Inc. health care provider (depending on your plan), except for emergency care and urgent care outside of the Kaiser Permanente service area. Kaiser Foundation Health Plan of Washington Options, Inc. members may self-refer to most care from any licensed health care provider in the United States at a lower benefit level.
- Covered by the Kaiser Foundation Health Plan of Washington or Kaiser Foundation Health Plan of

Washington Options, Inc. plan in which you are enrolled. To ask about coverage for a specific treatment or service, contact Member Services.

Utilization reviews

At Kaiser Permanente, we provide or authorize your medical care based on what is appropriate and necessary for the condition being treated or diagnosed. We do not use financial incentives to encourage our providers to withhold care from members. Our doctors are free to make their own decisions. However, some treatments and services require a utilization review (or coverage review) by the plan.

A utilization review determines whether a treatment or service is covered under the terms of your coverage agreement. It does not determine whether a provider may render services or whether you may choose to purchase a medical service on your own. Utilization reviews may occur at different times relative to the services you receive. It may occur before you receive the services, at the same time you receive services, or after you receive services.

During a utilization review, we will:

- Evaluate whether a specific health care service, procedure, or setting is necessary, appropriate, effective, and efficient for the condition in question; or
- Monitor the use of a specific health care service, procedure, or setting.

Some treatments and services are subject to utilization reviews based on criteria developed by Kaiser Permanente or another organization. In some cases, a service for which we have conducted a utilization review may not be deemed medically necessary, as defined in the plan's clinical review criteria.

If you believe you need a specific type of care, talk to your health care provider. He or she will discuss it with you and recommend the most appropriate care. For more information about utilization reviews, or for a written explanation of our criteria for a specific service, contact Member Services.

A preservice review (for preauthorization) is a specific type of utilization review that occurs prior to your receiving services. Some care requires a referral from your personal physician but does not require preauthorization. However, certain services do require preservice review to be covered.

In addition, the service must be covered by your health plan for you to receive the coverage benefit.

Usually, your provider will arrange for preservice review when necessary. If a treatment or service is not authorized, you'll receive a written explanation of the reason for the denial, your right to appeal the decision, and the appeal process.

Kaiser Permanente will not deny coverage retroactively for preauthorized services that have already been provided to the member. Exceptions are if there has been an intentional misrepresentation of a material fact by the patient, member, or provider of services; if coverage was obtained based on inaccurate, false, or misleading information on the enrollment application; or if premiums have not been paid.

Grievances and appeals processes

If you ever have a concern, request, complaint, or compliment, we encourage you to let us know. Kaiser Permanente offers grievance, coverage decision (including exceptions), and appeals processes. Generally, grievances are complaints regarding the quality of care you receive, or the quality of service we provide, including problems getting appointments and disrespectful or rude staff behavior.

Coverage decisions are decisions about what your plan will and won't cover. These types of decisions could include an exception for a prescription drug that isn't on our list of covered drugs or a request for a drug at a lower out-of-pocket cost.

An appeal is a formal way of asking us to review and change a coverage decision we've made. You have the right to appeal any coverage decision. The type of appeal, and timeframe for resolution, depends on what is being denied. We'll tell you how to appeal in the letter we send you explaining our denial decision. We quickly review appeals involving urgently needed care and act as fast as necessary, given the clinical urgency of the condition. Reviews that are clinically urgent will take no longer than 72 hours.

Appeals that are not resolved to your satisfaction may be eligible for independent review by a state-certified independent review organization or plan-specified entity. See [kp.org/wa/appeals](https://www.kp.org/wa/appeals) for more detail.