"Injury" means bodily injury sustained by an insured as a result of an accident while occupying, entering into, alighting from or using an automobile, or as a pedestrian, caused by an automobile or by an object propelled by or from an automobile.

"Insured" means a person eligible for coverage, at least in part, for medical expenses incurred for treatment of injuries, under an automobile policy PIP medical expense provision, and who meets the definition of a named insured or family member.

1. Named insured means the person or persons identified as the insured in the automobile policy and if an individual, that person's spouse, if the spouse is a resident of the same household, except that if the spouse ceases to be a resident of the household of the named insured, coverage for that spouse shall continue until the expiration of full term of any policy period in effect at the time of the cessation of residency.

2. Family member means any relative of the named insured or the named insured's spouse who:

i. Is related to the named insured or named insured's spouse by blood, marriage, adoption or guardianship;

ii. Resides in the household of the named insured or spouse of the named insured; and

iii. Is not a named insured under another automobile policy.

"Medical expenses" means expenses for medical, surgical and dental treatment, professional nursing services, hospital expenses, rehabilitation services, diagnostic services, ambulance services, prosthetic devices, medications and other reasonable and necessary expenses resulting from the treatment prescribed by persons licensed to practice medicine and surgery, dentistry, psychology or chiropractic in accordance with this State's laws, or by persons similarly licensed in other states or nations, or any nonmedical remedial treatment rendered in accordance with a recognized religious method of healing.

"Medical fee schedule" means that list of services, procedures and supplies to which have been assigned a maximum fee or percentage of a fee payable by an automobile insurer for expenses incurred as a result of the rendering to an insured any of those specific services, procedures or supplies for injuries, which list is set forth at N.J.A.C. 11:3–29.

"Out-of-State automobile insurance coverage" or "OSAIC" means any coverage for medical expenses under an automobile insurance policy other than PIP, as PIP is defined herein, including automobile insurance policies issued in another state or jurisdiction.

"PIP" means personal injury protection coverage provided as part of an automobile insurance policy issued in New Jersey, specifically those provisions for medical expenses coverage.

"Plan" means any policy, contract, certificate, booklet, evidence of enrollment, program, or other such term which evidences the existence of a relationship between a health benefits provider or PIP carrier and an insured with respect to the provisions of hospital, medical, surgical, dental and/or other health care related benefits, at least in part.

"Primary coverage" means coverage by any plan which determines its actual benefits payable on allowable expenses incurred by an insured for treatment of injuries without taking into consideration the existence of any coverage for which the insured may be eligible provided secondary in accordance with this subchapter. There may be more than one plan providing the insured primary coverage.

"Secondary coverage" means coverage by any plan which determines its actual benefits payable on all allowable expenses incurred by an insured for treatment of injuries after all plans providing primary coverage have considered expenses incurred and paid actual benefits.

Case Notes

Eligibility for coverage under hospitalization policy did not bar hospitalization insurer from resisting contribution toward payments made by insured's personal injury protection insurer as not having been "reasonable and necessary". Bailey v. Garden State Hospitalization Plan, 290 N.J.Super. 277, 675 A.2d 696 (A.D.1996).

11:3–37.3 Health benefits providers

(a) Nothing in this subchapter shall be construed as requiring any health benefits provider to offer, provide, or continue coverage to or for any individual or group, except as may be set forth by other laws of this State, or of the Federal government.

(b) Nothing in this subchapter shall be construed as requiring any health benefits provider to provide coverage for any treatment or service not otherwise covered under the terms of the applicable health benefits plan.

(c) No health benefits contract or policy delivered or issued for delivery in this State, or renewed, continued or converted on or after January 1, 1991, shall contain any provision, rider, waiver of endorsement or other instrument which restricts, limits or excludes coverage, directly or indirectly, of services or expenses otherwise eligible under the policy or contract on the grounds that such expenses or services would be covered under an automobile policy PIP provision for which the insured would be eligible had the named insured on the automobile policy not selected the PIP-as-secondary coverage option.

(d) No health benefits contract or policy delivered or issued for delivery in this State, or renewed, continued or converted on or after January 1, 1991, shall contain any provision, rider, waiver or endorsement, or other instrument

which restricts, limits or excludes coverage, directly or indirectly, of services or expenses otherwise eligible under the policy or contract on the grounds that:

1. Such expenses arise from an automobile-related injury;

2. Such expenses are covered or paid by PIP; or

3. Such expenses are covered or paid by OSAIC except for reductions in benefits when the health benefits contract provides secondary coverage as defined in and permitted by this rule.

(e) A health benefits contract or policy may provide that it is always primary to OSAIC, or may provide that it will determine its benefits as if it were secondary to any OSAIC. If the health benefits contract or policy provides that it will determine its benefits as if it were secondary to OSAIC and the OSAIC either contains a provision that it is always excess or secondary, or refuses to cooperate in determining the amount of benefits payable by the health benefits plan as secondary coverage provider, the health benefits plan shall provide primary coverage.

Case Notes

Code section invalidating insurance contract exclusions was within ERISA's insurance savings clause. Jugan v. State Farm Ins. Co., 267 N.J.Super. 338, 631 A.2d 582 (L.1993).

Secondary insurer was liable for reasonable medical expenses insured incurred as result of motor vehicle accident. Jugan v. State Farm Ins. Co., 267 N.J.Super. 338, 631 A.2d 582 (L.1993).

11:3–37.4 Application of the PIP-as-secondary coverage option

(a) When a named insured elects the PIP option, whereby the named insured intends that medical expenses incurred for treatment of an injury are to be covered by a health benefits provider or providers, as evidenced on the Coverage Selection Form, then the medical expense provisions of the PIP coverage shall be considered to be secondary coverage for the purposes of the order of benefit determination, and all health benefits plans of an insured subject to the PIP option elected shall be considered to be primary coverage.

(b) The election by the named insured to make PIP medical expense provisions secondary coverage shall apply to only the named insured and family members of the named insured who reside in the named insured's household and are not named insureds under other automobile policies.

(c) The election by the named insured to make PIP medical expense provisions secondary coverage shall continue in force as to subsequent renewal or replacement policies until the automobile policy insurer or its authorized representative receives a properly executed written request revoking the selection of this option.

(d) In the event that an insured is ineligible for health plan coverage of medical expenses, or is eligible for coverage under a dental expense or dental service plan only when an injury occurs, despite the selection of the PIP-as-secondary coverage option by the named insured, benefits shall be provided to the insured through PIP coverage in accordance with N.J.A.C. 11:3–37.8.

11:3–37.5 Health benefit plan standards and the PIP premium reduction

(a) An automobile insurer may eliminate the premium reduction on the base rate applicable to the amount of medical expense benefit chosen in conjunction with the PIP-as-secondary coverage option election if the automobile insurer complies with (b) below, and verifies that the coverage specified by the named insured:

1. Excludes the provision of benefits for treatment of injuries of an eligible insured when expenses incurred in relation to treatment of those injuries are eligible expenses under an automobile policy's PIP provisions; or

2. Provides that it is always secondary, or otherwise will not be a primary provider of benefits;

3. Provides benefits only for dental expenses or dental services; or

4. Provides benefits only for prescription drugs.

(b) An automobile carrier shall notify a named insured if the automobile insurer determines that the health benefits plan(s) specified by the named insured contain exclusionary or restrictive coverage provisions as set forth in (a) above, or if the automobile insurer determines that one or more of the insureds covered under the automobile insurance policy is not provided coverage by at least one of the health benefit plan(s) specified by the named insured, and, therefore, the named insured's premium reduction for PIP medical expense benefits will be eliminated.

1. The notice shall be in writing and shall specify the reasons why the automobile insurer believes the named insured's health plan coverage is not in compliance with this subchapter.

2. The automobile insurer may include in the notice a demand for payment of the premium reduction difference with an explanation that failure to pay the indicated premium reduction difference may result in early cancellation of the automobile policy in accordance with (c) below.

3. The notice shall be sent no later than 30 days prior to the date of cancellation as calculated in accordance with (c) below. A notice which is sent 30 days prior to the date of cancellation shall either contain a statement that it is a notice of cancellation, or be attached to a notice of cancellation, setting forth the effective date of cancellation.

(c) The effective date of the cancellation of a policy for nonpayment of premium shall not be earlier than 10 days prior to the last full day of which premium received by the company, prior to the date of preparation of the cancellation notice, would pay for coverage on a pro rata basis. In calculating the effective date of the cancellation, the premium applicable to the coverage provided by the policy and the premium received by the company at or prior to the time the cancellation notice was prepared shall be the premium used for the calculation and determination of such effective date.

1. No cancellation in accordance with (c) above shall be effective unless prior thereto, the automobile insurer shall have notified the named insured that the premium reduction difference had to be paid to avoid cancellation, as specified in (b)2 above.

2. No cancellation notice shall be mailed prior to 30 days in advance of its effective date.

(d) If the insured provides payment of the full premium amount and subsequently provides proof that coverage is not restricted in the manner set forth in accordance with (a) above, or that all insureds under the automobile policy were provided coverage by a health benefits plan at the time notification of noncoverage was sent, and that such coverage continues and is not restricted in the manner set forth in accordance with (a) above, the automobile insurer shall refund the monies paid in excess of the full reduction, or shall credit any excess paid on the reduced premium to the extent any premium payment is still unpaid on the policy.

11:3–37.6 Order of benefits determination when PIP is secondary coverage

(a) When the named insured of an automobile policy has selected the PIP-as-secondary coverage option, all health benefits plans for which the insured is eligible shall provide coverage for the allowable expenses incurred by the insured due to an automobile-related injury prior to any benefits for medical expenses being paid by a PIP plan.

(b) If the insured is eligible for coverage under more than one group health benefits plan, the group health benefits plans shall coordinate benefits with one another in accordance with the rules set forth for such plans at N.J.A.C. 11:4–28.

(c) The PIP plan shall provide benefits for allowable expenses remaining uncovered after all health benefits plans for which the insured is eligible have paid benefits towards those allowable expenses.

(d) The PIP plan shall continue to be liable for expenses related to the same occurrence as the expenses are incurred, whether or not the health benefits plan(s) in force at the time of the accident terminate(s) coverage, or benefits provided under the health benefits plan(s) are exhausted subsequent to the occurrence of the accident, up to the maximum PIP benefits available to the insured under the terms of the automobile policy.

(e) Total benefits paid by an insured's health benefits and PIP plans shall not exceed the amount of total allowable expenses.

11:3–37.7 Determination of PIP medical benefits payable when PIP is secondary coverage

(a) In calculating the actual benefits to be paid by the automobile insurer when the PIP-as-secondary coverage option has been selected, the automobile insurer shall first determine the amount of eligible expenses which would have been paid after application of the deductible and copayment limitations had the PIP-as-secondary coverage option not been selected.

1. In the event the remaining allowable expenses are less than the benefits calculated pursuant to (a) above, the automobile insurer shall pay actual benefits equal to the remaining allowable expenses, without reducing the remaining allowable expenses by its deductible or copayments.

2. In the event the remaining allowable expenses are greater than the benefits calculated pursuant to (a) above, the actual benefits paid by the automobile insurer shall be the benefits calculated pursuant to (a) above, without reducing the remaining allowable expenses by its deductible or copayments.

(b) In paying actual benefits, the automobile insurer shall not:

1. Reduce its actual benefits payable on account of any deductibles or copayments of the health benefits plans which have provided benefits ahead of the PIP plan due to the selection of the PIP-as-secondary coverage option; or

2. Reduce its actual benefits payable for any allowable expense remaining uncovered which item of expense otherwise would not be an eligible expense under the PIP plan, except as set forth by (c) below.

(c) In determining remaining uncovered allowable expenses, the automobile insurer shall not consider any amount for items of expense which exceed the dollar or percent amounts recognized by the medical fee schedules promulgated pursuant to N.J.S.A. 39:6A–4.6.

(d) The total amount of benefits to be provided through the PIP medical expense provisions for each insured per accident or occurrence shall not exceed the maximum PIP benefits as provided for by the terms of the policy.

11:3–37.8 Health benefits plan coverage ineligibility

(a) When, subsequent to the selection of the PIP-as-secondary coverage option by a named insured, it is determined that an insured did not have health coverage in effect at the time of an injury, or had health coverage in effect at the time of any injury which is such that the PIP-as-secondary coverage option selection could have been invalidated by the automobile insurer and elimination of the premium reduction amount effected in accordance with N.J.A.C. 11:3–37.5(a), but was not, then the insured shall be provided benefits for incurred medical expenses through the PIP medical expense provision.

1. Benefits payable shall be subject to a per accident deductible equalling the total of $750.00 plus the PIP deductible selected by the named insured of the policy.

2. Benefits payable shall be subject to a 20 percent copayment for amounts less than $5,000 after the deductible has been satisfied.

3. Determination of the amount of benefits payable shall be made in accordance with medical fee schedules promulgated pursuant to N.J.S.A. 39:6A–4.6 and set forth at N.J.A.C. 11:3–29, or on a reasonable basis, as determined by the automobile insurer, considering the medical fee schedules for similar services or equipment in the region where the service or equipment was provided, when an item of expense is not included on the medical fee schedules.

4. Total benefits paid for each insured eligible for benefits in any one accident shall not exceed the maximum PIP benefits provided for by the terms of the policy.

(b) All items of medical expense incurred by the insured for treatment of an injury shall be eligible expense to the extent the treatment or procedure from which the expenses arose is recognized on the medical fee schedules, or are reasonable medical expenses in accordance with N.J.S.A. 39:6A–4.

(c) The automobile insurer shall be entitled to recover, for the contract period in which the automobile-related injury occurred, the difference between the reduced premiums paid on the policy and the amount of premium which would have been due on the policy had the named insured not selected the PIP-as-secondary coverage option, and no premium reduction shall be provided on that policy for the PIP-as-secondary coverage option during the remainder of that current contract period.

11:3–37.9 Determination of benefits when PIP is primary coverage

(a) When no election has been made by a named insured to make his or her health benefits plan(s) primary coverage provider(s), so that the PIP plan will provide primary coverage for medical expenses incurred for treatment of injuries, the PIP plan shall provide benefits to the insured without consideration of any benefits for which the insured may be eligible under any health benefits plan.

(b) Actual benefits paid by the PIP plan shall be for all medical expenses which are eligible expenses incurred for treatment of injuries, subject to application of the deductible provided for by the terms of the automobile policy, and a 20 percent copayment requirement for amounts incurred after the deductible and up to $5,000.

(c) Actual benefits payable by a health benefits plan, when the PIP plan is providing primary coverage for medical expenses incurred for treatment of injuries, shall be the lesser of the remaining uncovered allowable expenses or the actual benefits that would have been payable had the health benefits plan been providing coverage primary to the PIP plan.

1. Actual benefits payable may be reduced by the deductible(s) and copayment requirements applicable by the terms of the health benefits plan, and shall not exceed the amount of actual benefits that would have been payable had the health benefits plan been providing coverage primary to the PIP plan.

2. Allowable expenses remaining uncovered, which the health benefits plan(s) shall consider when the PIP plan is providing primary coverage, include:

i. Any PIP deductible(s);

ii. Any PIP copayment amounts;

iii. Any expenses which exceed the medical expense coverage limits of the PIP plan per person per accident, as set forth by the terms of the automobile policy; and

iv. Any expenses not covered by the PIP plan when such expense was determined to be in excess of the reasonable charge for an item of expense not listed on the medical fee schedules, but for which the automobile insurer determined a reasonable charge based on the medical fee schedule for a similar item of expense in the region where the service or equipment was provided.

(d) When a health benefits plan provides hospital expense or service benefits only, or medical expense or service benefits only, and is not otherwise a part of a basic health benefits package, all allowable expenses remaining uncovered shall be considered by that health benefits plan for the provision of benefits, without regard as to whether the expenses are hospital-related or medical-related expenses. Actual benefits paid by that health benefits plan for the allowable expenses remaining uncovered shall not exceed the total actual benefits which would have been payable had the health benefits plan been providing coverage primary to the PIP plan.

(e) When there is one health benefits plan providing insureds hospital expense or service benefits and another health benefits plan providing insureds medical expense or service benefits as two separate parts of one basic health benefits plan package, the hospital benefits plan and the medical benefits plan shall both consider all allowable expenses remaining uncovered and shall apportion such allowable expenses between the two plans on a pro-rata basis without regard as to whether the expenses are hospital-related or medical-related expenses. Actual benefits paid by each plan of the health benefits plan package shall not exceed the total actual benefits which would have been payable by each plan had the health benefits plan package been providing primary coverage.

(f) No insured shall be liable to a health care provider for any fees for services or supplies which exceed the dollar or percentage amounts recognized for those services or supplies on the medical fee schedules.