

(a) Notwithstanding any provision of a group or individual policy or contract issued by a nonprofit health service plan, or any certificate issued thereunder, of health, sickness, accident, or disability insurance, delivered or issued for delivery within the State, whenever such policy, contract, or certificate provides for reimbursement for any service which is within the lawful scope of practice of a health care provider duly licensed under the Health Occupations Article, the insured, or any other person covered by, or entitled to reimbursement under, the policy, contract, or certificate, shall be entitled to reimbursement for such service. The provisions of this section apply to all such policies, contracts, or certificates issued, renewed, modified, altered, amended, or reissued on or after July 1, 1984.

(b) (1) ~~WITHIN 45~~ 30 DAYS OF RECEIPT OF A CLAIM FOR REIMBURSEMENT FROM ANY PERSON UNDER SUBSECTION (A) OF THIS SECTION OR ANY HOSPITAL OR RELATED INSTITUTION AS DEFINED IN § 19-301 OF THE HEALTH - GENERAL ARTICLE, A NONPROFIT HEALTH SERVICE PLAN SHALL:

(I) PAY THE CLAIM IN ACCORDANCE WITH THIS SUBSECTION; OR

(II) SEND A "NOTICE OF RECEIPT AND STATUS OF THE CLAIM" THAT STATES THAT THE PLAN:

~~(I) WILL REIMBURSE THE CLAIM AS FILED;~~

~~(II) 1. REFUSES TO REIMBURSE THE CLAIM, OR A PORTION OF THE CLAIM, AND PROVIDES THE SPECIFIC REASONS FOR DENYING THE CLAIM, OR A PORTION OF THE CLAIM; OR~~

~~(III) 2. REQUIRES FURTHER INFORMATION TO MAKE A DETERMINATION ON REIMBURSEMENT OF THE CLAIM, OR A PORTION OF THE CLAIM, AND STATES WHAT SPECIFIC ADDITIONAL INFORMATION IS NECESSARY TO MAKE THE DETERMINATION.~~

(2) (I) Notwithstanding any other provision of this article, whenever liability and amount are reasonably clear, a nonprofit health service plan shall reimburse any person entitled to reimbursement under subsection (a) of this section or any hospital or related institution defined in § 19-301 of the Health - General Article entitled to reimbursement within 30 days of the proper filing of a claim together with all necessary documentation.

[(2) (i)] (II) 1. If a nonprofit health service plan fails to comply with [paragraph (1) of this subsection] SUBPARAGRAPH (I) OF THIS PARAGRAPH, the nonprofit health service plan shall pay interest on that amount of the claim that remains unpaid 30 days after the filing of the claim.

[(ii)] 2. The interest paid under this [paragraph] SUBPARAGRAPH shall be at the rate of 1 1/2 percent per month AND SHALL BE INCLUDED IN ANY LATE REIMBURSEMENT WITHOUT THE NECESSITY FOR ANY CLAIM FOR THAT INTEREST TO BE MADE BY THE PERSON, HOSPITAL,