SFTP Frequently Asked Questions and Answers

Q: Will Blue Shield accept an IP address that is housed outside of the United States?
A: Each situation is different, but if you have an IP address that is housed outside of the United States, you will need to work with your EDI Analyst and Blue Shield's Privacy department to determine if BSC can accept and/or transmit data with that IP address.

Q: Can I setup multiple IP addresses?
A: Blue Shield will accept a Primary and Secondary IP address. If you change your IP address, BSC must be notified prior to switching the IP address to avoid interruption in processing your file.

Q: What is the process to change my IP address?
A: Contact your EDI Analyst immediately as the process for updating an IP address can take up to 6 weeks to complete. Your EDI Analyst will provide you with the tools needed to update your IP address. You may be asked to complete another Trading Partner Enrollment Form if necessary.

Q: What is the IP Ownership Form, and when will I use it?
A: The IP Ownership Form indicates that the trading partner is authorized to use the indicated IP address. The form is required when the IP address is not registered in the trading partner's name.

Q: What is the timeframe for connection once the paperwork is turned in?
A: The setup and processing time can take up to 6 weeks depending on the type of request.

Q: What is the difference between a static and dynamic IP address?
A: A 'Static' IP address is an IP address that has been specifically assigned to a PC/Network drive. A 'Dynamic' IP address is a range of IP addresses that are used by a PC/Network drive and they are randomly assigned. Note: BSC does not setup an SFTP connection for Dynamic IP addresses.

Q: How do I know where my IP address is registered to?
A: You can go to the ARIN (American Registry for Internet Numbers) website at www.arin.net, enter your IP address and it will bring up the owner and location of the IP address.

Q: What naming convention should we use to send our transaction to BSC?
A: For Trading Partners sending in the ANSI 834 format, please use the following naming convention:
FXXXX_CCYYMMDDHHMM.834.asc or .pgp
  (FXXXX=Feed Code -- .asc=ASCII encryption -- .pgp=Binary encryption)
    (Example: FABCD_200706111002.834.asc)

For Trading Partners sending in the CRF format, please use the following naming convention:
FXXXX_CCYYMMDD.txt.asc or .pgp
  (FXXXX=Feed Code -- .asc=ASCII encryption -- .pgp=Binary encryption)
  (Example: FABCD_20070611.txt.asc)

Document	Description
Trading Partner Enrollment Form	A TP Enrollment Form is required to be completed when data is going to be exchange between the TP and BSC. The TP Enrollment Form supplies contact information and identifies which

	transaction the TP is interested in.
SFTP Connectivity Detail Form (page 3 of the TP Enrollment Form)	This form must be completed in its entirety when requesting a SFTP connection. All areas of the form must be completed.
IP Ownership Form	This form is required if the IP address indicated on the SFTP form is not registered to the trading partner.

High Level Process Diagram for SFTP Process (PDF, 22KB)
The above link provides a high level process diagram of Blue Shield of California's SFTP process. This diagram will assist you with the understanding of the current process.

SFTP Glossary

These are terms that are referenced when performing activities around SFTP business process.

American Registry of Internet Numbers (ARIN): a site that allows you to search for an IP address and check whether it is associated with your external customer

backup IP address: see secondary IP address

business contact: an individual at the external customer's site who can be contacted when there are questions about the connection; it's critical that the requester obtain *at least two business contacts*, in case one person is unavailable.

domain name system (DNS): translates computer host names (for example blueshieldca.com) intro the IP addresses that networking equipment needs for delivering information

dynamic IP address: an IP address that changes/can change; Blue Shield does *not* use dynamic IP addresses, only static IP addresses

external customers: this would include employer groups, providers, and vendors.

file transfer protocol (FTP): one of the transfer protocols Blue Shield uses (This method is used only when files are encrypted with PGP.)

internal customer: the person or department within Blue Shield that wants to send secure email to, or receive it from, an external customer

internet protocol (IP) address: an IP address is a unique (computer) address that devices use to identify and communicate with each other on a computer network

pretty good privacy (PGP): the type of data encryption Blue Shield uses to ensure data security for file transfers

primary IP address: the external customer IP address used for an SFTP connection to/from Blue Shield

secondary (or backup) IP address: secondary external customer IP address to be used in the event of a primary IP address failure.

secure file transfer protocol (SFTP): Technology that allows you to send an electronic file securely from one location to another using the internet.

secure shell (SSH): the delivery method used with SFTP; with SSH, the entire connection is encrypted.

static IP address: an IP address that never changes and is assigned permanently to a device (such as a computer or a server); Blue Shield uses static IP addresses *only*, not dynamic IP addresses, for SFTP

trading partner: a specific type of external customer

trading partner agreement: an agreement between Large Group Electronic Processing and a trading partner; used only in Large Group Electronic Processing.