

November 2024 Annual Legal Notices

1. COBRA – Continuation Coverage Rights Under Cobra

You're getting this notice because you recently gained coverage under a group health plan (the Plan). This notice has important information about your right to COBRA continuation coverage, which is a temporary extension of coverage under the Plan. **This notice explains COBRA continuation coverage, when it may become available to you and your family, and what you need to do to protect your right to get it.** When you become eligible for COBRA, you may also become eligible for other coverage options that may cost less than COBRA continuation coverage.

The right to COBRA continuation coverage was created by a federal law, the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1985 (COBRA). COBRA continuation coverage can become available to you and other members of your family when group health coverage would otherwise end. For more information about your rights and obligations under the Plan and under federal law, you should review the Plan's Summary Plan Description or contact the Plan Administrator.

You may have other options available to you when you lose group health coverage. For example, you may be eligible to buy an individual plan through the Health Insurance Marketplace. By enrolling in coverage through the Marketplace, you may qualify for lower costs on your monthly premiums and lower out-of-pocket costs. Additionally, you may qualify for a 30-day special enrollment period for another group health plan for which you are eligible (such as a spouse's plan), even if that plan generally doesn't accept late enrollees.

What is COBRA continuation coverage?

COBRA continuation coverage is a continuation of Plan coverage when it would otherwise end because of a life event. This is also called a "qualifying event." Specific qualifying events are listed later in this notice. After a qualifying event, COBRA continuation coverage must be offered to each person who is a "qualified beneficiary." You, your spouse, and your dependent children could become qualified beneficiaries if coverage under the Plan is lost because of the qualifying event. Under the Plan, qualified beneficiaries who elect COBRA continuation coverage [*choose and enter appropriate information*]: must pay for COBRA continuation coverage.

If you're an employee, you'll become a qualified beneficiary if you lose your coverage under the Plan because of the following qualifying events:

- Your hours of employment are reduced, or
- Your employment ends for any reason other than your gross misconduct.
- If you're the spouse of an employee, you'll become a qualified beneficiary if you lose your coverage under the Plan because of the following qualifying events:
 - Your spouse dies;
 - Your spouse's hours of employment are reduced;
 - Your spouse's employment ends for any reason other than his or her gross misconduct;
 - Your spouse becomes entitled to Medicare benefits (under Part A, Part B, or both); or
 - You become divorced or legally separated from your spouse.

Your dependent children will become qualified beneficiaries if they lose coverage under the Plan because of the following qualifying events:

- The parent-employee dies;
- The parent-employee's hours of employment are reduced;
- The parent-employee's employment ends for any reason other than his or her gross misconduct;
- The parent-employee becomes entitled to Medicare benefits (Part A, Part B, or both);
- The parents become divorced or legally separated; or
- The child stops being eligible for coverage under the Plan as a "dependent child."

When is COBRA continuation coverage available?

The Plan will offer COBRA continuation coverage to qualified beneficiaries only after the Plan Administrator has been notified that a qualifying event has occurred. The employer must notify the Plan Administrator of the following qualifying events:

- The end of employment or reduction of hours of employment;
- Death of the employee;
- The employee's becoming entitled to Medicare benefits (under Part A, Part B, or both).

For all other qualifying events (divorce or legal separation of the employee and spouse or a dependent child's losing eligibility for coverage as a dependent child), you must notify the Plan Administrator within 60 days of the qualifying event occurs. You must provide this notice to: Human Resources

How is COBRA continuation coverage provided?

Once the Plan Administrator receives notice that a qualifying event has occurred, COBRA continuation coverage will be offered to each of the qualified beneficiaries. Each qualified beneficiary will have an independent right to elect COBRA continuation coverage. Covered employees may elect COBRA continuation coverage on behalf of their spouses, and parents may elect COBRA continuation coverage on behalf of their children.

COBRA continuation coverage is a temporary continuation of coverage that generally lasts for 18 months due to employment termination or reduction of hours of work. Certain qualifying events, or a second qualifying event during the initial period of coverage, may permit a beneficiary to receive a maximum of 36 months of coverage.

There are also ways in which this 18-month period of COBRA continuation coverage can be extended:

Disability extension of 18-month period of COBRA continuation coverage

If you or anyone in your family covered under the Plan is determined by Social Security to be disabled and you notify the Plan Administrator in a timely fashion, you and your entire family may be entitled to get up to an additional 11 months of COBRA continuation coverage, for a maximum of 29 months. The disability would have to have started at some time before the 60th day of COBRA continuation coverage and must last at least until the end of the 18-month period of COBRA continuation coverage.

Second qualifying event extension of 18-month period of continuation coverage

If your family experiences another qualifying event during the 18 months of COBRA continuation coverage, the spouse and dependent children in your family can get up to 18 additional months of COBRA continuation coverage, for a maximum of 36 months, if the Plan is properly notified about the second qualifying event. This extension may be available to the spouse and any dependent children getting COBRA continuation coverage if the employee or former employee dies; becomes entitled to Medicare benefits (under Part A, Part B, or both); gets divorced or legally separated; or if the dependent child stops being eligible under the Plan as a dependent child. This extension is only available if the second qualifying event would have caused the spouse or dependent child to lose coverage under the Plan had the first qualifying event not occurred.

Are there other coverage options besides COBRA Continuation Coverage?

Yes. Instead of enrolling in COBRA continuation coverage, there may be other coverage options for you and your family through the Health Insurance Marketplace, Medicare, Medicaid, [Children's Health Insurance Program \(CHIP\)](#), or other group health plan coverage options (such as a spouse's plan) through what is called a "special enrollment period." Some of these options may cost less than COBRA continuation coverage. You can learn more about many of these options at www.healthcare.gov.

Can I enroll in Medicare instead of COBRA continuation coverage after my group health plan coverage ends?

In general, if you don't enroll in Medicare Part A or B when you are first eligible because you are still employed, after the Medicare initial enrollment period, you have an 8-month special enrollment period¹ to sign up for Medicare Part A or B, beginning on the earlier of

- The month after your employment ends; or
- The month after group health plan coverage based on current employment ends.

If you don't enroll in Medicare and elect COBRA continuation coverage instead, you may have to pay a Part B late enrollment penalty and you may have a gap in coverage if you decide you want Part B later. If you elect COBRA continuation coverage and later enroll in Medicare Part A or B before the COBRA continuation coverage ends, the Plan may terminate your continuation coverage. However, if Medicare Part A or B is effective on or before the date of the COBRA election, COBRA coverage may not be discontinued on account of Medicare entitlement, even if you enroll in the other part of Medicare after the date of the election of COBRA coverage.

If you are enrolled in both COBRA continuation coverage and Medicare, Medicare will generally pay first (primary payer) and COBRA continuation coverage will pay second. Certain plans may pay as if secondary to Medicare, even if you are not enrolled in Medicare.

For more information visit <https://www.medicare.gov/medicare-and-you>.

¹ <https://www.medicare.gov/sign-up-change-plans/how-do-i-get-parts-a-b/part-a-part-b-sign-up-periods>.

If you have questions

Questions concerning your Plan or your COBRA continuation coverage rights should be addressed to the contact or contacts identified below. For more information about your rights under the Employee Retirement Income Security Act (ERISA), including COBRA, the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, and other laws affecting group health plans, contact the nearest Regional or District Office of the U.S. Department of Labor's Employee Benefits Security Administration (EBSA) in your area or visit www.dol.gov/ebsa. (Addresses and phone numbers of Regional and District EBSA Offices are available through EBSA's website.) For more information about the Marketplace, visit www.HealthCare.gov.

Keep your Plan informed of address changes

To protect your family's rights, let the Plan Administrator know about any changes in the addresses of family members. You should also keep a copy, for your records, of any notices you send to the Plan Administrator.

OMB Control Number 1210-0123

2. HIPAA Special Enrollment Rights

If you are declining enrollment for yourself or your dependents (including your spouse) because of other health insurance or group health plan coverage, you may be able to enroll yourself and your dependents in this plan if you or your dependents lose eligibility for that other coverage (or if the employer stops contributing toward your or your dependents' other coverage). However, you must request enrollment within "30 days" after you or your dependents' other coverage ends (or after the employer stops contributing toward the other coverage). In addition, if you have a new dependent as a result of marriage, birth, adoption, or placement for adoption, you may be able to enroll yourself and your dependents. However, you must request enrollment within 30 days after the marriage, birth, adoption, or placement for adoption. To request special enrollment or obtain more information, contact the Human Resources Department.

3. Reminder of Availability of HIPAA Privacy Notice

The Plan Sponsor maintains the HIPAA Notice of Privacy Practices for the Plan, which describes how health information about you may be used and disclosed. You may obtain a copy of our HIPAA Notice of Privacy Practices by contacting the Plan Sponsor or Privacy Officer by writing to your employer.

4. Newborn's and Mother's Health Protection Act

Group health plans and health insurance issuers generally may not, under Federal law, restrict benefits for any hospital length of stay in connection with childbirth for the mother or newborn child to less than 48 hours following a vaginal delivery, or less than 96 hours following a cesarean section. However, Federal law generally does not prohibit the mother's or newborn's attending provider, after consulting with the mother, from discharging the mother or her newborn earlier than 48 hours (or 96 hours as applicable). In any case, plans and insurers may not, under Federal law, require that a provider obtain authorization from the plan or the insurer for prescribing a length of stay not more than 48 hours (or 96 hours).

5. Women's Health and Cancer Rights Enrollment Notice

If you have had or are going to have a mastectomy, you may be entitled to certain benefits under the Women's Health and Cancer Rights Act of 1998 (WHCRA). For individuals receiving mastectomy-related benefits, coverage will be provided in a manner determined in consultation with the attending physician and the patient, for:

- All stages of reconstruction of the breast on which the mastectomy was performed;
- Surgery and reconstruction of the other breast to produce a symmetrical appearance;
- Prostheses; and
- Treatment of physical complications of the mastectomy, including lymph edema.

These benefits will be provided subject to the same deductibles and coinsurance applicable to other medical and surgical benefits provided under this plan. If you would like more information on WHCRA benefits, call your plan administrator at 1-800-724-5032 or visit the Excellus website for more information <https://www.excellusbcbs.com>.

6. Women's Health and Cancer Rights Act Annual Notice

Do you know that your plan, as required by the Women's Health and Cancer Rights Act of 1998, provides benefits for mastectomy-related services including all stages of reconstruction and surgery to achieve symmetry between the breasts, prostheses and complications resulting from a mastectomy, including lymph edema? Contact Excellus Customer Service at 1-800-724-5032 or visit the Excellus website for more information <https://www.excellusbcbs.com>.

7. Women's Preventive Benefits as part of Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA) Summary

The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA) requires health plans to cover designated women's preventive services without cost sharing for the member. Cost-sharing includes deductibles, copayments and coinsurance. Some of the benefits and services outlined in the women's preventive guidelines are already included within the existing PPACA preventive services requirements. Many of the screenings/services included in this provision would be provided at the time of the annual well-women visit. The following preventive services must be covered with no cost sharing:

- a) Well-woman visits: Including coverage for pre-natal visits that are billed separately from the delivery and post-partum care.
- b) Gestational Diabetes Screening*
- c) Human Papillomavirus (HPV) Testing*
- d) Counseling for Sexually Transmitted Diseases
- e) HIV Testing and Counseling*
- f) Contraceptive Methods and Counseling
- g) Breastfeeding Support, Supplies and Counseling
- h) Domestic Violence Screening and Counseling

(* laboratory services associated with the screening are covered at no cost-share)

The existing PPACA preventive benefits had age, gender and frequency restrictions.

Does the women's preventive services provision contain any restrictions?

Yes, there are certain benefits and services that contain frequency restrictions. Some services/benefits are provided to pregnant women only or for women who are sexually active. For a full list of restrictions and guidelines, visit:

<http://www.hrsa.gov/womensguidelines/>

8. Lifetime/Annual Dollar Limits Summary and Essential Health Benefits per the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA)

Law prohibits imposing annual limits on "Essential Health Benefits" and any lifetime dollar limits. The services covered in the medical plan will not change but any service designated as "essential" will no longer have an annual and/or lifetime dollar limit. These "essential services" as defined by the federal mandate include: Ambulatory services, emergency services, hospitalization, maternity and newborn care, mental health and substance abuse services, prescription drugs, rehabilitative and habilitative care, laboratory services, preventative and wellness service and chronic disease management, pediatric services, including oral and vision care. Essential Health Benefits as required by Health Care Reform are included in your medical plan. Please visit www.excellusbcbs.com for a full listing of covered benefits. This list is subject to change based on additions and deletions from regulatory agencies.

9. Cancer Screening and Blood Donation

Cancer Screening: All public employees are entitled to take up to a maximum of four (4) hours (including commute time) of excused paid leave each school year to obtain a screening for cancer which is not deducted from sick or personal leave. The time is not cumulative and is not compensable if the screening occurs outside the employee's work day. Employees seeking this type of leave should obtain permission, absent emergency circumstances, at least two (2) weeks in advance and provide follow-up verification of their screening to their supervisor.

Blood Donation: Employees who work 20 or more hours per week and seek to donate blood during their regular work hours are entitled to an excused unpaid leave of absence (or use of personal or vacation time) for up to a maximum of three (3) hours (including commute time) each school year. Time outside the work day is not compensable and the leave is not cumulative. Employees seeking this type of leave should obtain permission at least two (2) weeks in advance and provide follow-up verification of their blood donation appointment to their supervisor.

Required Documentation: Employees are required to submit a completed "Employee Request for Excused Leave" form. This form is available on the BOCES Human Resources webpage at <http://www.monroe2boces.org/hr>. If you intend to obtain a cancer screening or make a blood donation during normal work hours, submit the completed form to your supervisor at least two (2) weeks prior to your appointment. Once it is signed by your supervisor and director, the form should be presented to the physician or blood donation facility for authorization that the employee received the applicable screening or donated blood. Forms plus a copy of the screening referral slip or appointment receipt must be forwarded to the employee's supervisor. The absence should be reported and the documentation forwarded to the Payroll Department by the end of the pay period in which the leave was taken. You will notice two attendance codes for the purpose of recording these absences. These codes are:

- BA – Blood donation
- SA – Cancer screening

These codes need to be used to report these absences.

10. 403(b) Universal Availability Notice

See Attached.

11. Medicaid – CHIP Notice

Premium Assistance Under Medicaid and the Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP)

If you or your children are eligible for Medicaid or CHIP and you’re eligible for health coverage from your employer, your state may have a premium assistance program that can help pay for coverage, using funds from their Medicaid or CHIP programs. If you or your children aren’t eligible for Medicaid or CHIP, you won’t be eligible for these premium assistance programs but you may be able to buy individual insurance coverage through the Health Insurance Marketplace. For more information, visit www.healthcare.gov.

If you or your dependents are already enrolled in Medicaid or CHIP and you live in a State listed below, contact your State Medicaid or CHIP office to find out if premium assistance is available.

If you or your dependents are NOT currently enrolled in Medicaid or CHIP, and you think you or any of your dependents might be eligible for either of these programs, contact your State Medicaid or CHIP office or dial **1-877-KIDS NOW** or www.insurekidsnow.gov to find out how to apply. If you qualify, ask your state if it has a program that might help you pay the premiums for an employer-sponsored plan.

If you or your dependents are eligible for premium assistance under Medicaid or CHIP, as well as eligible under your employer plan, your employer must allow you to enroll in your employer plan if you aren’t already enrolled. This is called a “special enrollment” opportunity, and **you must request coverage within 60 days of being determined eligible for premium assistance**. If you have questions about enrolling in your employer plan, contact the Department of Labor at www.askebsa.dol.gov or call **1-866-444-EBSA (3272)**.

If you live in one of the following states, you may be eligible for assistance paying your employer health plan premiums. The following list of states is current as of January 31, 2024. Contact your State for more information on eligibility –

ALABAMA – Medicaid	FLORIDA – Medicaid
Website: http://myalhipp.com/ Phone: 1-855-692-5447	Website: http://flmedicaidtprecovery.com/hipp/ Phone: 1-877-357-3268
ALASKA – Medicaid	GEORGIA – Medicaid
The AK Health Insurance Premium Payment Program Website: http://myakhipp.com/ Phone: 1-866-251-4861 Email: CustomerService@MyAKHIPPA.com Medicaid Eligibility: http://dhss.alaska.gov/dpa/Pages/medicaid/default.aspx	Website: https://medicaid.georgia.gov/health-insurance-premium-payment-program-hipp Phone: 678-564-1162 ext 2131
ARKANSAS – Medicaid	INDIANA – Medicaid
Website: http://myarhipp.com/ Phone: 1-855-MyARHIPPA (855-692-7447)	Healthy Indiana Plan for low-income adults 19-64 Website: http://www.in.gov/fssa/hip/ Phone: 1-877-438-4479 All other Medicaid Website: http://www.indianamedicaid.com Phone 1-800-403-0864
COLORADO – Health First Colorado (Colorado’s Medicaid Program) & Child Health Plan Plus (CHP+)	IOWA – Medicaid
Health First Colorado Website: https://www.healthfirstcolorado.com/ Health First Colorado Member Contact Center: 1-800-221-3943/ State Relay 711 CHP+: https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/hcpf/child-health-plan-plus CHP+ Customer Service: 1-800-359-1991/ State Relay 711	Website: http://dhs.iowa.gov/Hawki Phone: 1-800-257-8563
KANSAS – Medicaid	NEW HAMPSHIRE – Medicaid
Website: http://www.kdheks.gov/hcf/ Phone: 1-785-296-3512	Website: https://www.dhhs.nh.gov/oii/hipp.htm Phone: 603-271-5218 Toll free number for the HIPPA program: 1-800-852-3345, ext 5218
KENTUCKY – Medicaid	NEW JERSEY – Medicaid and CHIP
Website: https://chfs.ky.gov Phone: 1-800-635-2570	Medicaid Website: http://www.state.nj.us/humanservices/dmahs/clients/medicaid/ Medicaid Phone: 609-631-2392 CHIP Website: http://www.njfamilycare.org/index.html CHIP Phone: 1-800-701-0710
LOUISIANA – Medicaid	NEW YORK – Medicaid
Website: http://dhh.louisiana.gov/index.cfm/subhome/1/n/331 Phone: 1-888-695-2447	Website: https://www.health.ny.gov/health_care/medicaid/ Phone: 1-800-541-2831
MAINE – Medicaid	NORTH CAROLINA – Medicaid
Website: http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/ofi/public-assistance/index.html Phone: 1-800-442-6003 TTY: Maine relay 711	Website: https://medicaid.ncdhhs.gov/ Phone: 919-855-4100
MASSACHUSETTS – Medicaid and CHIP	NORTH DAKOTA – Medicaid
Website: http://www.mass.gov/eohhs/gov/departments/masshealth/ Phone: 1-800-862-4840	Website: http://www.nd.gov/dhs/services/medicalserv/medicaid/ Phone: 1-844-854-4825
MINNESOTA – Medicaid	OKLAHOMA – Medicaid and CHIP

Website: https://mn.gov/dhs/people-we-serve/seniors/health-care/health-care-programs/programs-and-services/other-insurance.jsp Phone: 1-800-657-3739	Website: http://www.insureoklahoma.org Phone: 1-888-365-3742
MISSOURI – Medicaid	OREGON – Medicaid
Website: http://www.dss.mo.gov/mhd/participants/pages/hipp.htm Phone: 573-751-2005	Website: http://healthcare.oregon.gov/Pages/index.aspx http://www.oregonhealthcare.gov/index-es.html Phone: 1-800-699-9075
MONTANA – Medicaid	PENNSYLVANIA – Medicaid
Website: http://dphhs.mt.gov/MontanaHealthcarePrograms/HIPP Phone: 1-800-694-3084	Website: http://www.dhs.pa.gov/provider/medicalassistance/healthinsurancepremiumpaymenthippprogram/index.htm Phone: 1-800-692-7462
NEBRASKA – Medicaid	RHODE ISLAND – Medicaid and CHIP
Website: http://www.ACCESSNebraska.ne.gov Phone: (855) 632-7633 Lincoln: (402) 473-7000 Omaha: (402) 595-1178	Website: http://www.eohhs.ri.gov/ Phone: 855-697-4347, or 401-462-0311 (Direct Rlte Share Line)
NEVADA – Medicaid	SOUTH CAROLINA – Medicaid
Medicaid Website: https://dhcfp.nv.gov Medicaid Phone: 1-800-992-0900	Website: https://www.scdhhs.gov Phone: 1-888-549-0820
SOUTH DAKOTA - Medicaid	WASHINGTON – Medicaid
Website: http://dss.sd.gov Phone: 1-888-828-0059	Website: https://www.hca.wa.gov/ Phone: 1-800-562-3022 ext. 15473
TEXAS – Medicaid	WEST VIRGINIA – Medicaid
Website: http://gethipptexas.com/ Phone: 1-800-440-0493	Website: http://mywvhpp.com/ Toll-free phone: 1-855-MyWVHIPP (1-855-699-8447)
UTAH – Medicaid and CHIP	WISCONSIN – Medicaid and CHIP
Medicaid Website: https://medicaid.utah.gov/ CHIP Website: http://health.utah.gov/chip Phone: 1-877-543-7669	Website: https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/publications/p1/p10095.pdf Phone: 1-800-362-3002
VERMONT– Medicaid	WYOMING – Medicaid
Website: http://www.greenmountaincare.org/ Phone: 1-800-250-8427	Website: https://wyequalitycare.acs-inc.com/ Phone: 307-777-7531
VIRGINIA – Medicaid and CHIP	
Medicaid Website: http://www.coverva.org/programs_premium_assistance.cfm Medicaid Phone: 1-800-432-5924 CHIP Website: http://www.coverva.org/programs_premium_assistance.cfm CHIP Phone: 1-855-242-8282	

To see if any other states have added a premium assistance program since January 31, 2024, or for more information on special enrollment rights, contact either:

U.S. Department of Labor
Employee Benefits Security Administration
www.dol.gov/agencies/ebsa
1-866-444-EBSA (3272)

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services
www.cms.hhs.gov
1-877-267-2323, Menu Option 4, Ext. 61565

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (Pub. L. 104-13) (PRA), no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless such collection displays a valid Office of Management and Budget (OMB) control number. The Department notes that a Federal agency cannot conduct or sponsor a collection of information unless it is approved by OMB under the PRA, and displays a currently valid OMB control number, and the public is not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. See 44 U.S.C. 3507. Also, notwithstanding any other provisions of law, no person shall be subject to penalty for failing to comply with a collection of information if the collection of information does not display a currently valid OMB control number. See 44 U.S.C. 3512.

The public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average approximately seven minutes per respondent. Interested parties are encouraged to send comments regarding the burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to the U.S. Department of Labor, Employee Benefits Security Administration, Office of Policy and Research, Attention: PRA Clearance Officer, 200 Constitution Avenue, N.W., Room N-5718, Washington, DC 20210 or email ebsa.opr@dol.gov and reference the OMB Control Number 1210-0137.

OMB Control Number 1210-0137 (expires 1/31/2026)

QUESTIONS?

If you have any questions regarding these notices, please contact Human Resources.