

## Additional Notices – New Hire

# Continuation Coverage Rights Under COBRA

### Introduction

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 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."

Sometimes, filing a proceeding in bankruptcy under title 11 of the United States Code can be a qualifying event. If a proceeding in bankruptcy is filed with respect to Village of Oak Lawn and that bankruptcy results in the loss of coverage of any retired employee covered under the Plan, the retired employee will become a qualified beneficiary. The retired employee's spouse, surviving spouse, and dependent children will also become qualified beneficiaries if bankruptcy results in the loss of their coverage under the Plan.

### **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;
- Commencement of a proceeding in bankruptcy with respect to the employer;]; or
- 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 after the qualifying event occurs. You must provide this notice to: You must provide this notice to: HR Director Janie Vulich at Village of Oak Lawn 9446 S. Raymond Ave. Oak Lawn, IL 60453. [Jvulich@oaklawn-il.gov](mailto:Jvulich@oaklawn-il.gov) or 708-499-7882.**

### **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](http://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 period<sup>1</sup> 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>.

## 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](http://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](http://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.

## Plan contact information

Janie Vulich  
HR Director  
Village of Oak Lawn  
9446 S. Raymond Ave  
Oak Lawn, IL 60453  
708-499-7882 [jvulich@oaklawn-il.gov](mailto:jvulich@oaklawn-il.gov)

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.medicare.gov/basics/get-started-with-medicare/sign-up/when-does-medicare-coverage-start>.



# Health Insurance Marketplace Coverage Options and Your Health Coverage

Form Approved  
OMB No. 1210-0149  
(expires 12-31-2026)

## PART A: General Information

Even if you are offered health coverage through your employment, you may have other coverage options through the Health Insurance Marketplace ("Marketplace"). To assist you as you evaluate options for you and your family, this notice provides some basic information about the Health Insurance Marketplace and health coverage offered through your employment.

### What is the Health Insurance Marketplace?

The Marketplace is designed to help you find health insurance that meets your needs and fits your budget. The Marketplace offers "one-stop shopping" to find and compare private health insurance options in your geographic area.

### Can I Save Money on my Health Insurance Premiums in the Marketplace?

You may qualify to save money and lower your monthly premium and other out-of-pocket costs, but only if your employer does not offer coverage, or offers coverage that is not considered affordable for you and doesn't meet certain minimum value standards (discussed below). The savings that you're eligible for depends on your household income. You may also be eligible for a tax credit that lowers your costs.

### Does Employment-Based Health Coverage Affect Eligibility for Premium Savings through the Marketplace?

Yes. If you have an offer of health coverage from your employer that is considered affordable for you and meets certain minimum value standards, you will not be eligible for a tax credit, or advance payment of the tax credit, for your Marketplace coverage and may wish to enroll in your employment-based health plan. However, you may be eligible for a tax credit, and advance payments of the credit that lowers your monthly premium, or a reduction in certain cost-sharing, if your employer does not offer coverage to you at all or does not offer coverage that is considered affordable for you or meet minimum value standards. If your share of the premium cost of all plans offered to you through your employment is more than 9.12%<sup>2</sup> of your annual household income, or if the coverage through your employment does not meet the "minimum value" standard set by the Affordable Care Act, you may be eligible for a tax credit, and advance payment of the credit, if you do not enroll in the employment-based health coverage. For family members of the employee, coverage is considered affordable if the employee's cost of premiums for the lowest-cost plan that would cover all family members does not exceed 9.12% of the employee's household income.<sup>13</sup>

**Note:** If you purchase a health plan through the Marketplace instead of accepting health coverage offered through your employment, then you may lose access to whatever the employer contributes to the employment-based coverage. Also, this

<sup>2</sup> Indexed annually; see <https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-drop/rp-22-34.pdf> for 2023.

<sup>3</sup> An employer-sponsored or other employment-based health plan meets the "minimum value standard" if the plan's share of the total allowed benefit costs covered by the plan is no less than 60 percent of such costs. For purposes of eligibility for the premium tax credit, to meet the "minimum value standard," the health plan must also provide substantial coverage of both inpatient hospital services and physician services.

employer contribution -as well as your employee contribution to employment-based coverage- is generally excluded from income for federal and state income tax purposes. Your payments for coverage through the Marketplace are made on an after-tax basis. In addition, note that if the health coverage offered through your employment does not meet the affordability or minimum value standards, but you accept that coverage anyway, you will not be eligible for a tax credit. You should consider all of these factors in determining whether to purchase a health plan through the Marketplace.

## When Can I Enroll in Health Insurance Coverage through the Marketplace?

You can enroll in a Marketplace health insurance plan during the annual Marketplace Open Enrollment Period. Open Enrollment varies by state but generally starts November 1 and continues through at least December 15.

Outside the annual Open Enrollment Period, you can sign up for health insurance if you qualify for a Special Enrollment Period. In general, you qualify for a Special Enrollment Period if you've had certain qualifying life events, such as getting married, having a baby, adopting a child, or losing eligibility for other health coverage. Depending on your Special Enrollment Period type, you may have 60 days before or 60 days following the qualifying life event to enroll in a Marketplace plan.

There is also a Marketplace Special Enrollment Period for individuals and their families who lose eligibility for Medicaid or Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) coverage on or after March 31, 2023, through July 31, 2024. Since the onset of the nationwide COVID-19 public health emergency, state Medicaid and CHIP agencies generally have not terminated the enrollment of any Medicaid or CHIP beneficiary who was enrolled on or after March 18, 2020, through March 31, 2023. As state Medicaid and CHIP agencies resume regular eligibility and enrollment practices, many individuals may no longer be eligible for Medicaid or CHIP coverage starting as early as March 31, 2023. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services **is offering a temporary Marketplace Special Enrollment period to allow these individuals to enroll in Marketplace coverage.**

Marketplace-eligible individuals who live in states served by HealthCare.gov and either- submit a new application or update an existing application on HealthCare.gov between March 31, 2023 and July 31, 2024, and attest to a termination date of Medicaid or CHIP coverage within the same time period, are eligible for a 60-day Special Enrollment Period. **That means that if you lose Medicaid or CHIP coverage between March 31, 2023, and July 31, 2024, you may be able to enroll in Marketplace coverage within 60 days of when you lost Medicaid or CHIP coverage.** In addition, if you or your family members are enrolled in Medicaid or CHIP coverage, it is important to make sure that your contact information is up to date to make sure you get any information about changes to your eligibility. To learn more, visit HealthCare.gov or call the Marketplace Call Center at 1-800-318-2596. TTY users can call 1-855-889-4325.

## What about Alternatives to Marketplace Health Insurance Coverage?

If you or your family are eligible for coverage in an employment-based health plan (such as an employer-sponsored health plan), you or your family may also be eligible for a Special Enrollment Period to enroll in that health plan in certain circumstances, including if you or your dependents were enrolled in Medicaid or CHIP coverage and lost that coverage. Generally, you have 60 days after the loss of Medicaid or CHIP coverage to enroll in an employment-based health plan, but if you and your family lost eligibility for Medicaid or CHIP coverage between March 31, 2023 and July 10, 2023, you can request this special enrollment in the employment-based health plan through September 8, 2023. Confirm the deadline with your employer or your employment-based health plan.

Alternatively, you can enroll in Medicaid or CHIP coverage at any time by filling out an application through the Marketplace or applying directly through your state Medicaid agency. Visit <https://www.healthcare.gov/medicaid-chip/getting-medicaid-chip/> for more details.

## How Can I Get More Information?

For more information about your coverage offered through your employment, please check your health plan's summary plan description or contact Janie Vulich at [jvulich@oaklawn-il.gov](mailto:jvulich@oaklawn-il.gov) or 708-499-7882.

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The Marketplace can help you evaluate your coverage options, including your eligibility for coverage through the Marketplace and its cost. Please visit [HealthCare.gov](https://www.healthcare.gov) for more information, including an online application for health insurance coverage and contact information for a Health Insurance Marketplace in your area.

## PART B: Information About Health Coverage Offered by Your Employer

This section contains information about any health coverage offered by your employer. If you decide to complete an application for coverage in the Marketplace, you will be asked to provide this information. This information is numbered to correspond to the Marketplace application.

3. Employer name Village of Oak Lawn		4. Employer Identification Number (EIN) 36-6006024	
5. Employer address 9446 S. Raymond Avenue		6. Employer phone number 708-499-7882	
7. City Oak Lawn		8. State IL	9. ZIP code 60453
10. Who can we contact about employee health coverage at this job? Janie Vulich			
11. Phone number (if different from above)		12. Email address jvulich@oaklawn-il.gov	

Here is some basic information about health coverage offered by this employer:

- As your employer, we offer a health plan to:

All employees. Eligible employees are:

Full-time employees working a minimum of 30 hours per week.

Some employees. Eligible employees are:

- With respect to dependents:

We do offer coverage. Eligible dependents are:

Spouse, Civil Union Partner and eligible dependent children up to age 26. Certain qualifying disabled dependents or dependents who had served in any branch of the armed forces may be eligible to remain covered past age 26.

We do not offer coverage.

If checked, this coverage meets the minimum value standard, and the cost of this coverage to you is intended to be affordable, based on employee wages.

\*\* Even if your employer intends your coverage to be affordable, you may still be eligible for a premium discount through the Marketplace. The Marketplace will use your household income, along with other factors, to determine whether you may be eligible for a premium discount. If, for example, your wages vary from week to week (perhaps you are an hourly employee or you work on a commission basis), if you are newly employed mid-year, or if you have other income losses, you may still qualify for a premium discount.

If you decide to shop for coverage in the Marketplace, [HealthCare.gov](https://www.healthcare.gov) will guide you through the process. Here's the employer information you'll enter when you visit [HealthCare.gov](https://www.healthcare.gov) to find out if you can get a tax credit to lower your monthly premiums.