

Pennsylvania Signs Mini-COBRA into Law

Effective July 10, 2009, state Mini-COBRA benefits will be extended to employer groups with fewer than 20 employees. Mini-COBRA, or Act 2 of 2009, gives employees of these groups the right to purchase continued group health insurance after they leave employment.

To be eligible, they must have been enrolled for at least three continuous months in the health plan offered by a Pennsylvania business with 2-19 employees. Eligible employees and dependents can elect to purchase their employer's health insurance for up to nine months after their employment ends.

The federal COBRA subsidy will also be available to some Mini-COBRA beneficiaries, allowing for a 65 percent reduction in premiums for those impacted by layoffs. Additional information about the new law can be found on [the Pa. Department of Insurance website](#).

Currently, HealthAmerica is not a COBRA administrator. Therefore, while we are prepared to meet all requirements imposed on health insurance carriers, HealthAmerica will not administer mini-COBRA on behalf of our clients. This is consistent with the way HealthAmerica handles federal COBRA today.

Group contract amendments will be issued to all fully-insured members in Pennsylvania through our Living Well magazine near the end of August. These amendments are not intended to replace any of the notices which employers are required to provide. Copies of the amendments will be available on our website.

If you have any additional questions, please contact your account executive or account manager.

Legislative Update Reminder

Changes to laws in 2009

Several laws will impact the healthcare coverage your clients provide to their employees. Please visit our website for an [overview of legislative updates](#). Also watch for future communications from HealthAmerica requesting additional information from employer groups.

- COBRA Premium Subsidy (American Recovery & Reinvestment Act of 2009)
- Special Enrollment for Medical Assistance Loss or Qualification for Premium Assistance (CHIP Reauthorization Act of 2009)
- Genetic Nondiscrimination in Health Insurance (Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008)
- Autism Spectrum Disorders Mandate
- Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act of 2008
- Michelle's Law Federal
- Medicare Secondary Payer (a.k.a. Section 111)
- Health Information Technology for Economic and Clinical Health Act (HITECH) (American Recovery & Reinvestment Act of 2009)
- Pa. Senate Bill 189

