

Southern Healthcare Agency

301 New Pointe

Ridgeland, MS 39157

Contact Person: Josh Young

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Ongoing Notices

Southern Healthcare Agency

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Included in this packet are several pages of important information, many of which are mandated by the Federal Government and the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act

PLEASE SHARE THIS INFORMATION WITH ANY FAMILY MEMBERS YOU HAVE THAT YOU ENROLL FOR COVERAGE

PACKET INCLUDES:

SUMMARY OF BENEFITS

EXTENSION OF DEPENDENT COVERAGE TO AGE 26

LIFETIME LIMITS

NOTICE OF DESIGNATION OF PRIMARY CARE PROVIDER

THE WOMEN'S HEALTH AND CANCER RIGHTS ACT OF 1998

STATEMENT OF GRANDFATHER STATUS

CHIP-CHILDRENS HEALTH INSURANCE PROGRAM-MODEL NOTICE FOR EMPLOYERS

SPECIAL ENROLLMENT RIGHTS NOTICE

MENTAL HEALTH PARITY REQUIREMENTS EXPANDED AND EXTENDED TO SUBSTANCE ABUSE

MEDICARE PART D CREDITABLE if you have Medicare or will become eligible for Medicare in the next 12 months, a new federal law gives you more choices about your prescription drug coverage, starting in 2006.

HIPAA notice of privacy practices

NMHPA NEWBORNS AND MOTHERS HEALTH PROTECTION ACT OF 1996

HEALTH INSURANCE MARKETPLACE COVERAGE OPTIONS NOTICE

GENERAL COBRA NOTICE

The following are notices that the passage of the PPACA Healthcare Reform bill requires that we provide. For more information regarding these or other provisions of your health insurance plan, contact:

Southern Healthcare Agency at 800-880-2772

Notice of Opportunity to Enroll in connection with Extension of Dependent Coverage to Age 26

Individuals whose coverage ended, or who were denied coverage (or were not eligible for coverage), before attainment of age 26 due to student status, marital status, financial dependency or residency are eligible to enroll in this group health plan.

Notice of Lifetime Limit No Longer Applies

The lifetime limit on the dollar value of benefits under your group health plan no longer applies. Individuals whose coverage ended by reason of reaching a lifetime limit under the plan are eligible to enroll in the plan.

Notice of Designation of a Primary Care Provider

You have the right to designate any primary care provider who participates in our network and who is available to accept you or your family members. For information on how to select a primary care provider, and for a list of the participating primary care providers, you may go to www.bcbsms.com. For children, you may designate a pediatrician as the primary care provider.

You do not need prior authorization from Blue Cross Blue Shield of MS or from any other person (including a primary care provider) in order to obtain access to obstetrical or gynecological care from a health care professional in our network who specializes in obstetrics or gynecology. The health care professional, however, may be required to comply with certain procedures, including obtaining prior authorization for certain services, following a pre-approved treatment plan, or procedures for making referrals.

The Women's Health and Cancer Rights Act of 1998 ("WHCRA")

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 lymphedema? Call your Human Resources Manager or Southern Healthcare Agency for more information.

DISCLOSURE OF GRANDFATHER STATUS under the PATIENT PROTECTION and AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

To maintain status as a grandfathered health plan Southern Healthcare Agency must include a statement that we believe the Southern Healthcare Agency Employee Healthcare Plan is a "grandfathered health plan" under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (the Affordable Care Act).

The Southern Healthcare Agency Employee Healthcare Plan believes this Plan is a "grandfathered health plan" under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (the Affordable Care Act). As permitted by the Affordable Care Act, a grandfathered health plan can preserve certain basic health coverage that was already in effect when that law was enacted. Being a grandfathered health plan means that your Plan may not include certain consumer protections of the Affordable Care Act that apply to other plans, for example, the requirement for the provision of preventative health services without any cost sharing. However, grandfathered health plans must comply with certain other consumers protections in the Affordable Care Act, for example, the elimination of lifetime limits on benefits.

Questions regarding which protections apply and which protections do not apply to a grandfathered health plan and what might cause a plan to change from grandfathered health plan status can be directed to the claims administrator:

Blue Cross Blue Shield of MS
P.O. Box 1043
Jackson, MS 39215-1043
800-222-8046

You may also contact the Employee Benefits Security Administration, U.S. Department of Labor at 1-866-444-3272 or www.dol.gov/ebsa/healthreform. This website has a table summarizing which protections do and do not apply to grandfathered health plans.

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, 2015. Contact your State for more information on eligibility –

ALABAMA – Medicaid	GEORGIA – Medicaid
Website: www.myalhipp.com Phone: 1-855-692-5447	Website: http://dch.georgia.gov/ - Click on Programs, then Medicaid, then Health Insurance Premium Payment (HIPP) Phone: 1-800-869-1150
ALASKA – Medicaid	INDIANA – Medicaid
Website: http://health.hss.state.ak.us/dpa/programs/medicaid/ Phone (Outside of Anchorage): 1-888-318-8890 Phone (Anchorage): 907-269-6529	Website: http://www.in.gov/fssa Phone: 1-800-889-9949
COLORADO – Medicaid	IOWA – Medicaid
Medicaid Website: http://www.colorado.gov/hcpf Medicaid Customer Contact Center: 1-800-221-3943	Website: www.dhs.state.ia.us/hipp/ Phone: 1-888-346-9562
FLORIDA – Medicaid	KANSAS – Medicaid
Website: https://www.flmedicaidtprecovery.com/ Phone: 1-877-357-3268	Website: http://www.kdheks.gov/hcf/ Phone: 1-800-792-4884

KENTUCKY – Medicaid	NEW HAMPSHIRE – Medicaid
Website: http://chfs.ky.gov/dms/default.htm Phone: 1-800-635-2570	Website: http://www.dhhs.nh.gov/oii/documents/hippapp.pdf Phone: 603-271-5218
LOUISIANA – Medicaid	NEW JERSEY – Medicaid and CHIP
Website: http://www.lahipp.dhh.louisiana.gov Phone: 1-888-695-2447	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
MAINE – Medicaid	NEW YORK – Medicaid
Website: http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/of/public-assistance/index.html Phone: 1-800-977-6740 TTY 1-800-977-6741	Website: http://www.nyhealth.gov/health_care/medicaid/ Phone: 1-800-541-2831
MASSACHUSETTS – Medicaid and CHIP	NORTH CAROLINA – Medicaid
Website: http://www.mass.gov/MassHealth Phone: 1-800-462-1120	Website: http://www.ncdhhs.gov/dma Phone: 919-855-4100
MINNESOTA – Medicaid	NORTH DAKOTA – Medicaid
Website: http://www.dhs.state.mn.us/id_006254 Click on Health Care, then Medical Assistance Phone: 1-800-657-3739	Website: http://www.nd.gov/dhs/services/medicalserv/medicaid/ Phone: 1-800-755-2604
MISSOURI – Medicaid	OKLAHOMA – Medicaid and CHIP
Website: http://www.dss.mo.gov/mhd/participants/pages/hipp.htm Phone: 573-751-2005	Website: http://www.insureoklahoma.org Phone: 1-888-365-3742
MONTANA – Medicaid	OREGON – Medicaid
Website: http://medicaid.mt.gov/member Phone: 1-800-694-3084	Website: http://www.oregonhealthykids.gov http://www.hijossaludablesoregon.gov Phone: 1-800-699-9075
NEBRASKA – Medicaid	PENNSYLVANIA – Medicaid
Website: www.ACCESSNebraska.ne.gov Phone: 1-855-632-7633	Website: http://www.dpw.state.pa.us/hipp Phone: 1-800-692-7462
NEVADA – Medicaid	RHODE ISLAND – Medicaid
Medicaid Website: http://dwss.nv.gov/ Medicaid Phone: 1-800-992-0900	Website: www.ohhs.ri.gov Phone: 401-462-5300

SOUTH CAROLINA – Medicaid	VIRGINIA – Medicaid and CHIP
Website: http://www.scdhhs.gov Phone: 1-888-549-0820	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
SOUTH DAKOTA - Medicaid	WASHINGTON – Medicaid
Website: http://dss.sd.gov Phone: 1-888-828-0059	Website: http://www.hca.wa.gov/medicaid/premiumpymt/pages/index.aspx Phone: 1-800-562-3022 ext. 15473
TEXAS – Medicaid	WEST VIRGINIA – Medicaid
Website: https://www.gethipptexas.com/ Phone: 1-800-440-0493	Website: www.dhhr.wv.gov/bms/ Phone: 1-877-598-5820, HMS Third Party Liability
UTAH – Medicaid and CHIP	WISCONSIN – Medicaid and CHIP
Website: Medicaid: http://health.utah.gov/medicaid CHIP: http://health.utah.gov/chip Phone: 1-866-435-7414	Website: https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/badgercareplus/p-10095.htm Phone: 1-800-362-3002
VERMONT– Medicaid	WYOMING – Medicaid
Website: http://www.greenmountaincare.org/ Phone: 1-800-250-8427	Website: http://health.wyo.gov/healthcarefin/equalitycare Phone: 307-777-7531

To see if any other states have added a premium assistance program since January 31, 2015, or for more information on special enrollment rights, contact either:

U.S. Department of Labor
Employee Benefits Security Administration
www.dol.gov/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

OMB Control Number 1210-0137 (expires 10/31/2016)

SPECIAL ENROLLMENT NOTICE

This notice is being provided to insure that you understand your right to apply for group health insurance coverage. You should read this notice even if you plan to waive coverage at this time.

LOSS OF OTHER COVERAGES

If you are declining coverage 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 your or your dependents' other coverage ends (or after the employer stops contributing toward the other coverage).

Example: You waived coverage because you were covered under a plan offered by your spouse's employer. Your spouse terminates his employment. If you notify your employer within 30 days of the date coverage ends, you and your eligible dependents may apply for coverage under our health plan.

MARRIAGE, BIRTH, OR ADOPTION

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, or placement for adoption.

Example: When you were hired by us, you were single and chose not to elect health insurance benefits. One year later, you marry. You and your eligible dependents are entitled to enroll in this group health plan. However, you must apply within 30 days from the date of your marriage.

MEDICAID or CHIP

If you or your dependents lose eligibility for coverage under Medicaid or the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) or become eligible for a premium assistance subsidy under Medicaid or CHIP, you may be able to enroll yourself and your dependents. You must request enrollment within 60 days of the loss of Medicaid or CHIP coverage or the determination of eligibility for a premium assistance subsidy.

Example: When you were hired by us, your children received health coverage under CHIP and you did not enroll them in our health plan. Because of changes in your income, your children are no longer eligible for CHIP coverage. You may enroll them in this group health plan if you apply within 60 days of the date of their loss CHIP coverage.

FOR MORE INFORMATION or ASSISTANCE

To request special enrollment or obtain more information, please contact your Human Resources Manager or Southern Healthcare Agency.

Note: If you and your eligible dependents enroll during a **special enrollment period**, as described above, you are not considered a late enrollee. Therefore, your group health plan may not require you to serve a pre-existing condition waiting period of more than 12 months. Any pre-existing condition waiting period will be reduced by time served in a qualified plan.

KNOW YOUR EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

The Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act of 2008

On October 3, 2008, President Bush signed into law the Emergency Economic Stabilization Act of 2008. Contained within this important but unrelated piece of emergency legislation is the *Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act of 2008* (the "Act"), which requires group health plans to apply the same treatment limits on mental health or substance-related disorder benefits as they do for medical and surgical benefits. The Act also extends this parity requirement to inpatient and outpatient services, whether in-network or out-of-network, and to emergency care services.

Notably, the Act revised the definition of "mental health benefits" to now include substance use disorder benefits. The Act also requires group health plans to apply the same beneficiary financial requirements to mental health or substance use disorder benefits as they apply for medical and surgical benefits, including limits on deductibles, copayments and out-of-pocket expenses. Plan administrators are further required to make the criteria for "medical necessity" determinations with respect to mental health and substance use disorder benefits available to plan participants, beneficiaries or providers upon request.

Accordingly, if plans have limits on hospital inpatient days and/or outpatient visits for mental health treatments, but not for other treatments, they will be required to change their current plan design to comply with the new requirements of the Act.

The Act is applicable to plan years beginning after October 3, 2009 (for calendar year plans, that is **January 1, 2010** and to group health plans under a collective bargaining agreement the later of (1) plan years starting on or after Jan. 1, 2010, or (2) the termination date of the last collective bargaining agreement relating to the plan.

For a copy of the new law, see: <http://www.govtrack.us/congress/bill.xpd?bill=h110-1424>

Important Notice About Your Prescription Drug Coverage and Medicare

Please read this notice carefully and keep it where you can find it. This notice has information about your current prescription drug coverage and about your options under Medicare's prescription drug coverage. This information can help you decide whether or not you want to join a Medicare drug plan. If you are considering joining, you should compare your current coverage, including which drugs are covered at what cost, with the coverage and costs of the plans offering Medicare prescription drug coverage in your area. Information about where you can get help to make decisions about your prescription drug coverage is at the end of this notice. There are two important things you need to know about your current coverage and Medicare's prescription drug coverage:

1. Medicare prescription drug coverage became available in 2006 to everyone with Medicare. You can get this coverage if you join a Medicare Prescription Drug Plan or join a Medicare Advantage Plan (like an HMO or PPO) that offers prescription drug coverage. All Medicare drug plans provide at least a standard level of coverage set by Medicare. Some plans may also offer more coverage for a higher monthly premium.
2. The prescription drug coverage offered by your employer is, on average for all plan participants, expected to pay out as much as standard Medicare prescription drug coverage pays and is therefore considered Creditable Coverage. Because your existing coverage is Creditable Coverage, you can keep this coverage and not pay a higher premium (a penalty) if you later decide to join a Medicare drug plan.

When Can You Join A Medicare Drug Plan?

You can join a Medicare drug plan when you first become eligible for Medicare and each year from October 15th to December 7th. However, if you lose your current creditable prescription drug coverage, through no fault of your own, you will also be eligible for a two (2) month Special Enrollment Period (SEP) to join a Medicare drug plan.

What Happens To Your Current Coverage If You Decide to Join A Medicare Drug Plan?

If you decide to join a Medicare drug plan, your current coverage will not be affected. If you do decide to join a Medicare drug plan and drop your current coverage, be aware that you and your dependents will be able to get this coverage back at each annual renewal period.

When Will You Pay A Higher Premium (Penalty) To Join A Medicare Drug Plan?

You should also know that if you drop or lose your current coverage and don't join a Medicare drug plan within 63 continuous days after your current coverage ends, you may pay a higher premium (a penalty) to join a Medicare drug plan later. If you go 63 continuous days or longer without creditable prescription drug coverage, your monthly premium may go up by at least 1% of the Medicare base beneficiary premium per month of every month that you did not have that coverage. For example, if you go nineteen months without creditable coverage, your premium may consistently be at least 19% higher than the Medicare base coverage. In addition, you may have to wait until the following October to join.

For more information about this notice or your current prescription drug coverage..
Contact Southern Healthcare Agency.

NOTE: You'll get this notice each year. You will also get it before the next period you can join a Medicare drug plan, and if this coverages changes. You also may request a copy of this notice at any time.

For more information about your options under Medicare Prescription Drug Coverage...

More detailed information about Medicare plans that offer prescription drug coverage is in the "Medicare & You" handbook. Medicare Eligible Individuals get a copy of the handbook in the mail every year from Medicare. You may also be contacted directly by Medicare drug plans.

For more information about Medicare prescription drug coverage:

- Visit www.medicare.gov
- Call your State Health Insurance Assistance Program (see the inside back cover of your copy of the "Medicare & You" handbook for their telephone number) for personalized help
- Call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227). TTY users should call 1-877-486-2048.

If you have limited income and resources, extra help paying for Medicare prescription drug coverage is available. For information about this extra help, visit Social Security on the web at www.socialsecurity.gov, or call them at 1-800-772-1213 (TTY 1-800-325-0778).

HIPPA PRIVACY NOTICE REMINDER

Your plan's Notice of Privacy Practices is available and can be obtained by requesting from Southern Healthcare Agency by calling 800-880-2772 or emailing kbradshaw@southernhealthcare.com.

NMHPA - Newborns' and Mothers' Health Protection Act of 1996

Under the Newborns' and Mothers' Health Protection Act of 1996, group health insurance issues generally may not 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 issuers may not, under federal law, require that a provider obtain authorization from the Plan or the issuer for prescribing a length of stay not in excess of 48 hours (or 96 hours). In no event will an "attending provider" include a plan, hospital, managed care organization, or other issuer.

If a Physician believes that it is Medically Necessary for hospitalization in connection with childbirth to extend beyond the length of time of forty-eight (48) hours following a normal vaginal delivery or ninety-six (96) hours following a caesarian section, the Physician must request the additional days. The Utilization Review/Precertification carrier will determine the Medical Necessity of the additional days.

Benefits are payable in the same manner as for medial or surgical care of an illness, shown in the Schedule of Benefits and this section, and subject to the same maximums.



New Health Insurance Marketplace Coverage Options and Your Health Coverage

Form Approved
OMB No. 1210-0149
(expires 6-30-2023)

PART A: General Information

When key parts of the health care law take effect in 2014, there will be a new way to buy health insurance: the Health Insurance Marketplace. To assist you as you evaluate options for you and your family, this notice provides some basic information about the new Marketplace and employment-based health coverage offered by your employer.

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. You may also be eligible for a new kind of tax credit that lowers your monthly premium right away. Open enrollment for health insurance coverage through the Marketplace begins in October 2013 for coverage starting as early as January 1, 2014.

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

You may qualify to save money and lower your monthly premium, but only if your employer does not offer coverage, or offers coverage that doesn't meet certain standards. The savings on your premium that you're eligible for depends on your household income.

Does Employer Health Coverage Affect Eligibility for Premium Savings through the Marketplace?

Yes. If you have an offer of health coverage from your employer that meets certain standards, you will not be eligible for a tax credit through the Marketplace and may wish to enroll in your employer's health plan. However, you may be eligible for a tax 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 meets certain standards. If the cost of a plan from your employer that would cover you (and not any other members of your family) is more than 9.5% of your household income for the year, or if the coverage your employer provides does not meet the "minimum value" standard set by the Affordable Care Act, you may be eligible for a tax credit.¹

Note: If you purchase a health plan through the Marketplace instead of accepting health coverage offered by your employer, then you may lose the employer contribution (if any) to the employer-offered coverage. Also, this employer contribution—as well as your employee contribution to employer-offered coverage—is often excluded from income for Federal and State income tax purposes. Your payments for coverage through the Marketplace are made on an after-tax basis.

How Can I Get More Information?

For more information about your coverage offered by your employer, please check your summary plan description or contact Melissa Conway (662) 378-4470.

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

¹ An employer-sponsored 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.

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 Southern Healthcare Agency, Inc.		4. Employer Identification Number (EIN) 64-0829013	
5. Employer address 301 New Pointe		6. Employer phone number (601) 933-0037	
7. City Ridgeland	8. State MS	9. ZIP code 39157	
10. Who can we contact about employee health coverage at this job? Josh Young			
11. Phone number (if different from above) (601) 933-0037		12. Email address jyoung@southernhealthcare.com	

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:

☒ Some employees. Eligible employees are:

Employees classified as full-time upon hiring and employees classified as variable hour who satisfy the initial eligibility requirement of 1,560 hours within a consecutive 12 month measurement period.

- With respect to dependents:

☒ We do offer coverage. Eligible dependents are:

Legal dependents of eligible employees who participate in Southern Healthcare's Insurance Program.

☐ 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.

Southern Healthcare Agency
CONTINUATION COVERAGE RIGHTS UNDER COBRA

Southern Healthcare Agency

301 New Pointe
Ridgeland, MS 39157
Company Contact Person: Josh Young

Introduction

You are receiving this notice because you have recently become covered under a group health plan (the Plan) with Southern Healthcare Agency. This notice contains important information about your rights to COBRA continuation coverage, which is a temporary extension of coverage under the Plan. **This notice generally explains COBRA continuation coverage, when it may become available to you and your family, and what you need to do to protect the right to receive it.**

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 when you would otherwise lose your group health coverage. It can also become available to other members of your family who are covered under the Plan when they would otherwise lose their group health coverage. For additional 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.

What is COBRA Continuation Coverage?

COBRA continuation coverage is a continuation of Plan coverage when coverage would otherwise end because of a life event known as a "qualifying event." Specific qualifying events are listed later in the 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 would 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 are an employee, you will become a qualified beneficiary if you will lose your coverage under the Plan because either one of the following qualifying events happen:

1. Your hours of employment are reduced, or
2. Your employment ends for any reason other than your gross misconduct.

If you are the spouse of an employee, you will become a qualified beneficiary if you will lose your coverage under the Plan because any of the following qualifying events happens:

1. Your spouse dies;
2. Your spouse's hours of employment are reduced;
3. Your spouse's employment ends for any reason other than his or her gross misconduct;
4. Your spouse becomes entitled to Medicare benefits (under Part A, Part B, or both); or
5. You become divorced or legally separated from your spouse.

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

1. The parent-employee dies
2. The parent-employee's hours of employment are reduced;
3. The parent-employee's employment ends for any reason other than his or her gross misconduct;
4. The parent-employee becomes enrolled in Medicare (Part A, Part B, or both);
5. The parents become divorced or legally separated; or
6. The child stops being eligible for coverage under the plan as a "dependent child."

When is COBRA Coverage Available?

The plan will offer COBRA continuation to qualified beneficiaries only after the Plan Administrator has been notified that a qualifying event has occurred. When the qualifying event is the end of employment or reduction of hours of employment, death of the employee, or the employee(s) is becoming entitled to Medicare benefits (under Part A, Part B, or both), the employer must notify the Plan Administrator of the qualifying event.

You Must Give Notice of Some Qualifying Events

For the 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, in writing, to Southern Healthcare Agency.

How is COBRA 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. When the qualifying event is the end of employment or reduction of the employee's hours of employment, COBRA continuation coverage generally lasts for up to a total of 18 months.

When the qualifying event is the death of the employee, the employee's becoming entitled to Medicare benefits (under Part A, Part B, or both), your divorce or legal separation, or a dependent child's losing eligibility as a dependent child, COBRA continuation coverage lasts for up to a total of 36 months.

When the qualifying event is the end of employment or reduction of the employee's hours of employment, and the employee became entitled to Medicare benefits less than 18 months before the qualifying event, COBRA continuation coverage for qualified beneficiaries other than the employee lasts until 36 months after the date of Medicare entitlement. For example, if a covered employee becomes entitled to Medicare 8 months before the date on which his employment terminates, COBRA continuation coverage for his spouse and children can last up to 36 months after the date of Medicare entitlement, which is equal to 28 months after the date of the qualifying event (36 months minus 8 months).

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

Disability extension of 18-month period of continuation coverage

If you or anyone in your family covered under the Plan is determined by the Social Security Administration to be disabled and you notify the Plan Administrator in a timely fashion, you and your entire family may be entitled to receive 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 continuation coverage.

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

If your family experiences another qualifying event while receiving 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 notice of the second qualifying event is properly given to the Plan. This extension may be available to the spouse and any dependent children receiving continuation coverage if the employee or former employee dies, gets divorced or legally separated, or if the dependent child stops being eligible under the Plan as a dependent child, but only if the event would have caused the spouse or dependent child to lose coverage under the Plan had the first qualifying event not occurred.

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 ERISA, including COBRA, the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), 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 the EBSA website at www.dol.gov/ebsa. (Addresses and phone numbers of Regional and District EBSA Offices are available through EBSA's website).

Keep Your Plan Informed of Address Changes

In order to protect your family's rights, you should keep the Plan Administrator informed of 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

If you have any questions concerning the information in this notice or your rights to coverage, you should contact: Kristen Bradshaw