



The new health care law signed by President Barack Obama in late March represents more than 2,000 pages of new federal law that will touch virtually every facet of the health care industry, including a variety of near-term and longer-term changes to the health insurance marketplace that will impact **all** Americans.

Because of the size and scope of the legislation, and the fact that the law requires federal departments to issue more detailed regulations for implementation, it will take time to fully analyze and digest the changes. As we learn more and prepare for the post-reform environment, we will update these Frequently Asked Questions, so check back often for new information.

Frequently Asked Questions:

Q: What does this mean for Empire BlueCross Blue Shield?

- Our priority remains meeting the health care benefit needs of our members and ensuring they have access to affordable, high-quality care. As such, we will continue to put our members and customers first.
- At same time, affordability is more important than ever before, and we remain concerned the bill signed into law by the president does not address long-term cost containment measures that will make the system sustainable.
- We have teams of individuals reviewing and analyzing the impact of the legislation and any near-term requirements to ensure we are prepared to implement all required changes in accordance with the law.

Q: Will there be changes to my benefits or my network?

- Based on the current law, we do not anticipate members will see immediate changes to their benefits. The requirements in this legislation will be phased in beginning later this year and continuing over the next several years.
- This legislation does not impact our current physician or hospital networks. However, we do believe members may see an impact to their benefits and their premiums as the legislation is implemented.

Q: How will be premiums be affected?

- At this point we do not know what the impact will be on our members' premiums as we will receive additional guidance from the Department of Health and Human Services, but we anticipate the impact will vary depending on the type of product you have.

Q: Do I need to do anything?

- At this time there is not anything for you as a member/customer/employer to do.

Q: What changes will take effect immediately?

- **Several near-term requirements will impact all contracts for new sales and renewals beginning in approximately six months.** While there is a provision that "grandfathers" existing plans and allows members in these plans to keep their products, the new law requires us to add several new elements to all contracts, regardless of whether the plan is "grandfathered." These include elements like:



- Allowing members to add dependents up to age 26 regardless of student status
- Eliminating lifetime limits on policies

It is important to note that our preliminary analysis of the “grandfathering” provision indicates that if a subscriber changes products after March 23, 2010, he or she will likely be subject to additional product requirements that are effective in the future.

For new sales and subscribers who change policies after approximately six months, we will be required to make additional changes, such as:

- Removing any member cost sharing for “preventive” benefits, as defined by the legislation.

- **Other, more comprehensive insurance reforms will begin in 2014.** Many of the more significant changes to the insurance marketplace — such as rating reforms, the individual and employer mandates, Medicaid expansions, the insurance exchanges and the insurance subsidies — are set to be effective on January 1, 2014.
- Many of the new laws require federal agencies to issue more detailed regulations that will guide implementation, and we will share more information when it is available.

Q: I have a child under the age of 26. When can I add him or her to my policy according to the new legislation?

- Effective six months from the effective day (when the president signed the bill into law), any new policy or any renewal on an existing policy will have the extended age benefit. This should take effect in late September or early October.