

Affordable Care Act (ACA) Employee Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What are the Health Insurance Marketplaces?

A: Marketplaces will be a state or federal run website where many people can buy health care coverage. It will be available to people who are uninsured or buy insurance on their own. They will be able to compare and choose health plans offered by private companies, get answers to questions, and find out if they are eligible for financial assistance or special programs. The Marketplaces will be open in October 2013, and coverage purchased there will be effective January 1, 2014, or later.

New York Exchange Website - <http://www.nystateofhealth.ny.gov>

Q: Do I have to buy from the Marketplace?

A: No. The Marketplace is just one of the ways people can shop for health coverage. People can still get coverage through their school district or directly from an insurance company. You will have to buy coverage through the Marketplace to apply for subsidized coverage. However, if you qualify for subsidized coverage, you will no longer receive the District's contribution towards health insurance.

Q: Is Marketplace coverage better than the districts?

The Marketplace will provide health care coverage at various levels ranging from Bronze (insurance will cover 60% of all health care costs) to Platinum (insurance will cover 90% of all health care costs). **All health plans within the Cooperative offer higher levels of coverage.**

Q: Who has to buy health insurance?

A: The Affordable Care Act requires most U.S. citizens and legal immigrants to have a basic level of health coverage starting January 1, 2014.

Some people won't have to buy insurance. This includes people with certain religious beliefs, members of Native American tribes, undocumented immigrants, and people who are in prison. People whose income is below a certain level are also not required to buy insurance.

Q: What if I can't afford to buy health care coverage?

A: The government may provide financial assistance called premium tax credits and cost sharing subsidies to help some people pay for health coverage or care if they can't afford it themselves. This is usually determined by a person's income level and family size. You will be able to find out if you qualify for financial assistance by utilizing the Tax Credit and Premium Rate Estimator on the website listed above.

Q: What if I don't buy health care coverage?

A: If you don't buy coverage and go without it for three months or longer, you'll be charged a tax penalty by the government. If you lack coverage for a period of fewer than three months, you will not be charged a penalty for that period of time.