

Ready or Not, Healthcare Reform is Here!



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September 23rd started the sweeping changes and overhaul of our healthcare system. But many of the changes do not go into effect for several years. A few key reforms, however, have just become law.

Companies can no longer:

- 1) Deny coverage to children with pre-existing conditions
- 2) Impose lifetime limits or caps on health coverage
- 3) Cancel a policy without proving fraud
- 4) Deny health claims without giving you a chance to appeal the decision
- 5) Put drug card maximum riders on their plans

Companies must also now:

- 1) Offer free preventative health services
- 2) Allow young adults can stay on parent's plan until age 26
- 3) Allow each member to choose a primary care doctor and pediatrician
- 4) Allow members coverage for the nearest emergency room without penalty

Adding children/dependents immediately?

Many small business owners will want to add their child(ren) onto their plan immediately. Now that the law is in effect there's no reason not to add the dependent to their plan because as of now there is **no additional cost** to add the dependent. But, with the exception of Empire, each business will need to wait until their renewal to add their child(ren).

What the carriers won't tell the administrators of these plans is that if the business wants to have the ability to add the dependents of their employees immediately, that there is a way. The business can switch companies and on the new plan the dependents can be added at open enrollment. Naturally, the carriers don't want you to leave, but you could always switch back at a later date.

Drug card max eliminated!

As a result of these changes, Healthy NY is also in the process of eliminating the \$3,000 maximum on their drug card. This means this program will be even more popular in the coming months and prescription drug dependent candidates can now enjoy this plan without drug costs becoming prohibitive by being forced to pay out-of-pocket once exhausting the \$3,000 maximum.

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