

Health Care Reform: What You Need to Know

You've been hearing about the Affordable Care Act (ACA)—often just called health care reform—for several years now. Some health care reform rules have already gone into effect for most plans, such as free preventive care and the option to keep your adult child on your medical plan until age 26.

With even bigger changes scheduled to take place by the end of the year, we want to help you understand what you need to know as an ICSVEBA member.

Our Benefits Program

ICSVEBA will continue to offer a competitive medical benefits package for you and your family utilizing the Anthem Blue Cross JAA Network. For some time, our coverage has been more generous than what the law requires in many respects, and it will continue. As such, many of you will not find the need to go to the exchange. Please keep in mind that if you are eligible for the ICSVEBA health plan and you decide to purchase insurance through the exchange instead, you will not be eligible for a tax credit. Also, when you enroll in your District employer's health plan through the ICSVEBA, your District pays a portion of your premium, and you pay your share with tax-free money – which could make the ICSVEBA plan less expensive for you overall.

Health Insurance Exchanges

Key parts of health care reform have taken effect on January 1, 2014, and insurance is now available through new, state-based health insurance marketplaces called “exchanges.” These exchanges will allow people to compare the benefits and costs of all available medical plan options. Financial assistance will be available for those who qualify.

The exchanges opened for business on October 1, 2013, selling medical coverage that began January 1, 2014. By now, you have already received information about the exchanges as required by the federal government this past summer or early fall.

We cannot provide you with assistance in evaluating your options for exchange coverage, but the government agencies will have some educational materials and sources for additional information. You can find more information to help you make your decision at www.healthcare.gov or <https://www.cuidadodesalud.gov/es/> (Spanish); you can also call (800) 318-2596.

The Individual Mandate: Do Not Worry about the Penalty

Health care reform requires most Americans to have health insurance starting January 1, 2014, or pay a penalty. This doesn't affect you if you and your family members already have insurance—through ICSVEBA, your spouse's employer, or an individual policy, for example.

We are sharing information with you about what is currently known or discussed about health care reform. We cannot guarantee its accuracy, or that there won't be future changes, and many other factors can affect you and your options under the law. If you need to rely on any information about this law, we suggest you speak to your own personal tax or financial advisor.