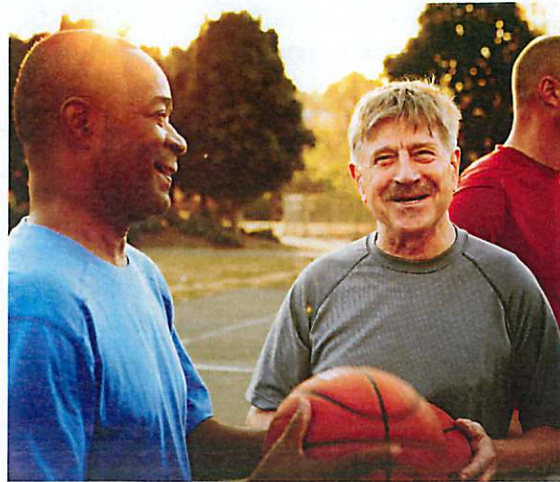




illinois health insurance marketplace



healthcare reform is coming.
find answers here.



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The Affordable Care Act. What it means for you.

In March of 2010, the Affordable Care Act (sometimes referred to as the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act) was signed into law. This federal law focuses on consumer protections and makes it easier and more affordable for individuals, families, and small businesses to buy and enroll in health insurance, even if they have never had coverage in the past.



So how will Illinoisans apply for health coverage?

Illinois consumers can shop for health coverage on the Illinois Health Insurance Marketplace, run in partnership between the state and federal governments. Consumers can apply for coverage on the Marketplace online, by phone, or through a paper application. Support will be available for Illinois residents every step of the way. *Applications for coverage will be online and available starting October 1, 2013.*



What is a Health Insurance Marketplace?

A Marketplace is a website designed to help you apply for coverage, compare insurance options, and enroll in the health coverage that is best for you and your family. Families who do not have access to other affordable, quality coverage, such as Medicare, Medicaid, or employer-sponsored insurance, may also be eligible for financial help to reduce the cost of their monthly premiums and medical expenses.

What is the timeframe for enrollment?

The enrollment period will be October 1, 2013 through March 31, 2014. Consumers who enroll by December 15 will have coverage starting January 1, 2014. During open enrollment, specially trained community members will be available to help you apply for and enroll in health insurance throughout the state.

Choosing the right plan.

The Affordable Care Act sets basic guidelines for health insurance plans to make sure you have the coverage you need – especially when you get sick and need it most. Starting in 2014, each health insurance plan will have to cover, at a minimum, a comprehensive package of essential health benefits, including hospitalization, doctor visits, and prescription medicine. You will be able to easily compare different health insurance plan options and costs on the Illinois Health Insurance Marketplace's website.



Differences in plan coverage.

Although all plans will cover the essential health benefits, you will be able to determine which insurance plan best fits your health and financial needs. There will be four coverage levels on the Marketplace to choose from: Bronze, Silver, Gold, and Platinum. You will be able to choose a level based on the amount of premium versus out-of-pocket coverage costs that work for you.

Actual costs of plans on the Illinois Health Insurance Marketplace will be available in the fall of 2013.

No more exclusions or higher rates for pre-existing conditions.

Under the ACA, insurers will no longer be able to charge consumers higher premiums based on being sick or having a pre-existing condition. Premiums will only be allowed to vary based on age, tobacco use, geographic area, and family size. This also means insurers will no longer be able to charge you more if you are a woman.



Key features of the Affordable Care Act.

Several protections in the law have already gone into effect:

- Small business tax credits
- Elimination of lifetime dollar limits
- Coverage for children with pre-existing conditions
- Coverage for certain preventive services
- Review of premium increases
- And many more listed here: <http://www.healthcare.gov/law/timeline/index.html>

The ACA and small business.



How small business owners can purchase insurance for employees.

Illinois small business owners with 50 or fewer employees will have the opportunity to sign up for coverage through the Health Insurance Marketplace Small Business Health Options Program (SHOP) online, by phone, or with a paper application. Employers will be able to compare private insurance options by premium price and other plan attributes.

The SHOP Marketplace will be open for plan selection on October 1, 2013, with coverage beginning January 1, 2014. For the 2014 plan year, employers using the SHOP Marketplace will select one plan for their employees. Beginning in 2015, an employer will be able to select a fixed contribution amount and tier of coverage from which an employee may choose any plan. More information about the SHOP is available at: <https://www.healthcare.gov/small-businesses>

What is the Small Business Health Care Tax Credit and who is eligible?



The ACA established the Small Business Health Care Tax Credit to provide small employers with assistance in paying their share of employee insurance premiums. Employers with fewer than 25 full-time equivalent employees with average annual wages of less than \$50,000 who cover at least 50% of premiums at the single (employee-only) coverage rate are eligible for the credit. For tax years 2010 through 2013, the maximum credit is 35% of premium

contributions for small business employers and 25% of premium contributions for tax-exempt small employers. For tax years 2014 and beyond, the maximum credit increases to 50% for small businesses and 35% for small tax-exempt organizations. Beginning in 2014, the tax credit is available exclusively to employers purchasing coverage through SHOP and may only be claimed for two years. More information about the Small Business Health Care Tax Credit is available at: <http://www.irs.gov/uac/Small-Business-Health-Care-Tax-Credit-for-Small-Employers>