

COBRA CONTINUATION COVERAGE

Introduction

The right to COBRA Continuation Coverage was created by a federal law, the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1985, as amended ("COBRA"). COBRA Continuation Coverage may become available to you and other members of your family when group health coverage would otherwise end. You should check with your Employer to see if COBRA applies to you and your Dependents.

You may have other options available to you when you lose group health coverage. For example, you may be eligible to buy an individual plan through the Health Insurance Marketplace. By enrolling in coverage through the Marketplace, you may qualify for lower costs on your monthly premiums and lower out-of-pocket costs. Additionally, you may qualify for a 30-day special enrollment period for another group health plan for which you are eligible (such as a spouse's plan), even if that plan generally doesn't accept late enrollees.

What is COBRA Continuation Coverage?

"COBRA Continuation Coverage" is a continuation of Plan coverage when coverage otherwise would end because of a life event known as a "Qualifying Event."

After a Qualifying Event, COBRA Continuation Coverage must be offered to each person who is a "Qualified Beneficiary." You, your spouse, and your dependent children could become Qualified Beneficiaries if coverage under the Plan is lost because of the Qualifying Event. Under the Plan, Qualified Beneficiaries who elect COBRA Continuation Coverage must pay for COBRA Continuation Coverage. Life insurance, Accidental death and dismemberment benefits and weekly income or long-term disability benefits (if a part of your Employer's plan) are not considered for continuation under COBRA.

Domestic Partners and Children of a covered Member's Domestic Partner, who otherwise satisfy the Eligibility requirements set forth in the Eligibility provision and are covered under this Plan, will also be offered the opportunity to make an independent election to receive COBRA Continuation Coverage. All references to Spouse will also be applicable to a Domestic Partner, unless otherwise indicated.

If you are a Covered Member, you will become a Qualified Beneficiary if you lose your coverage under the Plan due to one of the following Qualifying Events:

- Your hours of employment are reduced; or
- Your employment ends for any reason other than your gross misconduct.

If you are the Spouse of a Covered Member, you will become a Qualified Beneficiary if you lose your coverage under the Plan due to one of the following Qualifying Events:

- Your Spouse dies;
- Your Spouse's hours of employment are reduced;
- Your Spouse's employment ends for any reason other than his or her gross misconduct;
- Your Spouse becomes entitled to Medicare benefits (under Part A, Part B, or both); or
- You become divorced or legally separated from your Spouse.

Note: Medicare entitlement means that you are eligible for and enrolled in Medicare.

Your Dependent children will become Qualified Beneficiaries if they lose coverage under the Plan due to one of the following Qualifying Events:

- The parent-covered Member dies;
- The parent-covered Member's hours of employment are reduced;
- The parent-covered Member's employment ends for any reason other than his or her gross misconduct;
- The parent-covered Member becomes entitled to Medicare benefits (Part A, Part B, or both);
- The parents become divorced or legally separated; or
- The child is no longer eligible for coverage under the plan as a "Dependent child."

If this Plan provides retiree health coverage, sometimes, filing a proceeding in bankruptcy under Title 11 of the United States Code can be a Qualifying Event. If a proceeding in bankruptcy is filed with respect to the Employer, and that bankruptcy results in the loss of coverage of any retired Member covered under the Plan, the retired Member will become a Qualified Beneficiary with respect to the bankruptcy. The retired Member's Spouse, surviving Spouse, and Dependent children also will become Qualified Beneficiaries if bankruptcy results in the loss of their coverage under the Plan.

When is Cobra Continuation Coverage available?

The Plan will offer COBRA Continuation Coverage to Qualified Beneficiaries only after the Plan Administrator has been notified that a Qualifying Event has occurred. When the Qualifying Event is the end of employment, reduction of hours of employment, death of the Covered Member, commencement of proceeding in bankruptcy with respect to the Employer, or the Covered Member's becoming entitled to Medicare benefits (under Part A, Part B, or both), the Plan Administrator must be notified of the Qualifying Event.

For all other qualifying events (divorce or legal separation of the Employee and spouse or a dependent child's losing eligibility for coverage as a dependent child), you must notify the Plan Administrator within 60 days after the Qualifying Event occurs. You must provide this notice in writing to:

Plan Administrator
Public Education Health Trust
2550 Denali Street, Suite 1614
Anchorage, AK 99503
(907) 274-7526

Notice must be postmarked, if mailed, or dated, if emailed or hand-delivered on or before the 60th day following the Qualifying Event.

How is COBRA Continuation Coverage Provided?

Once the Plan Administrator receives notice that a Qualifying Event has occurred, COBRA Continuation Coverage will be offered to each of the Qualified Beneficiaries. Each Qualified Beneficiary will have an independent right to elect COBRA Continuation Coverage. Covered Members may elect COBRA Continuation Coverage on behalf of their Spouses, and parents may elect COBRA Continuation Coverage on behalf of their children.

In the event that the Plan Administrator determines that the individual is not entitled to COBRA Continuation Coverage, the Plan Administrator or the COBRA Administrator will provide to the individual an explanation as to why he or she is not entitled to COBRA Continuation Coverage.

How long does COBRA Continuation Coverage last?

COBRA Continuation Coverage is a temporary continuation of coverage that generally last for 18 months due to the employment termination or reduction of hours of work. Certain Qualifying Events, or a second Qualifying Event during the initial period of coverage, may permit a Qualified Beneficiary to receive a maximum of 36 months of coverage.

There are also ways in which this 18-month period of COBRA Continuation Coverage can be extended, discussed below.

If the Qualifying Event is the death of the Covered Member (or former Member), the Covered Member's (or former Member's) becoming entitled to Medicare benefits (under Part A, Part B, or both), your divorce or legal separation, or a Dependent child's losing eligibility as a Dependent child, COBRA Continuation Coverage can last for up to a total of 36 months.

Medicare extension of COBRA Continuation Coverage

If you (as the Covered Member) become entitled to Medicare benefits, your Spouse and dependents may be entitled to an extension of the 18-month period of COBRA Continuation Coverage.

If you first become entitled to Medicare benefits, and later experience a termination or employment or a reduction of hours, then the maximum coverage period for Qualified Beneficiaries other than you ends on the later of (i) 36 months after the date you became entitled to Medicare benefits, and (ii) 18 months (or 29 months if there is a disability extension) after the date of the termination or reduction of hours. For example, if you become entitled to Medicare 8 months before the date on which your employment terminates, COBRA Continuation Coverage for your Spouse and children can last up to 36 months after the date of your Medicare entitlement.

If the first Qualifying Event is your termination of employment or a reduction of hours of employment, and you then became entitled to Medicare benefits less than 18 months after the first Qualifying Event, Qualified Beneficiaries other than you are not entitled to an extension of the 18-month period.

Disability extension of 18-month period of COBRA Continuation Coverage

If you or anyone in your family covered under the Plan is determined by the Social Security Administration (SSA) to be disabled and you notify the Plan Administrator as set forth herein, you and your entire family may be entitled to receive up to an additional 11 months of COBRA Continuation Coverage, for a total maximum of 29 months. The disability would have to have started at some time before the 60th day of COBRA Continuation Coverage and must last at least until the end of the 18-month period of COBRA Continuation Coverage. An extra fee will be charged for this extended COBRA Continuation Coverage.

Notice of the disability determination must be provided in writing to the Plan Administrator by the date that is 60 days after the latest of:

- The date of the disability determination by the SSA;
- The date on which a Qualifying Event occurs;
- The date on which the Qualified Beneficiary loses (or would lose) coverage under the Plan as a result of the Qualifying Event; or
- The date on which the Qualified Beneficiary is informed, through the furnishing of the Plan's Summary Plan Description of both the responsibility to provide the notice and the Plan's procedures for providing such notice to the Plan Administrator.

In any event, this notice must be furnished before the end of the first 18 months of Continuation Coverage. The notice must include the name of the Qualified Beneficiary determined to be disabled by the SSA and the date of the determination. A copy of SSA's Notice of Award Letter must be provided within 30 days after the deadline to provide the notice.

You must provide this notice to:

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Public Education Health Trust
2550 Denali Street, Suite 1614
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Second Qualifying Event extension of 18-month period of COBRA Continuation Coverage

If your family experiences another Qualifying Event while receiving 18 months of COBRA Continuation Coverage, the Spouse and Dependent children in your family can get up to 18 additional months of COBRA Continuation Coverage, for a maximum of 36 months, if the Plan Administrator is properly notified about the second Qualifying Event. This extension may be available to the Spouse and any Dependent children receiving COBRA Continuation Coverage if the covered Member or former Member dies, becomes entitled to Medicare benefits (under Part A, Part B, or both), or gets divorced or legally separated, or if the Dependent child stops being eligible under the Plan as a Dependent child. This extension is only available if the second Qualifying Event would have caused the Spouse or Dependent child to lose coverage under the Plan had the first Qualifying Event not occurred.

Notice of a second Qualifying Event must be provided in writing to the Plan Administrator by the date that is 60 days after the latest of:

- The date on which the relevant Qualifying Event occurs;
- The date on which the Qualified Beneficiary loses (or would lose) coverage under the Plan as a result of the Qualifying Event; or
- The date on which the Qualifying Beneficiary is informed, through the furnishing of the Plan's Summary Plan Description of both the responsibility to provide the notice and the Plan's procedures for providing such notice to the Plan Administrator.

The notice must include the name of the Qualified Beneficiary experiencing the second Qualifying Event, a description of the event and the date of the event. If the extension of coverage is due to a divorce or legal separation, a copy of the decree of divorce or legal separation must be provided within 30 days after the deadline to provide the notice.

You must provide this notice to:

Plan Administrator
Public Education Health Trust
2550 Denali Street, Suite 1614
Anchorage, AK 99503
(907) 274-7526

Does COBRA Continuation Coverage ever end earlier than the maximum periods above?

COBRA Continuation Coverage also may end before the end of the maximum period on the earliest of the following dates:

- The date your Employer ceases to provide a group health plan to any Employee;
- The date on which coverage ceases by reason of the Qualified Beneficiary's failure to make timely payment of any required premium;
- The date that the Qualified Beneficiary first becomes, after the date of election, covered under any other group health plan (as an Employee or otherwise), or entitled to either Medicare Part A or Part B (whichever comes first), except as stated under COBRA's special bankruptcy rules;
- The first day of the month that begins more than 30 days after the date of the SSA's determination that the Qualified Beneficiary is no longer disabled, but in no event before the end of the maximum coverage period that applied without taking into consideration the disability extension; or
- On the same basis that the Plan can terminate for cause the coverage of a similarly situated non-COBRA participant.

How Do I Pay for COBRA Continuation Coverage

Once COBRA Continuation Coverage is elected, you must pay for the cost of the initial period of coverage within 45 days. Payments are due on the first day of each month to continue coverage for that month. If a payment is not received and/or post-marked within 30 days of the due date, COBRA Continuation Coverage will be canceled and will not be reinstated.

Are There Other Coverage Options Besides COBRA Continuation Coverage?

Yes. Instead of enrolling in COBRA Continuation Coverage, there may be other coverage options for you and your family through the Health Insurance Marketplace, Medicaid, or other group health plan coverage options (such as a spouse's plan) through what is called a "special enrollment period." Some of these options may cost less than COBRA Continuation Coverage. You can learn more about many of these options at www.healthcare.gov.

Additional Information

Additional information about the Plan and COBRA Continuation Coverage is available from the Plan Administrator and COBRA Administrator:

Plan Administrator
Public Education Health Trust
2550 Denali Street, Suite 1614
Anchorage, AK 99503
(907) 274-7526

COBRA Administrator
Employee Benefit Management Services, LLC.
P.O. Box 21367
Billings, MT 59104
406-245-3575 or 800-777-3575

For more information about your rights under the Public Health Services Act, COBRA, the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, and other laws affecting group health plans, contact the nearest Regional or District Office of the U.S. Department of Labor's Employee Benefits Security Administration (EBSA) in your area or visit www.dol.gov/agencies/ebsa. (Addresses and phone numbers of Regional and District EBSA Offices are available through EBSA's website.) For more information about the Marketplace, visit www.healthcare.gov.

Current Addresses

To protect your family's rights let the Plan Administrator (who is identified above) informed of any changes in the addresses of family members. You should also keep a copy, for your records, of any notices you send to the Plan Administrator.