

Information About Coverage for People Who Have Lost Their Job

Have you recently lost your health coverage due to a job loss? Virginia's Insurance Marketplace is here to help! Loss of health coverage due to a job loss is a qualifying life event and allows individuals to apply for coverage during a special enrollment period. We offer qualified health plans that cover the ten essential health benefits. People who qualify based on income can receive financial assistance to reduce the cost of monthly premiums, making health coverage more affordable. Here are some frequently asked questions about coverage based on job loss:

I have recently lost my job. My health coverage was provided through my employer. Can I get health coverage through Virginia's Insurance Marketplace? Individuals who have recently lost employer-sponsored health coverage qualify for a Special Enrollment Period (SEP) through Virginia's Insurance Marketplace.

What counts as a job loss? If you leave your job for any reason (even if you quit or get fired) and lose your job-based health insurance, you can enroll in a Marketplace plan. You'll qualify for a Special Enrollment Period to enroll to get coverage for the rest of the year.

When can I apply for health coverage through Virginia's Insurance Marketplace? If you know you are leaving your job, you may apply for coverage up to 60 days prior to the event. You will have 60 days after the job loss to submit an application and enroll in a qualified health plan.

What if I can't afford to pay for health coverage? When you apply for health coverage through Virginia's Insurance Marketplace, you may qualify for financial assistance to help lower the cost of monthly premiums and other healthcare expenses. Financial assistance is based on income and is awarded on a sliding scale basis. Nearly 9 out of 10 consumers qualify for financial savings on the Marketplace.

When will coverage become effective? Coverage will be effective on the first day of the month following the date you select a plan for your new coverage, unless you select a plan prior to the last day of employment at the job you are losing. In that case, coverage will be effective on the first day of the month following your last day of employment for the job you are losing.

Am I required to take Continuation of Health Coverage (COBRA) if my employer offers it?

According to the U.S. Department of Labor, you are not required to take COBRA if your employer offers it. You should review the cost of COBRA and determine what a qualified health plan through Virginia's Insurance Marketplace would cost. This will allow you to make an informed choice and choose the option that is best for you.

- **Some important facts about COBRA according to the U.S Department of Labor:**
 - If you choose to take COBRA, you may not be able switch to a Marketplace plan until your COBRA is exhausted.
 - Having an offer of COBRA does not make you ineligible for financial assistance through Virginia's Insurance Marketplace.
 - If your employer offers to cover a portion of your COBRA for a specified period of time after your job loss, you may qualify for a special enrollment period when the employer's assistance stops.
 - You must be given at least 60 days to enroll in COBRA. This will allow you time to compare other options such as Marketplace coverage so you can choose the option that best meets your needs.
 - For additional information on COBRA, visit [Continuation of Health Coverage \(COBRA\) | U.S. Department of Labor](#)

Still have questions? Call our Consumer Assistance Center at 888-687-1501 or visit our Marketplace Help Center at [Marketplace Help Center | Virginia's Insurance Marketplace](#) to connect with Customer Service or find a Marketplace Certified Agent or Assister to help you!