

STATE OF OHIO
DEPARTMENT OF INSURANCE
COMMUNICATIONS OFFICE

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Federal COBRA Subsidy Extended For Workers Who Lose Jobs

Ohio Department of Insurance can answer COBRA questions

COLUMBUS — President Barack Obama signed legislation on December 19 that allows certain laid-off workers to receive subsidized COBRA premiums for up to 15 months. Representatives at the Ohio Department of Insurance are available to assist Ohioans who have lost their jobs with questions about how to continue their health coverage and receive a 65 percent federal subsidy, said Ohio Department of Insurance Director Mary Jo Hudson.

“I support any effort to improve access to coverage for Ohioans,” Director Hudson said. “I encourage any individuals or employers who have questions about the continuation of health coverage and the COBRA subsidy to contact the Ohio Department of Insurance.”

President Obama signed the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, commonly called the Stimulus Plan, in February 2009 that included an initial COBRA subsidy of nine months for those who qualify and lost employment between September 1, 2008 and December 31, 2009. The recent legislation extends the COBRA premium subsidy to those who qualify and lost employment through February 28, 2010. In addition, individuals will have an opportunity to continue their subsidized COBRA coverage for an additional six months for a total of 15 months.

The COBRA premium subsidy is available to people with COBRA under federal law, and also to people who have worked for small employers and have elected continuation coverage under state law, often called “mini COBRA.”

Ohioans should work with their employer to enroll in or to continue the COBRA subsidy.

Those with questions about COBRA and the premium subsidy can call the Department’s consumer hotline at 1-800-686-1526. Free information for consumers and businesses can also be obtained at www.insurance.ohio.gov in the COBRA Toolkit.

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