

Initial Enrollment Notices

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- 2. Women's Health and Cancer Rights Act Annual Notice***
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Women's Health and Cancer Rights Act Annual Notice

On October 21, 1998 the federal government passed the Women's Health and Cancer Rights Act of 1998. As part of our plan's compliance with this Act, we are required to provide you with this annual notice outlining the coverage that this law requires our plan to provide.

Our group health plan has always provided coverage for medically-necessary mastectomies. This coverage includes procedures to reconstruct the breast, on which the mastectomy was performed, as well as the cost of necessary prostheses (implants, special bras, etc.) and treatment of any physical complications resulting from any stage of the mastectomy. However, as a result of this federal law, the plan now provides coverage for surgery and reconstruction of the other breast to achieve a symmetrical appearance and any complications that could result from that surgery.

The following benefits must be provided if benefits are provided for a mastectomy:

1. Coverage for reconstruction of the breast on which the mastectomy is performed.
2. Coverage for surgery and reconstruction of the other breast to produce a symmetrical appearance with the breast on which the mastectomy is performed.
3. Coverage for prostheses and physical complications resulting from any stage of the mastectomy, including lymph edemas.

These benefits are subject to the same deductible, copayments and coinsurance that apply to mastectomy benefits under the plan.

General Notice of Cobra Continuation Coverage Rights

Upon enrollment in our medical, dental and/or life coverage, we are required to send you (and your family) the **General Notice of COBRA Continuation Coverage Rights**. This notice explains continuation of your coverage and when it may become available to you and/or your family members under the federal COBRA law. It also provides you important information regarding your responsibilities if you were to experience a “qualifying event”. For instance, if your dependent child loses eligibility on the New Prague Area Schools ISD721 plan, you must notify Human Resources in writing within 60 days. If you fail to notify your employer, your dependent would lose their right to COBRA continuation. This document is important to read so you are aware of New Prague Area Schools ISD721 and your rights and responsibilities.

General Notice of Cobra Continuation Coverage Rights Notice of COBRA Continuation Coverage Rights (For New Prague Area Schools ISD721 Health Plan)

You’re getting this notice because you recently gained coverage under a group health plan (the Plan). This notice has important information about your right to COBRA continuation coverage, which is a temporary extension of coverage under the Plan. This notice explains COBRA continuation coverage, when it may become available to you and your family, and what you need to do to protect your right to get it. When you become eligible for COBRA, you may also become eligible for other coverage options that may cost less than COBRA continuation coverage.

The right to COBRA continuation coverage was created by a federal law, the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1985 (COBRA). COBRA continuation coverage can become available to you and other members of your family when group health coverage would otherwise end. For more information about your rights and obligations under the Plan and under federal law, you should review the Plan’s Summary Plan Description or contact the Plan Administrator.

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 it would otherwise end because of a life event. This is also called a “qualifying event.” Specific qualifying events are listed later in this notice. 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 [*choose and enter appropriate information*: must pay or aren’t required to pay] for COBRA continuation coverage.

If you’re an employee, you’ll become a qualified beneficiary if you lose your coverage under the Plan because 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’re the spouse of an employee, you’ll become a qualified beneficiary if you lose your coverage under the Plan because 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.

Your dependent children will become qualified beneficiaries if they lose coverage under the Plan because of the following qualifying events:

- The parent-employee dies;
- The parent-employee’s hours of employment are reduced;
- The parent-employee’s employment ends for any reason other than his or her gross misconduct;
- The parent-employee becomes entitled to Medicare benefits (Part A, Part B, or both);
- The parents become divorced or legally separated; or
- The child stops being eligible for coverage under the Plan as a “dependent child.”

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. The employer must notify the Plan Administrator of the following qualifying events:

- The end of employment or reduction of hours of employment;
- Death of the employee; or
- The employee's becoming entitled to Medicare benefits (under Part A, Part B, or both).

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 to: Human Resources.

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 employees may elect COBRA continuation coverage on behalf of their spouses, and parents may elect COBRA continuation coverage on behalf of their children.

COBRA continuation coverage is a temporary continuation of coverage that generally lasts for 18 months due to 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 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:

Disability extension of 18-month period of COBRA continuation coverage

If you or anyone in your family covered under the Plan is determined by Social Security to be disabled and you notify the Plan Administrator in a timely fashion, you and your entire family may be entitled to get up to an additional 11 months of COBRA continuation coverage, for a 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. *[Add description of any additional Plan procedures for this notice, including a description of any required information or documentation, the name of the appropriate party to whom notice must be sent, and the time period for giving notice.]*

Second qualifying event extension of 18-month period of continuation coverage

If your family experiences another qualifying event during the 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 is properly notified about the second qualifying event. This extension may be available to the spouse and any dependent children getting COBRA continuation coverage if the employee or former employee dies; becomes entitled to Medicare benefits (under Part A, Part B, or both); 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.

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.

If you have questions

Questions concerning your Plan or your COBRA continuation coverage rights should be addressed to the contact or contacts identified below. For more information about your rights under the Employee Retirement Income Security Act (ERISA), including 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/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.

Keep your Plan informed of address changes

To protect your family's rights, let the Plan Administrator know about 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.

You Must Give Notice of Some Qualifying Events

For the 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 31 days or less after the qualifying event occurs. You must provide this notice to: Melissa Kartak, mekartak@isd721.org, (952) 758-1752 or Cassie Olson, colson@isd721.org, (952) 758-1704

Plan contact information

To obtain more information, contact Melissa Kartak, mekartak@isd721.org, (952) 758-1752 or Cassie Olson, colson@isd721.org, (952) 758-1704

Newborn's and Mother's Health Protection Act

The Newborns' and Mothers' Health Protection Act (Newborns' Act) includes important protections for mothers and their newborn children with regard to the length of the hospital stay following childbirth. The Newborns' Act requires that group health plans that offer maternity coverage pay for at least a 48-hour hospital stay following childbirth (96-hour stay in the case of Cesarean section).
