

Health Insurance Exchanges/ Marketplaces



- ❖ Under the Affordable Care Act (ACA), consumers in all states will be able to choose new affordable health insurance options through new health insurance marketplaces. They will allow individuals and small businesses to compare prices and benefits of qualified health plans and purchase health insurance.
- ❖ These marketplaces (or 'exchanges') will operate similar to online portals like Travelocity.com and Expedia.com, and will guarantee that individuals who make more than the federal poverty level can get insurance, regardless of preexisting conditions, with premium assistance and cost-sharing subsidies to offset much or most of the cost. This will help individuals who have been unable to obtain coverage through their employers or who do not qualify for Medicare or Medicaid, obtain affordable coverage with essential benefits.
- ❖ Subsidies in the form of tax credits will be available to over 3.5 million individuals and their families to purchase insurance through the exchanges if they have incomes between 100% and 400% of the federal poverty level. Using the 2013 figure below, this would mean that: individuals with incomes between \$11,490.00 and \$45,960.00 and families of four with incomes between \$23,550.00 and \$94,200.00 are eligible for tax credits to cover their health insurance.

No matter where you live, each state's marketplace will allow you to fill out a single, fairly simple application, which will then show you some options to get health care coverage for you and your family. You will find a selection of private insurance plans, and information about not only the cost of those plans, but also the out-of-pocket costs you can expect for each plan.

The marketplace will also tell you whether you qualify for free or low-cost coverage through Medicaid or through the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP). Like many modern "marketplaces," the new exchanges will allow you to do your health care coverage shopping not only in person, but by telephone, and online, as well.

2013 Federal Poverty Guidelines						
Family Size	100%	133%	150%	200%	300%	400%
1	\$11,490	\$15,282	\$17,235	\$22,980	\$34,470	\$45,960
2	\$15,510	\$20,628	\$23,265	\$31,020	\$46,530	\$62,040
3	\$19,530	\$25,975	\$29,295	\$39,060	\$58,590	\$78,120
4	\$23,550	\$31,322	\$35,325	\$47,100	\$70,650	\$94,200

Resources to help Consumers Navigate the Health Insurance World

Consumers in every marketplace will be able to get help to apply for and choose new insurance options. Federal rules require that each marketplace/exchange must provide consumer assistance, outreach, and education activities, to educate consumers about health insurance programs and encourage participation. This assistance will be provided in a number of different ways:

- **Navigators:** Navigators have a vital role in helping consumers apply for and enroll in coverage through the Marketplaces. They also provide outreach and education to raise awareness about the Marketplace. Navigators are funded through state and federal grant programs, and undergo training to ensure they have expertise in the needs of underserved and vulnerable populations (e.g. racial and ethnic minorities, rural populations, immigrants).
- **Certified Application Counselors:** The Federally-facilitated Marketplace will designate organizations to certify application counselors who perform many of the same functions as Navigators—including educating consumers and helping them complete an application for coverage. These groups might include community health centers or other health care providers, hospitals, or social service agencies.
- **Agents and Brokers:** To the extent permitted by a state and if all Marketplace requirements are met, licensed health insurance agents and brokers may enroll individuals, small employers, and employees in coverage through the Marketplace.

Open Enrollment in the Health Insurance Marketplace/ Exchange starts this Fall – October 1, 2013 with coverage starting as soon as January 1, 2014.

Individuals and small businesses may visit www.healthCare.gov right now to find the information they need to prepare for open enrollment. In addition to English and Spanish, the call center provides assistance in more than 150 languages through an interpretation and translation service. Customer service representatives are available for assistance via a toll-free number at 1-800-318-2596 and hearing impaired callers using TTY/TDD technology can dial 1-855-889-4325 for assistance. You may find out how to contact your state's marketplace/ exchange at that website. You may also learn more about your marketplace/ exchange by clicking on your state on the map at <http://kff.org/state-health-exchange-profiles/>. For additional information about how the health care law is impacting your state, visit: <http://www.hhs.gov/healthcare/facts/bystate/statebystate.html>.

