



## COBRA Subsidy Confusion: eHealthInsurance Answers Questions and Releases COBRA Subsidy Timeline Chart

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MOUNTAIN VIEW, CA, Jun 28, 2010 (MARKETWIRE via COMTEX) --

Today eHealthInsurance (NASDAQ: EHTH), the leading online source of individual and family health insurance, released a series of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) to address consumer confusion surrounding the expiration and possible extension of the federal COBRA subsidy. The company also released a printable chart describing COBRA subsidy timelines and how different consumers are affected by the subsidy.

The federal COBRA subsidy was designed to provide workers who were laid off between September 1, 2008 and May 31, 2010 with up to 15 months of premium assistance. The subsidy covers 65% of the monthly health insurance premiums which qualifying recipients are required to pay in order to maintain their COBRA coverage. The eligibility period for COBRA-eligible laid off workers to receive the federal subsidy expired June 1, 2010. On the same date, many of the subsidy's first recipients officially exhausted their 15 months of assistance.

Chart: COBRA Subsidy Timeline

A printable chart illustrating COBRA subsidy timelines and different consumer scenarios can be downloaded from the eHealthInsurance Media Center through the following link:

COBRA Subsidy Timelines Chart

FAQs: COBRA Subsidy Timeline

Question #1: "I've been receiving the COBRA subsidy for about six months. Am I going to lose my subsidy now that it has expired?"

Answer: No. As long you continue to qualify for the COBRA subsidy, you can still receive it for a total of 15 months. It is only the eligibility period for the COBRA subsidy that has expired -- that is, no new COBRA enrollees will benefit from the subsidy if they are laid off after June 1, 2010, unless the law is changed.

Question #2: "I just used up the last of my COBRA subsidy. Does that mean that I no longer qualify for COBRA coverage?"

Answer: Not necessarily. While the COBRA subsidy was intended to provide 15 months of assistance, COBRA itself generally lasts 18 months (longer in some states). If you want to continue your COBRA coverage after the subsidy, however, you're going to have to pay your full monthly premiums out of your own pocket. Since the subsidy covered 65% of those premiums, you may be looking at a steep increase in your COBRA costs.

If you have a pre-existing medical condition that might make it difficult for you to qualify for coverage on your own, COBRA may still be your best bet. However, if you're relatively healthy, you may want to consider purchasing your own individual or family health insurance plan. Work with a licensed agent like eHealthInsurance to see what's available in your area and find the best match for your needs and budget.

Question #3: "I was just laid off on June 10, 2010. Do I qualify for the COBRA subsidy?"

Answer: Unfortunately, no. While you may still qualify for COBRA, you do not qualify for the COBRA subsidy. Federal law does not currently provide any subsidy assistance for persons laid off June 1, 2010 or later. You may choose to enroll in COBRA without benefit of the subsidy or explore other health insurance alternatives. See the "Additional Resources" section below to learn more about your options.

Question #4: "Will the COBRA subsidy be extended again?"

Answer: It's unclear. Congress has discussed legislation that would extend the eligibility period so that persons laid off after June 1, 2010 can also receive the subsidy. However, the changes discussed would not extend the 15 month limit for subsidy assistance, only the eligibility period. Such an extension may not come to a final vote or be signed into law.

Additional Resources:

- To understand what health reform means for you after you've lost your COBRA subsidy, watch this video produced by eHealthInsurance.
- Do your homework: Research individual and family health insurance policies at eHealthInsurance.com.
- Understand all of your options -- private or public. For quick reference, use eHealthInsurance's new Your Health Insurance Options widget. Or, watch the recent 'Coping without COBRA' webinar, featuring experts from eHealthInsurance, the Foundation for Health Coverage Education and Healthcare Blue Book.
- Know your timeline: Calculate the amount of time you have remaining on the COBRA subsidy using the eHealthInsurance COBRA Subsidy Calendar widget.
- Talk to a licensed agent for personal help: If you have questions, call a licensed agent at 1-800-977-8860. eHealthInsurance has agents

that are licensed in all 50 states, plus DC.

- Don't let pre-existing conditions scare you: If you have pre-existing medical conditions, talk to an agent first to see if you might qualify with certain carriers, or to learn more about HIPAA plans. Then contact the Foundation for Health Coverage Education ([www.coverageforall.org/](http://www.coverageforall.org/)) to review public options available in your area.
- Get informed: Whether you are insured or uninsured, improve your understanding of medical costs using the helpful research and comparison tools at Healthcare Blue Book ([www.healthcarebluebook.com/](http://www.healthcarebluebook.com/)).

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