

# Required Health Plan Notices

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## Medicare Part D Creditable Coverage Notice

### **Important Notice from McLennan County about Your Prescription Drug Coverage and Medicare**

Please read this notice carefully and keep it where you can find it. This notice has information about your current prescription drug coverage with McLennan County and about your options under Medicare's prescription drug coverage. This information can help you decide whether or not you want to join a Medicare drug plan. If you are considering joining, you should compare your current coverage, including which drugs are covered at what cost, with the coverage and costs of the plans offering Medicare prescription drug coverage in your area. Information about where you can get help to make decisions about your prescription drug coverage is at the end of this notice.

There are two important things you need to know about your current coverage and Medicare's prescription drug coverage:

1. Medicare prescription drug coverage became available in 2006 to everyone with Medicare. You can get this coverage if you join a Medicare Prescription Drug Plan or join a Medicare Advantage Plan (like an HMO or PPO) that offers prescription drug coverage. All Medicare drug plans provide at least a standard level of coverage set by Medicare. Some plans may also offer more coverage for a higher monthly premium.

2. McLennan County has determined that the prescription drug coverage offered by the McLennan County Health Plan is, on average for all plan participants, expected to pay out as much as standard Medicare prescription drug coverage pays and is therefore considered Creditable Coverage. Because your existing coverage is Creditable Coverage, you can keep this coverage and not pay a higher premium (a penalty) if you later decide to join a Medicare drug plan.

### ***When Can You Join A Medicare Drug Plan?***

You can join a Medicare drug plan when you first become eligible for Medicare and each year from October 15th to December 7th.

However, if you lose your current creditable prescription drug coverage, through no fault of your own, you will also be eligible for a two (2) month Special Enrollment Period (SEP) to join a Medicare drug plan.

### ***What Happens To Your Current Coverage If You Decide to Join A Medicare Drug Plan?***

If you decide to join a Medicare drug plan, your current McLennan County coverage will not be affected if you are an active employee.

If you do decide to join a Medicare drug plan and drop your current McLennan County coverage, be aware that you and your dependents will be able to get this coverage back if you are an active employee.

### ***When Will You Pay A Higher Premium (Penalty) To Join A Medicare Drug Plan?***

You should also know that if you drop or lose your current coverage with McLennan County and don't join a Medicare drug plan within 63 continuous days after your current coverage ends, you may pay a higher premium (a penalty) to join a Medicare drug plan later.

If you go 63 continuous days or longer without creditable prescription drug coverage, your monthly premium may go up by at least 1% of the Medicare base beneficiary premium per month for every month that you did not have that coverage. For example, if you go nineteen months without creditable coverage, your premium may consistently be at least 19% higher than the Medicare base beneficiary premium. You may have to pay this higher premium (a penalty) as long as you have Medicare prescription drug coverage. In addition, you may have to wait until the following October to join.

### **For More Information about This Notice Or Your Current Prescription Drug Coverage...**

Contact the person listed below for further information. **NOTE:** You'll get this notice each year. You will also get it before the next period you can join a Medicare drug plan, and if this coverage McLennan County changes. You also may request a copy of this notice at any time.

### **For More Information about Your Options Under Medicare Prescription Drug Coverage...**

More detailed information about Medicare plans that offer prescription drug coverage is in the "Medicare & You" handbook. You'll get a copy of the handbook in the mail every year from Medicare. You may also be contacted directly by Medicare drug plans.

For more information about Medicare prescription drug coverage:

Visit [www.medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov).

Call your State Health Insurance Assistance Program or for personalized help call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227). TTY users should call 1-877-486-2048.

If you have limited income and resources, extra help paying for Medicare prescription drug coverage is available. For information about this extra help, visit Social Security on the web at [www.socialsecurity.gov](http://www.socialsecurity.gov) or call them at 1-800-772-1213 (TTY 1-800-325-0778).

**Remember: Keep this Creditable Coverage notice. If you decide to join one of the Medicare drug plans, you may be required to provide a copy of this notice when you join to show whether or not you have maintained creditable coverage and, therefore, whether or not you are required to pay a higher premium (a penalty).**

## CHIPRA/CHIP

If you or your children are eligible for Medicaid or CHIP and you're eligible for health coverage from your employer, your state may have a premium assistance program that can help pay for coverage, using funds from their Medicaid or CHIP programs. If you or your children aren't eligible for Medicaid or CHIP, you won't be eligible for these premium assistance programs but you may be able to buy individual insurance coverage through the Health Insurance Marketplace. For more information, visit [www.healthcare.gov](http://www.healthcare.gov).

If you or your dependents are already enrolled in Medicaid or CHIP and you live in a State listed below, contact your State Medicaid or CHIP office to find out if premium assistance is available.

If you or your dependents are NOT currently enrolled in Medicaid or CHIP, and you think you or any of your dependents might be eligible for either of these programs, contact your State Medicaid or CHIP office or dial **1-877- KIDS NOW** or [www.insurekidsnow.gov](http://www.insurekidsnow.gov) to find out how to apply. If you qualify, ask your state if it has a program that might help you pay the premiums for an employer-sponsored plan.

If you or your dependents are eligible for premium assistance under Medicaid or CHIP, as well as eligible under your employer plan, your employer must allow you to enroll in your employer plan if you aren't already enrolled. This is called a "special enrollment" opportunity, and **you must request coverage within 60 days of being determined eligible for premium assistance**. If you have questions about enrolling in your employer plan, contact the Department of Labor at

[www.askebsa.dol.gov](http://www.askebsa.dol.gov) or call **1-866-444-EBSA (3272)**.

**If you live in one of the following states, you may be eligible for assistance paying your employer health plan premiums. The following list of states is current as of July 31, 2020. Contact your State for more information on eligibility –**

ALABAMA – Medicaid	CALIFORNIA – Medicaid
Website: <a href="http://myalhipp.com/">http://myalhipp.com/</a> Phone: 1-855-692-5447	Website: <a href="https://www.dhcs.ca.gov/services/Pages/TPLRD_CAUCont.aspx">https://www.dhcs.ca.gov/services/Pages/TPLRD_CAUCont.aspx</a> Phone: 916-440-5676
ALASKA – Medicaid	COLORADO – Health First Colorado (Colorado's Medicaid Program) & Child Health Plan Plus (CHP+)
The AK Health Insurance Premium Payment Program Website: <a href="http://myakhipp.com/">http://myakhipp.com/</a> Phone: 1-866-251-4861 Email: <a href="mailto:CustomerService@MyAKHIPP.com">CustomerService@MyAKHIPP.com</a> Medicaid Eligibility: <a href="http://dhss.alaska.gov/dpa/Pages/medicaid/default.aspx">http://dhss.alaska.gov/dpa/Pages/medicaid/default.aspx</a>	Health First Colorado Website: <a href="https://www.healthfirstcolorado.com/">https://www.healthfirstcolorado.com/</a> Health First Colorado Member Contact Center: 1-800-221-3943/ State Relay 711 CHP+: <a href="https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/hcpf/child-health-plan-plus">https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/hcpf/child-health-plan-plus</a>

	<p>CHP+ Customer Service: 1-800-359-1991/ State Relay 711</p> <p>Health Insurance Buy-In Program (HIBI):</p> <p><a href="https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/hcpf/health-insurance-buy-program">https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/hcpf/health-insurance-buy-program</a></p> <p>HIBI Customer Service: 1-855-692-6442</p>
<b>ARKANSAS – Medicaid</b>	<b>FLORIDA – Medicaid</b>
<p>Website: <a href="http://myarhipp.com/">http://myarhipp.com/</a></p> <p>Phone: 1-855-MyARHIPP (855-692-7447)</p>	<p>Website:</p> <p><a href="https://www.flmedicaidprecovery.com/flmedicaidprecovery.com/hipp/index.html">https://www.flmedicaidprecovery.com/flmedicaidprecovery.com/hipp/index.html</a></p> <p>Phone: 1-877-357-3268</p>
<b>GEORGIA – Medicaid</b>	<b>MASSACHUSETTS – Medicaid and CHIP</b>
<p>Website: <a href="https://medicaid.georgia.gov/health-insurance-premium-payment-program-hipp">https://medicaid.georgia.gov/health-insurance-premium-payment-program-hipp</a></p> <p>Phone: 678-564-1162 ext 2131</p>	<p>Website:</p> <p><a href="http://www.mass.gov/eohhs/gov/departments/masshealth/">http://www.mass.gov/eohhs/gov/departments/masshealth/</a></p> <p>Phone: 1-800-862-4840</p>
<b>INDIANA – Medicaid</b>	<b>MINNESOTA – Medicaid</b>
<p>Healthy Indiana Plan for low-income adults 19-64</p> <p>Website: <a href="http://www.in.gov/fssa/hip/">http://www.in.gov/fssa/hip/</a></p> <p>Phone: 1-877-438-4479</p>	<p>Website:</p> <p><a href="https://mn.gov/dhs/people-we-serve/children-and-families/health-care/health-care-programs/programs-and-services/other-insurance.jsp">https://mn.gov/dhs/people-we-serve/children-and-families/health-care/health-care-programs/programs-and-services/other-insurance.jsp</a></p> <p>Phone: 1-800-657-3739</p>
<p>All other Medicaid</p> <p>Website: <a href="https://www.in.gov/medicaid/">https://www.in.gov/medicaid/</a></p> <p>Phone 1-800-457-4584</p>	
<b>IOWA – Medicaid and CHIP (Hawki)</b>	<b>MISSOURI – Medicaid</b>
<p>Medicaid Website:</p> <p><a href="https://dhs.iowa.gov/ime/members">https://dhs.iowa.gov/ime/members</a></p>	<p>Website:</p> <p><a href="http://www.dss.mo.gov/mhd/participants/pages/hipp.htm">http://www.dss.mo.gov/mhd/participants/pages/hipp.htm</a></p>

Medicaid Phone: 1-800-338-8366	Phone: 573-751-2005
Hawki Website:	
<a href="http://dhs.iowa.gov/Hawki">http://dhs.iowa.gov/Hawki</a>	
Hawki Phone: 1-800-257-8563	
<b>KANSAS – Medicaid</b>	<b>MONTANA – Medicaid</b>
Website: <a href="http://www.kdheks.gov/hcf/default.htm">http://www.kdheks.gov/hcf/default.htm</a> Phone: 1-800-792-4884	Website: <a href="http://dphhs.mt.gov/MontanaHealthcarePrograms/HIPP">http://dphhs.mt.gov/MontanaHealthcarePrograms/HIPP</a> Phone: 1-800-694-3084
<b>KENTUCKY – Medicaid</b>	<b>NEBRASKA – Medicaid</b>
Kentucky Integrated Health Insurance Premium Payment Program (KI-HIPP) Website: <a href="https://chfs.ky.gov/agencies/dms/member/Pages/kihipp.aspx">https://chfs.ky.gov/agencies/dms/member/Pages/kihipp.aspx</a> Phone: 1-855-459-6328 Email: <a href="mailto:KIHIPPPROGRAM@ky.gov">KIHIPPPROGRAM@ky.gov</a>	Website: <a href="http://www.ACCESSNebraska.ne.gov">http://www.ACCESSNebraska.ne.gov</a> Phone: 1-855-632-7633 Lincoln: 402-473-7000 Omaha: 402-595-1178
KCHIP Website: <a href="https://kidshealth.ky.gov/Pages/index.aspx">https://kidshealth.ky.gov/Pages/index.aspx</a> Phone: 1-877-524-4718	
Kentucky Medicaid Website: <a href="https://chfs.ky.gov">https://chfs.ky.gov</a>	
<b>LOUISIANA – Medicaid</b>	<b>NEVADA – Medicaid</b>
Website: <a href="http://www.medicaid.la.gov">www.medicaid.la.gov</a> or <a href="http://www.ldh.la.gov/lahipp">www.ldh.la.gov/lahipp</a> Phone: 1-888-342-6207 (Medicaid hotline) or 1-855-618-5488 (LaHIPP)	Medicaid Website: <a href="http://dhcfp.nv.gov">http://dhcfp.nv.gov</a> Medicaid Phone: 1-800-992-0900
<b>MAINE – Medicaid</b>	<b>NEW HAMPSHIRE – Medicaid</b>
Enrollment Website: <a href="https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/ofi/applications-forms">https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/ofi/applications-forms</a> Phone: 1-800-442-6003 TTY: Maine relay 711	Website: <a href="https://www.dhhs.nh.gov/oii/hipp.htm">https://www.dhhs.nh.gov/oii/hipp.htm</a> Phone: 603-271-5218 Toll free number for the HIPP program: 1-800-852-3345, ext 5218
Private Health Insurance Premium Webpage: <a href="https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/ofi/applications-forms">https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/ofi/applications-forms</a> Phone: 1-800-977-6740. TTY: Maine relay 711	
<b>NEW JERSEY – Medicaid and CHIP</b>	<b>SOUTH DAKOTA - Medicaid</b>

<p>Medicaid Website:  <a href="http://www.state.nj.us/humanservices/dmahs/clients/medicaid/">http://www.state.nj.us/humanservices/dmahs/clients/medicaid/</a></p> <p>Medicaid Phone: 609-631-2392</p> <p>CHIP Website: <a href="http://www.njfamilycare.org/index.html">http://www.njfamilycare.org/index.html</a>  CHIP Phone: 1-800-701-0710</p>	<p>Website: <a href="http://dss.sd.gov">http://dss.sd.gov</a> Phone: 1-888-828-0059</p>
NEW YORK – Medicaid	TEXAS – Medicaid
<p>Website:  <a href="https://www.health.ny.gov/health_care/medicaid/">https://www.health.ny.gov/health_care/medicaid/</a>  Phone: 1-800-541-2831</p>	<p>Website: <a href="http://gethipptexas.com/">http://gethipptexas.com/</a> Phone: 1-800-440-0493</p>
NORTH CAROLINA – Medicaid	UTAH – Medicaid and CHIP
<p>Website: <a href="https://medicaid.ncdhhs.gov/">https://medicaid.ncdhhs.gov/</a> Phone: 919-855-4100</p>	<p>Medicaid Website: <a href="https://medicaid.utah.gov/">https://medicaid.utah.gov/</a> CHIP Website: <a href="http://health.utah.gov/chip">http://health.utah.gov/chip</a>  Phone: 1-877-543-7669</p>
NORTH DAKOTA – Medicaid	VERMONT– Medicaid
<p>Website:  <a href="http://www.nd.gov/dhs/services/medicalserv/medicaid/">http://www.nd.gov/dhs/services/medicalserv/medicaid/</a>  Phone: 1-844-854-4825</p>	<p>Website: <a href="http://www.greenmountaincare.org/">http://www.greenmountaincare.org/</a> Phone: 1-800-250-8427</p>
OKLAHOMA – Medicaid and CHIP	VIRGINIA – Medicaid and CHIP
<p>Website: <a href="http://www.insureoklahoma.org">http://www.insureoklahoma.org</a> Phone: 1-888-365-3742</p>	<p>Website: <a href="https://www.coverva.org/hipp/">https://www.coverva.org/hipp/</a> Medicaid Phone: 1-800-432-5924  CHIP Phone: 1-855-242-8282</p>
OREGON – Medicaid	WASHINGTON – Medicaid
<p>Website: <a href="http://healthcare.oregon.gov/Pages/index.aspx">http://healthcare.oregon.gov/Pages/index.aspx</a>  <a href="http://www.oregonhealthcare.gov/index-es.html">http://www.oregonhealthcare.gov/index-es.html</a> Phone: 1-800-699-9075</p>	<p>Website: <a href="https://www.hca.wa.gov/">https://www.hca.wa.gov/</a> Phone: 1-800-562-3022</p>
PENNSYLVANIA – Medicaid	WEST VIRGINIA – Medicaid
<p>Website:  <a href="https://www.dhs.pa.gov/providers/Providers/Pages/Medical/HIPP-Program.aspx">https://www.dhs.pa.gov/providers/Providers/Pages/Medical/HIPP-Program.aspx</a>  Phone: 1-800-692-7462</p>	<p>Website: <a href="http://mywvhipp.com/">http://mywvhipp.com/</a>  Toll-free phone: 1-855-MyWVHIPP (1-855-699-8447)</p>
RHODE ISLAND – Medicaid and CHIP	WISCONSIN–Medicaid and CHIP

Website: <a href="http://www.eohhs.ri.gov/">http://www.eohhs.ri.gov/</a> Phone: 1-855-697-4347, or 401-462-0311 (Direct RIt e Share Line)	Website: <a href="https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/badgercareplus/p-10095.htm">https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/badgercareplus/p-10095.htm</a> Phone: 1-800-362-3002
<b>SOUTH CAROLINA – Medicaid</b>	<b>WYOMING – Medicaid</b>
Website: <a href="https://www.scdhhs.gov">https://www.scdhhs.gov</a> Phone: 1-888-549-0820	Website: <a href="https://health.wyo.gov/healthcarefin/medicaid/programs-and-eligibility/">https://health.wyo.gov/healthcarefin/medicaid/programs-and-eligibility/</a> Phone: 1-800-251-1269

To see if any other states have added a premium assistance program since July 31, 2020, or for more information on special enrollment rights, contact either:

U.S. Department of Labor U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Employee Benefits Security Administration Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services [www.dol.gov/agencies/ebsa](http://www.dol.gov/agencies/ebsa) [www.cms.hhs.gov](http://www.cms.hhs.gov)

1-866-444-EBSA (3272) 1-877-267-2323, Menu Option 4, Ext. 61565

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement**

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (Pub. L. 104-13) (PRA), no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless such collection displays a valid Office of Management and Budget (OMB) control number. The Department notes that a Federal agency cannot conduct or sponsor a collection of information unless it is approved by OMB under the PRA, and displays a currently valid OMB control number, and the public is not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. See 44 U.S.C. 3507. Also, notwithstanding any other provisions of law, no person shall be subject to penalty for failing to comply with a collection of information if the collection of information does not display a currently valid OMB control number. See 44 U.S.C. 3512.

The public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average approximately seven minutes per respondent. Interested parties are encouraged to send comments regarding the burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to the U.S. Department of Labor, Employee Benefits Security Administration, Office of Policy and Research, Attention: PRA Clearance Officer, 200 Constitution Avenue, N.W., Room N-5718, Washington, DC 20210 or email [ebsa.opr@dol.gov](mailto:ebsa.opr@dol.gov) and reference the OMB Control Number 1210-0137.

OMB Control Number 1210-0137 (expires 1/31/2023)

# Notice of Privacy Practices

## HIPAA Notice of Privacy Practices

HIPAA privacy rules require that health plans, or their insurers, distribute a notice to participants explaining their privacy rights as group health plan participants at least every three years. HIPAA also requires that plans give the notice to new participants and to redistribute the notice if it is revised. Sending the following notice annually fulfills the requirement and might be easier than remembering to send it every three years.

*Note:* In 2013, HIPAA protections were expanded in important ways, including significant changes to the notice used to explain HIPAA rules governing the group health plan

**THIS NOTICE DESCRIBES HOW HEALTH INFORMATION ABOUT YOU MAY BE USED AND DISCLOSED AND HOW YOU CAN GET ACCESS TO THIS INFORMATION. PLEASE REVIEW IT CAREFULLY.**

### McLennan County's Health Plan (The Plan)

January 1, 2023

Under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 ("HIPAA"), you have certain rights with respect to your Protected Health Information ("PHI"), including the right to know how your PHI may be used by a group health plan.

This Notice of Privacy Practices ("Notice") covers the following group health plans.

1. McLennan County's Medical and Pharmacy Plans
2. McLennan County's Flexible Spending Account Plan
3. McLennan County's Dental Plan
4. McLennan County's Vision Plan

The Plan is required by law to maintain the privacy of your PHI and to provide this Notice to you pursuant to HIPAA. This Notice describes how your PHI may be used or disclosed to carry out treatment, payment, health care operations, or for any other purposes that are permitted or required by law. This Notice also provides you with the following important information:

- Your privacy rights with respect to your PHI;
- The Plan's duties with respect to your PHI;
- Your right to file a complaint with the Plan's Privacy Officer and/or to the Secretary of the Office of Civil Rights of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; and
- The person or office to contact for further information about the Plan's privacy practices.

PHI is health information (including genetic information) in any form (oral, written, electronic) that:

- Is created or received by or on behalf of the Plan;
- Relates to your past, present or future physical or mental condition, or the provision of health care services to you, or the payment for those health care services; and
- Identifies you or from which there is a reasonable basis to believe the information can be used to identify you.

Health information your employer receives during the course of performing non-Plan functions is not PHI. For example, health information you submit to your employer to document a leave of absence under the Family and Medical Leave Act is not PHI.

### Section 1. Uses and Disclosures of Your PHI

Under HIPAA, the Plan may use or disclose your PHI under certain circumstances without your consent, authorization or opportunity to agree or object. Such uses and disclosures fall within the categories described below. Note that not every permissible use or disclosure in a category is listed; however, all the ways in which the Plan is permitted to use or disclose PHI will fall within one of the categories.



## General Uses and Disclosures

*Treatment.* The Plan may use and/or disclose your PHI to help you obtain treatment and/or services from providers. Treatment includes the provision, coordination or management of health care and related services. It also includes, but is not limited to, consultations and referrals between one or more of your providers. For example, the Plan may disclose to a treating orthodontist the name of your treating dentist so that the orthodontist may ask for your dental x-rays from the treating dentist. The Plan may also disclose information about your prior prescriptions to a pharmacist to determine if any medicines contraindicate a pending prescription.

*Payment.* The Plan may use and/or disclose your PHI in order to determine your eligibility for benefits, to facilitate payment of your health claims and to determine benefit responsibility. Payment includes, but is not limited to billing, claims management, subrogation, plan reimbursement, reviews for medical necessity and appropriateness of care and utilization review and pre-authorizations. For example, the Plan may tell a doctor whether you are eligible for coverage or what percentage of the bill will be paid by the Plan. The Plan may also disclose your PHI to another entity to assist with the adjudication or subrogation of health claims or to another health plan to coordinate payment of benefits.

*Health Care Operations.* The Plan may use and/or disclose your PHI for other Plan operations. These uses and disclosures are necessary to run the Plan and include, but are not limited to, conducting quality assessment and improvement activities, reviewing competence or qualifications of health care professionals, underwriting, premium and other activities relating to Plan coverage. It also includes cost management, conducting or arranging for medical review, legal services and auditing functions including fraud and abuse compliance programs, business planning and development, business management and general Plan administrative activities. For example, the Plan may use your PHI in connection with submitting claims for stop-loss coverage. The Plan may also use your PHI to refer you to a disease management program, project future costs or audit the accuracy of its claims processing functions. However, the Plan is prohibited from using or disclosing PHI that is an individual's genetic information for underwriting purposes.

*Business Associates.* The Plan may contract with individuals or entities known as Business Associates to perform various functions on the Plan's behalf or to provide certain types of services. In order to perform these functions or to provide such services, the Business Associates will receive, create, maintain, use and/or disclose your PHI. For example, the Plan may disclose your PHI to a Business Associate to administer claims or provide pharmacy benefit management services. However, Business Associates will receive, create, maintain, use and/or disclose your PHI on behalf of the Plan only after they have entered into a Business Associate agreement with the Plan and agree in writing to protect your PHI against inappropriate use or disclosure and to require that their subcontractors and agents do the same.

*Plan Sponsor.* For purposes of administering the Plan, the Plan may disclose your PHI to certain employees of **UnitedHealthcare and McLennan County**. However, these employees will only use or disclose such information as necessary to perform administration functions for the Plan or as otherwise required by HIPAA, unless you have authorized further disclosures. Your PHI cannot be used for employment purposes without your specific authorization.

*Required By Law.* The Plan may disclose your PHI when required to do so by federal, state or local law. For example, the Plan may disclose your PHI when required by public health disclosure laws.

*Health or Safety.* The Plan may disclose and/or use your PHI when necessary to prevent a serious threat to your health or safety or the health or safety of another individual or the public. Under these circumstances, any disclosure will be made only to the person or entity able to help prevent the threat.

### **Special Situations**

In addition to the above, the following categories describe other possible ways that the Plan may use and disclose your PHI without your consent, authorization or opportunity to agree or object. Note that not every permissible use or disclosure in a category is listed; however, all the ways in which the Plan is permitted to use or disclose PHI will fall within one of the categories.

*Public Health Activities.* The Plan may disclose your PHI when permitted for purposes of public health actions, including when necessary to report child abuse or neglect or domestic violence, to report reactions to drugs or problems with

products or devices, and to notify individuals about a product recall. Your PHI may also be used or disclosed if you have been exposed to a communicable disease or are at risk of spreading a disease or condition.

*Health Oversight.* The Plan may disclose your PHI to a public health oversight agency for oversight activities authorized by law. Oversight activities can include civil, administrative or criminal actions, audits and inspections, licensure or disciplinary actions (for example, to investigate complaints against providers); other activities necessary for appropriate oversight of government benefit programs (for example, to investigate Medicare or Medicaid fraud); compliance with civil rights laws and the health care system in general.

*Lawsuits, Judicial and Administrative Proceedings.* If you are involved in a lawsuit or similar proceeding, the Plan may disclose your PHI in response to a court or administrative order. The Plan may also disclose your PHI in response to a subpoena, discovery request or other lawful process by another individual involved in the dispute, provided certain conditions are met. One of these conditions is that satisfactory assurances must be given to the Plan that the requesting party has made a good faith attempt to provide written notice to you, and the notice provided sufficient information about the proceeding to permit you to raise an objection and no objections were raised or were resolved in favor of disclosure by the court or tribunal.

*Law Enforcement.* The Plan may disclose your PHI when required for law enforcement purposes, including for the purposes of identifying or locating a suspect, fugitive, material witness or missing person.

*Coroners, Medical Examiners and Funeral Directors.* The Plan may disclose your PHI when required to be given to a coroner or medical examiner for the purpose of identifying a deceased person, determining a cause of death or other duties as authorized by law. Also, disclosure is permitted to funeral directors, consistent with applicable law, as necessary to carry out their duties with respect to the decedent.

*Workers' Compensation.* The Plan may release your PHI for workers' compensation or similar programs that provide benefits for work-related injuries or illness.

*National Security and Intelligence.* The Plan may release PHI to authorized federal officials for intelligence, counterintelligence, and other national security activities authorized by law.

*Military and Veterans.* If you are a member of the armed forces, the Plan may disclose your PHI as required by military command authorities. The Plan may also release PHI about foreign military personnel to the appropriate foreign military authority.

*Organ and Tissue Donations.* If you are an organ donor, the Plan may disclose your PHI to organizations that handle organ procurement or organ, eye or tissue transplantation or to an organ donation bank, as necessary to facilitate organ or tissue donation and transplantation.

*Research.* The Plan may disclose your PHI for research when the individual identifiers have been removed or when the institutional review board or privacy board has reviewed the research proposal and established protocols to ensure the privacy of the requested information, and approves the research.

### ***Required Disclosure to Secretary***

The Plan is required to disclose your PHI to the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services when the Secretary is investigating or determining the Plan's compliance with HIPAA.

### ***Disclosures to Family Members and Personal Representatives***

The Plan may disclose your PHI to family members, other relatives and your close personal friends but only to the extent that it is directly relevant to such individual's involvement with a coverage, eligibility or payment matter relating to your care, unless you have requested and the Plan has agreed not to disclose your PHI to such individual. The Plan will disclose your PHI to an individual authorized by you, or to an individual designated as your personal representative, provided the Plan has received the appropriate authorization and/or supporting documents. Your personal representative will be required to produce evidence of his/her authority to act on your behalf before that person will be given access to your PHI or allowed to take any action for you. Proof of such authority may take one of the following forms:

- A power of attorney for health care purposes, notarized by a notary public;
- A court order of appointment of the person as the conservator or guardian of the individual; or
- An individual who is the parent of a minor child.

However, the Plan will not disclose information to an individual, including your personal representative, if it has a reasonable belief that:

- You have been, or may be, subjected to domestic violence, abuse or neglect by such person or treating such person as your personal representative could endanger you; and
- In the exercise of professional judgment, it is not in your best interest to disclose the PHI.

This also applies to personal representatives of minors.

### **Authorization**

Any uses or disclosures of your PHI not described above will be made only with your written authorization. Most disclosures involving psychotherapy notes will require your written authorization. In addition, the Plan generally cannot use your PHI for marketing purposes or engage in the sale of your PHI without your written authorization. You may revoke your written authorization at any time, so long as the revocation is in writing. Once the Plan receives your authorization, it will only be effective for future uses and disclosures. It will not be effective for any information that may have been used or disclosed in reliance upon the written authorization and prior to receiving your written revocation.

## **Section 2. RIGHTS OF INDIVIDUALS**

**You have the following rights with respect to your PHI:**

***Right to Request Restrictions on PHI Uses and Disclosures.*** You may request in writing that the Plan restrict or limit its uses and disclosures of your PHI to carry out treatment, payment, or health care operations, or to limit disclosures to family members, relatives, friends or other persons identified by you who are involved in your care or payment for your care. For example, you could request that the Plan not use or disclose specific information about a specific medical procedure you had. However, the Plan is not required to agree to your request.

***Right to Request Confidential Communications.*** You have the right to request that the Plan communicate with you about medical matters in a certain way or at a certain location. For example, you may ask that we only contact you at work or by mail. The Plan will not ask you the reason for your request, which must specify how or where you wish to be contacted. The Plan will accommodate all reasonable requests to receive communications of PHI by alternative means if you clearly provide information that the disclosure of all or part of your PHI could endanger you.

***Right to Inspect and Copy PHI.*** You have a right of access to inspect and obtain a copy of your PHI (including electronic PHI) contained in the Plan’s “designated record set,” for as long as the PHI is maintained by the Plan in a designated record set. If you request a copy of the information, the Plan may charge you a reasonable fee for the costs of copying, mailing or other supplies associated with your request.

“*Designated Record Set*” includes the medical records and billing records about an individual maintained by or for a covered health care provider; enrollment, payment, billing, claims adjudication and case or medical management record systems maintained by or for a health plan; or other information used in whole or in part by or for the covered entity to make decisions about the individual. Information used for quality control or peer review analyses and not used to make decisions about individuals is not in the designated record set.

If your request is granted, the requested information will be provided to you within 30 days after the receipt of your request in the form and format requested, if it is readily producible in such form and format, or if not, in a readable hard copy form (or a readable electronic form and format in the case of PHI maintained in designated records sets electronically) or such other form and format as agreed upon by you and the Plan. If the Plan is unable to comply with request within the 30-day deadline, a one-time 30-day extension is permissible. In such case, you will receive notification of the need for an extension within the initial 30-day period.

Please note that your right does not apply to psychotherapy notes or information compiled in reasonable anticipation of a legal proceeding. The Plan may deny your request to inspect and copy your PHI in very limited circumstances. If access is denied, you or your personal representative will be provided with a written denial setting forth the basis for the denial, a description of how you may exercise those review rights and a description of how you may complain to the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

*Right to Amend PHI.* If you believe that the PHI the Plan has about you is incorrect or incomplete, you have the right to request in writing that the Plan amend your PHI or a record contained in a designated record set for as long as the PHI is maintained by the Plan in the designated record set. The Plan has 60 days after the request is made to act on the request. However, a single 30-day extension is allowed if the Plan is unable to comply with the deadline.

The Plan may deny your request for an amendment if it is not in writing or does not include a reason to support the request. In addition, the Plan may deny your request if you ask for the amendment of information that: (1) is not part of the medical information kept by or for the Plan; (2) was not created by the Plan, unless the person or entity that created the information is no longer available to make the amendment; (3) is not part of the information that you would be permitted to inspect or copy; or (4) is already accurate and complete. If the request is denied in whole or in part, the Plan must provide you with a written denial that explains the basis for the denial. You have the right to file a written statement of disagreement and any future disclosures of the disputed information will include your statement.

*The Right to Receive an Accounting of PHI Disclosures.* You have the right to receive a list of disclosures of your PHI that have been made by the Plan on or after April 14, 2003 (or January 1, 2011 in the case of disclosures of your PHI from electronic health records maintained by the Plan, if any) over a period of up to six years (three years in the case of disclosures from an electronic health record) prior to the date of your request. Certain disclosures are not required to be included in such accounting of disclosures, including but not limited to disclosures made by the Plan (1) for treatment, payment or health care operations (unless the disclosure is made from an electronic health record), or (2) in accordance with your authorization. If you request more than one accounting within a 12-month period, the Plan will charge a reasonable, cost-based fee for each subsequent accounting.

*The Right to Receive a Paper Copy of This Notice Upon Request.* You have the right to receive a paper copy of this Notice even if you have agreed to receive this Notice electronically.

To exercise any of your HIPAA rights described above, you or your personal representative must contact the HIPAA Privacy Officer in writing at [human.resources@co.mclennan.tx.us](mailto:human.resources@co.mclennan.tx.us) or 214 N. 4<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 200, Waco, Texas 76701; or by calling (254)-757-5158. You or your personal representative may be required to complete a form required by the Plan in connection with your specific request.

### **Section 3. THE PLAN'S DUTIES**

*Notice of Privacy Practices.* The Plan is required by law to provide individuals covered under the Plan with notice of its legal duties and privacy practices. The Plan is required to comply with the terms of this Notice. However, the Plan reserves the right to change its privacy practices and to apply the changes to any PHI received or maintained by the Plan prior to that date. In the event of any material change to this Notice, a revised version of this Notice will be distributed to all individuals covered under the Plan within 60 days of the effective date of such change **by first-class U.S. mail** or with other Plan communications.

*Breach Notification.* The Plan has a legal duty to notify you following the discovery of a breach involving your unsecured PHI.

***Minimum Necessary Standard. When using or disclosing PHI, the Plan will use and/or disclose only the minimum amount of PHI necessary to accomplish the intended purposes of the use or disclosure. However, the minimum necessary standard will not apply in the following situations:***

- Disclosure to or requests by a health care provider for treatment;
- Uses or disclosures made to you; and
- Uses or disclosures that are required by law.

## Section 4. COMPLAINTS

If you believe that your privacy rights have been violated, you may file a complaint with the Plan or with the appropriate regional office of the Office for Civil Rights of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. To file a complaint with the Plan, contact the HIPAA Privacy Officer in writing at [human.resources@co.mclennan.tx.us](mailto:human.resources@co.mclennan.tx.us) or 214 N. 4<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 200, Waco, Texas 76701; or by calling (254)-757-5158.

You will not be penalized or in any other way retaliated against for filing a complaint with the Office for Civil Rights or with the Plan.

## Section 5. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

If you have any questions regarding this Notice or the subjects addressed in it, you may contact [the HIPAA Privacy Officer in writing at [human.resources@co.mclennan.tx.us](mailto:human.resources@co.mclennan.tx.us) or 214 N. 4<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 200, Waco, Texas 76701; or by calling (254)-757-5158.]

## NOTICE CONCERNING NON-DISCRIMINATION

McLennan County complies with applicable Federal civil rights laws and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex. McLennan County does not exclude people or treat them differently because of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex.

McLennan County:

- Provides free aids and services to people with disabilities to communicate effectively with us, such as:
  - Qualified sign language interpreters
  - Written information in other formats (large print, audio, accessible electronic formats, other formats)
- Provides free language services to people whose primary language is not English, such as:
  - Qualified interpreters
  - Information written in other languages

If you need these services, contact the McLennan County Human Resources Department.

If you believe that McLennan County has failed to provide these services or discriminated in another way on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex, you can file a grievance with: Human Resources Director, 214 N 4<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 200, Waco, Texas 76701-1366, Phone: 254-757-5158, Fax: 254-757-5073 or via email [Human.Resources@co.mclennan.tx.us](mailto:Human.Resources@co.mclennan.tx.us). You can file a grievance in person or by mail, fax, or email. If you need help filing a grievance, the Human Resources Director is available to help you.

You can also file a civil rights complaint with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office for Civil Rights, electronically through the Office for Civil Rights Complaint Portal, available at <https://ocrportal.hhs.gov/ocr/portal/lobby.jsf>, or by mail or phone at:

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
200 Independence Avenue, SW  
Room 509F, HHH Building  
Washington, D.C. 20201  
1-800-368-1019, 800-537-7697 (TDD)

Complaint forms are available at <http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/office/file/index.html>.

## Notice of Women's Health and Cancer Rights Act

The Women's Health and Cancer Rights Act of 1998 requires group health plans to make certain benefits available to participants who have undergone a mastectomy. In particular, a plan must offer mastectomy patients benefits for:

- All stages of reconstruction of the breast on which the mastectomy was performed
- Surgery and reconstruction of the other breast to produce a symmetrical appearance
- Prostheses
- Treatment of physical complications of the mastectomy, including lymphedema

Our plan complies with these requirements. Benefits for these items generally are comparable to those provided under our plan for similar types of medical services and supplies. Of course, the extent to which any of these items is appropriate following mastectomy is a matter to be determined by the patient and her physician. Our plan neither imposes penalties (for example, reducing or limiting reimbursements) nor provides incentives to induce attending providers to provide care inconsistent with these requirements. If you would like more information about WHCRA required coverage, you can contact the plan administrator at 800-299-6840.

## Patient Protection Disclosure

For plans and issuers that require or allow for the designation of primary care providers by participants or beneficiaries, insert:

The McLennan County Health Plan generally allows the designation of a primary care provider. You have the right to designate any primary care provider who participates in our network and who is available to accept you or your family members. For information on how to select a primary care provider, and for a list of the participating primary care providers, contact Scott & White.

For plans and issuers that require or allow for the designation of a primary care provider for a child, add:

For children, you may designate a pediatrician as the primary care provider.

For plans and issuers that provide coverage for obstetric or gynecological care and require the designation by a participant or beneficiary of a primary care provider, add:

You do not need prior authorization from the McLennan County Health Plan or from any other person (including a primary care provider) in order to obtain access to obstetrical or gynecological care from a health care professional in our network who specializes in obstetrics or gynecology. The health care professional, however, may be required to comply with certain procedures, including obtaining prior authorization for certain services, following a pre-approved treatment plan, or procedures for making referrals. For a list of participating health care professionals who specialize in obstetrics or gynecology, contact Scott & White.

## Notice of Special Enrollment Rights

If you are declining enrollment for yourself or your dependents (including your spouse) because of other health insurance or group health plan coverage, you may be able to enroll yourself and your dependents in this plan if you or your dependents lose eligibility for that other coverage (or if the employer stops contributing toward your or your dependents' other coverage). However, you must request enrollment within 31 days after your or your dependents' other coverage ends (or after the employer stops contributing toward the other coverage).

In addition, if you have a new dependent as a result of marriage, birth, adoption, or placement for adoption, you may be able to enroll yourself and your dependents. However, you must request enrollment within 31 days after the marriage, birth, adoption, or placement for adoption.

Effective April 1, 2009, if either of the following two events occur, you will have *60 days* from the date of the event to request enrollment in your employer's plan:

- Your dependents lose Medicaid or CHIP coverage because they are no longer eligible.
- Your dependents become eligible for a state's premium assistance program.



To take advantage of special enrollment rights, you must experience a qualifying event *and* provide the employer plan with timely notice of the event and your enrollment request.

To request special enrollment or obtain more information, contact a member of the Human Resources team at [human.resources@co.mclennan.tx.us](mailto:human.resources@co.mclennan.tx.us) or 214 N. 4<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 200, Waco, Texas 76701; or by calling (254)-757-5158.

## **Uniformed Services Employment and Re-Employment Rights Act of 1994 (USERRA)**

The Uniformed Services Employment and Re-employment Rights Act of 1994 (USERRA) sets requirements for continuation of health coverage and re-employment in regard to a Covered Employee's military leave of absence. These requirements apply to medical and dental coverage for the Employee and his or her Dependents.

For leaves of less than 31 days, coverage will continue for the duration of such leave. For leaves of 31 days or more, the Employee may continue Employee and Dependent coverage by paying the required contribution to the Employer, until the earliest of the following: 24 months from the last day of employment with the Employer; the day after the Employee fails to return to work; or the date the Plan is canceled. The Employer may charge the Employee and his or her Dependents up to 102% of the total coverage cost.

If coverage ends during the leave of absence because the Employee does not elect USERRA and the Employee is reemployed by the Employer, coverage for the Employee and his or her Dependents may be reinstated if: (a) the Employee gave the Employer advance written or verbal notice of his or her military service leave; and (b) the duration of all military leaves while the Employee is employed with the Employer does not exceed 5 years. The Employee and his or her Dependents will be subject to only the balance of any waiting period that was not yet satisfied before the leave began. If coverage under this Plan terminates as a result of the Employee's eligibility for military medical and dental coverage and the Employee's order to active duty is canceled before active duty service commences, these reinstatement rights will apply.

## **Newborn's and Mothers' Disclosure Notice**

### ***MATERNITY BENEFITS***

Under Federal and state law you have certain rights and protections regarding your Maternity benefits under the Plan.

Under federal law known as the "**Newborns' and Mothers' Health Protection Act of 1996**" (**Newborns' Act**) group health plans and health insurance issuers generally may not restrict benefits for any hospital length of stay in connection with childbirth for the mother or newborn child to less than 48 hours following a vaginal delivery, or less than 96 hours following a cesarean section. However, federal law generally does not prohibit the mother's or newborn's attending provider, after consulting with the mother, from discharging the mother or her newborn earlier than 48 hours (or 96 hours as applicable). In any case, plans and issuers may not, under federal law, require that a provider obtain authorization from the plan or the issuer for prescribing a length of stay not in excess of 48 hours (or 96 hours).

Under Texas law, if your Plan provides benefits for obstetrical services your benefits will include coverage for postpartum services. Coverage will include benefits for inpatient care and a home visit or visits, which shall be in accordance with the medical criteria, outlined in the most current version of or an official update to the "Guidelines for Perinatal Care" prepared by the American Academy of Pediatrics and the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists or the "Standards for Obstetric-Gynecologic Services" prepared by the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists. Coverage for obstetrical services as an inpatient in a general Hospital or obstetrical services by a Physician shall provide such benefits with durational limits, deductibles, coinsurance factors, and Copayments that are no less favorable than for physical illness generally.

## Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)

The Plan shall at all times comply with the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 as promulgated in regulations issued by the Department of Labor.

During any leave taken under the Family and Medical Leave Act, the Employer will maintain coverage under the Plan on the same conditions as coverage would have been provided if the Covered Employee had been continuously employed during the entire leave period.

If Plan coverage terminates during the FMLA leave, coverage will be reinstated for the Employee and his or her covered Dependents if the Employee returns to work in accordance with the terms of the FMLA leave. Coverage will be reinstated only if the person(s) had coverage under the Plan when the FMLA leave started, and will be reinstated to the same extent that it was in force when that coverage terminated. For example, Waiting Periods will not be imposed unless they were in effect for the Employee and/or his or her Dependents when Plan coverage terminated.

## Health Insurance Marketplace Coverage Options and Your Health Coverage

### General Information

When key parts of the health care law took effect in 2014, there was a new way introduced to buy health insurance: the Health Insurance Marketplace. To assist you as you evaluate options for you and your family, this notice provides some basic information about the Marketplace and employment based health coverage offered by your employer.

### What is the Health Insurance Marketplace?

The Marketplace is designed to help you find health insurance that meets your needs and fits your budget. The Marketplace offers "one-stop shopping" to find and compare private health insurance options. You may also be eligible for a new kind of tax credit that lowers your monthly premium right away. Open enrollment for health insurance coverage through the Marketplace is November 1<sup>st</sup> – December 15<sup>th</sup> for coverage starting as early as January 1, 2023.

Can I Save Money on my Health Insurance Premiums in the Marketplace?

You may qualify to save money and lower your monthly premium, but only if your employer does not offer coverage, or offers coverage that doesn't meet certain standards. The savings on your premium that you're eligible for depends on your household income.

### Does Employer Health Coverage Affect Eligibility for Premium Savings through the Marketplace?

Yes. If you have an offer of health coverage from your employer that meets certain standards, you will not be eligible for a tax credit through the Marketplace and may wish to enroll in your employer's health plan. However, you may be eligible for a tax credit that lowers your monthly premium, or a reduction in certain cost-sharing if your employer does not offer coverage to you at all or does not offer coverage that meets certain standards. If the cost of a plan from your employer that would cover you (and not any other members of your family) is more than 9.5% of your household income for the year, or if the coverage your employer provides does not meet the "minimum value" standard set by the Affordable Care Act, you may be eligible for a tax credit.\*

Note: If you purchase a health plan through the Marketplace instead of accepting health coverage offered by your employer, then you may lose the employer contribution (if any) to the employer-offered coverage. Also, this employer contribution -as well as your employee contribution to employer-offered coverage- is often excluded from income for Federal and State income tax purposes. Your payments for coverage through the Marketplace are made on an after-tax basis.

### How Can I Get More Information?

For more information about your coverage offered by your employer, please check your summary plan description or



contact a member of the Human Resources team at [human.resources@co.mclennan.tx.us](mailto:human.resources@co.mclennan.tx.us) or 214 N. 4th Street, Suite 200, Waco, Texas 76701; or by calling (254)-757-5158.

The Marketplace can help you evaluate your coverage options, including your eligibility for coverage through the Marketplace and its cost. Please visit [HealthCare.gov](http://HealthCare.gov) for more information, including an online application for health insurance coverage and contact information for a Health Insurance Marketplace in your area.

\*An employer-sponsored health plan meets the "minimum value standard" if the plan's share of the total allowed benefit costs covered by the plan is no less than 60 percent of such costs.

## **Affordable Healthcare Act Coverage Requirements**

Under the Affordable Healthcare Act (ACA), McLennan County is required to offer health benefits to employees who average at least 30 hours of work per week. The County determines who is eligible for coverage based on the following the three stage administrative procedure outlined by the ACA.

### **Measurement Period**

This is a time period 12 months in length during which the County looks at an employee's work history to determine whether or not that employee has worked more than 30 hours a week on average. If yes then that employee is considered a full-time equivalent employee.

### **Administrative Period**

This is the period of time – not more than 90 days during which the County will be doing the measurement, making the determination of whether or not an employee is a full-time employee and notifying them of their status and eligibility.

### **Stability Period**

Once the County has determined and notified the employee of their full-time status, employees will be considered full-time for a stability period, which can be no less than the measurement period. At the end of the stability period, you may again measure the employee's status.

## **General Notice of Cobra Continuation Coverage Rights**

### **Continuation Coverage Rights Under Cobra**

You're getting this notice because you recently gained coverage under a McLennan County Employee 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 generally explains COBRA continuation coverage, when it may become available to you and your family, and what you need to do to protect the right to receive it.

Read this notice carefully to help understand your COBRA rights. Keep in mind that 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 when you would otherwise lose your group health coverage. It can also become available to other members of your family who are covered under the Plan when they would otherwise lose their group health coverage. This notice does not fully describe COBRA continuation coverage or other rights under the Plan. For additional and more complete 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 known as 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 may be required to pay for COBRA continuation coverage.

### Employee

If you're an employee, you'll become a qualified beneficiary if you lose your coverage under the Plan because either of the following qualifying events happens:

- Your hours of employment are reduced, or
- Your employment ends for any reason other than your gross misconduct.

### Spouse

If you're the spouse of an employee, you'll become a qualified beneficiary if you lose your coverage under the Plan because any of the following qualifying events happens:

- 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. In the event your spouse, who is the employee, reduces or terminates your coverage under the Plan in anticipation of a divorce or legal separation which later occurs, the divorce or legal separation may be considered a qualifying event even though the coverage was reduced or terminated before the divorce or separation.

### Dependent children

Your dependent children (including any child born to or placed for adoption with you during the period of COBRA coverage who is properly enrolled in the Plan and any child of yours who is receiving benefits under the Plan pursuant to a qualified medical child support order) will become qualified beneficiaries if they lose coverage under the Plan because any of the following qualifying events happens:

- 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."

### Retiree Coverage

Sometimes, filing a proceeding in bankruptcy under title 11 of the United States Code can be a qualifying event. If a

proceeding in bankruptcy is filed with respect to the Company, and that bankruptcy results in the loss of coverage of any retired employee covered under the Plan, the retired employee will become a qualified beneficiary. The retired employee's spouse, surviving spouse, and dependent children will also become qualified beneficiaries if bankruptcy results in the loss of their coverage under the Plan.

### **When Is Cobra 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;
- Commencement of a proceeding in bankruptcy with respect to the Company; 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: McLennan County Human Resources. The Plan procedures for this notice, including a description of any required information or documentation, can be found in the most recent Summary Plan Description or by contacting the Plan Administrator. If these procedures are not followed or if the notice is not provided in writing to the Plan Administrator during the 60-day notice period, you will lose your right to elect COBRA continuation coverage.

### **How Is Cobra Coverage Provided?**

Once the Plan Administrator receives timely 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. If COBRA continuation coverage is not elected within the 60-day election period, a qualified beneficiary will lose the right to elect COBRA continuation coverage.

COBRA continuation coverage is a temporary continuation of coverage.

- When the qualifying event is the death of the employee, the employee's becoming entitled to Medicare benefits (under Part A, Part B or both), your divorce or legal separation, or a dependent child's losing eligibility as a dependent child, COBRA continuation coverage may last for up to a total of 36 months.
- When the qualifying event is the end of employment or reduction of the employee's hours of employment, COBRA continuation coverage generally lasts for only up to a total of 18 months. There are two ways in which this 18-month period of COBRA continuation coverage can be extended.

Also, when the qualifying event is the end of employment or reduction of the employee's hours of employment, and the employee became entitled to Medicare benefits less than 18 months before the qualifying event, COBRA continuation coverage for qualified beneficiaries other than the employee lasts until 36 months after the date of Medicare entitlement. For example, if a covered employee becomes entitled to Medicare 8 months before the date on which his employment terminates, COBRA continuation coverage for his spouse and children can last up to 36 months after the date of Medicare entitlement, which is equal to 28 months after the date of the qualifying event (36 months minus 8 months).

## Disability Extension

If you or anyone in your family covered under the Plan is determined by the Social Security Administration 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 total 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 continuation coverage.

The 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, can be found in the most recent Summary Plan Description or by contacting the Plan Administrator. If these procedures are not followed or if the notice is not provided in writing to the Plan Administrator during the 60-day notice period and within 18 months after the covered employee's termination of employment or reduction of hours, there will be no disability extension of COBRA continuation coverage. The affected individual must also notify the Plan Administrator within 30 days of any final determination that the individual is no longer disabled.

## Second Qualifying Event Extension

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 notice of the second qualifying event is properly given to the Plan. This extension may be available to the spouse and any dependent children receiving COBRA continuation coverage if the employee or former employee dies, becomes entitled to Medicare benefits (under Part A, Part B or both) or 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.

The 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, can be found in the most recent Summary Plan Description or by contacting the Plan Administrator. If these procedures are not followed or if the notice is not provided in writing to the Plan Administrator during the 60-day notice period, there will be no extension of COBRA continuation coverage due to a second qualifying event.

## Are There Other Coverage Options Besides Cobra?

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](http://www.healthcare.gov).

## Can I enroll in Medicare instead of COBRA continuation coverage after my group health plan coverage ends?

In general, if you don't enroll in Medicare Part A or B when you are first eligible because you are still employed, after the Medicare initial enrollment period, you have an 8-month special enrollment period to sign up for Medicare Part A or B, beginning on the earlier of

- The month after your employment ends; or
- The month after group health plan coverage based on current employment ends.

If you don't enroll in Medicare and elect COBRA continuation coverage instead, you may have to pay a Part B late

enrollment penalty and you may have a gap in coverage if you decide you want Part B later. If you elect COBRA continuation coverage and later enroll in Medicare Part A or B before the COBRA continuation coverage ends, the Plan may terminate your continuation coverage. However, if Medicare Part A or B is effective on or before the date of the COBRA election, COBRA coverage may not be discontinued on account of Medicare entitlement, even if you enroll in the other part of Medicare after the date of the election of COBRA coverage.

If you are enrolled in both COBRA continuation coverage and Medicare, Medicare will generally pay first (primary payer) and COBRA continuation coverage will pay second. Certain plans may pay as if secondary to Medicare, even if you are not enrolled in Medicare.

## **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 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](http://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](http://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.

## **Plan Contact Information**

McLennan County Employee Health Plan; McLennan County Human Resources Department  
214 North 4th Street, Suite 200  
Waco, Texas 76710  
254-757-5158

## **Availability of Summary Health Information**

As an employee, the health benefits available to you represent a significant component of your compensation package. They also provide important protection for you and your family in the case of illness or injury. As a plan participant, you are entitled to a comprehensive description of your rights and obligations under the McLennan County Employee Health Plan.

Your plan offers health coverage options. Choosing a health coverage option is an important decision. To help you make an informed choice, your plan makes available:

- A Summary Plan Description (SPD)
- A Summary of Benefits & Coverage (SBC)

The SBC summarizes important information about any health coverage option in a standard format, to help you compare across options. In order to ensure that you fully understand the benefits available to you and your obligations as a plan participant, it is imperative that you familiarize yourself with the information contained within the SPD.

The SPD & SBC are provided to you on the McLennan County Intranet under Human Resources, or on the UnitedHealthcare website [www.myuhc.com](http://www.myuhc.com). If you would like to receive a paper copy of these documents, please contact Human Resources and one will be provided to you free of charge.