

Government Extends Deadlines Related to Claims and Appeals, Special Enrollment and COBRA

Updated: April 13, 2021

You should also be aware that the federal government has issued additional COVID-19 relief by temporarily giving you extra time to file claims and meet certain deadlines. The relief applies to both the Pension and Health Plans and covers claims and appeals procedures, special enrollment periods and COBRA.

The relief provides that any deadlines related to the following items will be temporarily suspended until the end of the applicable time period described below:

- Benefit claims;
- Appeals of adverse benefit determinations;
- Requests for external review;
- Filing information for claims, appeals, and requests for external review;
- Special enrollment periods; and
- COBRA notices, collection periods, and premium payment deadlines.

The applicable time period will run from March 1, 2020 until the earlier of:

- One year from the date of the original deadline; or
- Sixty (60) days after the end of the COVID-19 National Emergency.

Plan staff will automatically apply this temporary extension in assessing whether any of your claims, appeals or other election deadlines have been met. There is no application and nothing special you need to do in order to take advantage of the relief.

This relief does not apply to subsidized COBRA coverage offered under the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021. That means if you qualify for free COBRA, you must still make an election within the applicable 60-day election window, or else you may have to pay the full price of COBRA coverage if you elect to enroll in the future, or may waive your right to enroll altogether.

Please note that government guidance regarding COVID-19 relief for pension and health plans is constantly evolving, and there may be changes in the relief described in this notice. If you have concerns with respect to your benefits with the Plans, or with meeting an applicable deadline due to the COVID-19 National Emergency, please contact us at (323) 866-2200, Ext. 401 to determine if relief may be available to you.