



County of Orange
California

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Dear Working Retiree:

The Affordable Care Act (ACA) required all U.S. citizens and resident aliens to have medical coverage beginning January 1, 2014 (or pay a penalty). To make affordable coverage available to everyone, the Federal government has created Health Insurance Marketplaces. On October 1, 2013 each state unveiled a "Health Insurance Marketplace" – which in California is called "Covered California." Residents may investigate health plans, and possibly enroll in a plan in their state's Marketplace. The Federal healthcare website, www.healthcare.gov, provides a link to the Marketplace for all 50 states. Information on the California marketplace can be found at www.coveredca.com.

What You Need to Know

- The federal government requires employers to send the enclosed notice to all new employees of the County.
- As a working retiree, you are not eligible for County of Orange employee medical coverage but you may be enrolled in County of Orange retiree medical coverage.
- You may qualify for lower premium costs, depending on your income and family size, by enrolling in a Marketplace plan instead of your County retiree plan. You can visit the Marketplace, your "one-stop shopping" for private health insurance, to compare options.
- Marketplace information is available online at www.healthcare.gov.
- However, if you disenroll from your County retiree medical plan before you are eligible for Medicare, you will be permanently disenrolling from the County of Orange Retiree Medical Plan, which includes the Retiree Medical Grant (if applicable). You will be prohibited from re-enrolling in a County retiree medical plan and receiving the Grant (if you were eligible) in the future. If you are eligible for Medicare, you would remain eligible for the Retiree Medical Grant (if applicable), but only for Medicare Part B premium reimbursement (if applicable).

If You Want to Shop for Marketplace Insurance ...

- Visit www.healthcare.gov to learn about the Marketplace and what plans are available.
- If you decide to apply for medical coverage through the Marketplace, you must submit an application during the government's Open Enrollment period in the Fall.
- Applications are available on www.healthcare.gov. Use the information on the enclosed notice to fill out the Employer section on the application.

If You Have Questions

For questions about the Marketplaces or applying for Marketplace coverage, call the Health Insurance Marketplace at 800-318-2596.

Sincerely,

Human Resource Services/Employee Benefits



New Health Insurance Marketplace Coverage Options and Your Health Coverage

PART A: General Information

"Health care reform" refers to the Affordable Care Act (ACA), which was passed in 2010. The law is intended to extend access to medical coverage to nearly everyone in the U.S., eliminate restrictions on key benefits, and help control the country's rising health costs. Starting January 1, 2014, the ACA required almost everyone in the U.S. to have health insurance or pay a penalty. This is called the **individual mandate**.

To help satisfy this requirement, there is a new way 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 new marketplace.

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 takes place each Fall for coverage starting as early as January 1.

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

Maybe. Because you are not eligible to receive medical coverage through the County of Orange as an active employee, you may qualify for a subsidy from the government to help pay for coverage through the marketplace. In order to qualify for the subsidy, you must meet the following requirements:

- You don't already have access to a plan that meets the ACA's benefit requirements;
- You can't be enrolled or participating in any other County sponsored health plan; and
- You earn below a certain level of income.

A Summary of What You Need to Know:

- Starting in 2014, you must have medical coverage, or you'll pay a penalty. This is called the **individual mandate**.
- You can get medical coverage through many sources, including through your spouse's/partner's company plan, private insurance, Medicare (if eligible), or the new public health care marketplaces.
- Because you are not eligible for employee medical coverage from the County of Orange, your best option to meet the individual mandate may be a plan available through the marketplace. (However, your spouse/partner may find that coverage through his/her employer is his/her best option.)

Does County of Orange Health Coverage Affect My Eligibility for Premium Savings through the Marketplace?

Yes. If you are eligible for medical coverage through the County of Orange as an active employee, you will not be eligible for a tax credit through the marketplace. Further, if you are enrolled or are participating in any other County-sponsored health plan, you will not be eligible for a tax credit through the marketplace.

However, because you are **not** eligible for active employee medical coverage from the County, you may be eligible for a tax credit that lowers your monthly premium, or a reduction in certain cost-sharing. If the cost of a plan from an 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 an 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 (if eligible), then you may lose the employer contribution (if any) to the employer-offered coverage. Also, the 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 the County of Orange Benefits Center at 1-866-325-2345.

The marketplace can help you evaluate your coverage options, including your eligibility for coverage through the marketplace and its cost. Please visit HealthCare.gov for more information, including an online application for health insurance coverage and contact information for a health insurance marketplace in your area.

PART B: Information About Health Coverage Offered by the County of Orange

This section contains information about any health coverage offered by the County of Orange. If you decide to complete an application for coverage in the marketplace, you will be asked to provide this information. This information is numbered to correspond to the marketplace application.

3. Employer name County of Orange		4. Employer Identification Number (EIN) 95-6000928	
5. Employer address 333 W. Santa Ana Blvd.		6. Employer phone number N/A	
7. City Santa Ana	8. State CA	9. ZIP code 92701	
10. Who can we contact about employee health coverage at this job? County of Orange Benefits Center			
11. Phone number (if different from above) 1-866-325-2345	12. Email address N/A		

Here is some basic information about health coverage offered by the County:

- As your employer, we offer health coverage to the following eligible employees:
 - Full-time regular employees working 40 hours a week, and
 - Part-time regular employees working at least 20 hours per week

You are not eligible for active employee health insurance coverage through the County of Orange, though you may be enrolled in County retiree medical coverage. If you are not eligible to participate in a plan as an active employee that meets the ACA's benefit requirements or if you are not enrolled or participating in any other health plan offered through the County, you and your family may be able to obtain health coverage through the Marketplace, with a new kind of tax credit that lowers your monthly premium and with assistance for out-of-pocket costs.

If you decide to shop for coverage in the Marketplace, [HealthCare.gov](https://www.healthcare.gov) will guide you through the process.