

Employee FAQ

Health Insurance Eligibility under the Affordable Care Act (“ACA”)

1. What is the ACA?

The Affordable Care Act (ACA) is a federal law that expands access to health insurance.

2. Why am I eligible for coverage under the South Dakota State Employee Health Plan?

The ACA added a new standard for employees to be eligible for health insurance coverage from their employer.

You are eligible for health insurance because:

- you are employed by the State of South Dakota
- you worked for the State for more than one year
- you averaged 30 or more hours of service per week during a 12 month period (over 1560 hours)

Your employee status and hours of service are evaluated every 12 months to determine continued eligibility in the South Dakota State Employee Health Plan.

3. What benefits are available to me?

You may enroll in the following benefits with the South Dakota State Employee Benefits Program:

- Health Insurance
- Flexible Spending Accounts (Medical Expense Spending Account and/or Dependent Care/Day Care Spending Account)
- Health Savings Account (HSA)
- Health Reimbursement Account (HRA)
- Dental
- Vision
- Accident Insurance
- Short Term Disability
- Hospital Indemnity
- Life Insurance

4. What is the timeframe for enrolling in benefits?

If this is the first time you have been offered health insurance, you are required to enroll in the South Dakota State Employee Health Plan within 30 days from the date at the top of the eligibility letter that was mailed to your home address stating you are eligible to be enrolled in the health plan.

If you previously worked for the state and had health insurance, your benefits may begin on the first day you start back to work. This will depend on the length of your break in service. A Benefits Specialist will work with you on setting up your benefits.

5. What if I don't want health coverage under the South Dakota State Employee Health Plan?

You can opt out of coverage under the South Dakota State Employee Health Plan if you have other group health coverage. Other group health coverage does not include Medicare, Medicaid, Indian Health Services, or services provided through the VA Hospital.

You must notify the Benefits Program within 30 days from the date on the top of the eligibility letter that was mailed to your home address. If you do not contact the Benefits Program within 30 days, you will automatically be enrolled in the \$2,200 High Deductible Health Plan.

6. When will coverage begin and how long will I be eligible?

If this is the first time you have been offered health insurance, your coverage will begin one month and one day from the date at the top of the eligibility letter that was mailed to your home address.

If you previously worked for the state and had health insurance, your benefits may begin on the first day you start back to work. This will depend on how long your break in service was. A Benefits Specialist will work with you on setting up your benefits.

While employed, benefits will continue for a 12 month stability period. Your hours of service are measured yearly to determine your future ACA eligibility.

7. How do I enroll in benefits?

To enroll in benefits, please complete and return the FY20 Factsheet included with your ACA eligibility letter. If you previously had benefits with the state, visit with a Benefits Specialist prior to enrolling.

8. Are benefits available to me when my ACA eligibility or employment ends?

Yes. You are eligible for COBRA coverage allowing you to continue your health, dental, vision and flexible spending accounts. You will be able to continue your accident, hospital indemnity and life insurance directly with the insurance company that provides the specific coverage. If you elect COBRA coverage continuation, you will pay the full contribution rate plus an administration fee (102% of the cost of coverage).

If you are eligible for a retiree benefit through SDRS, you may be eligible to continue your health insurance as a retiree.

9. Whom should I contact with questions?

If you have questions, contact the South Dakota State Employee Benefits Program using one of the methods below.

Mail: South Dakota State Employee Benefits Program
500 East Capitol Avenue
Pierre, SD 57501

Phone: 605.773.3148

Email: BHR.memberbenefits@state.sd.us

Website: <http://benefits.sd.gov>