

MEDIA RELEASE

June 18, 2020

CORONAVIRUS EMERGENCY SPECIAL ENROLLMENT PERIOD DEADLINE EXTENDED TO JULY 15

More than 43,000 have enrolled since mid-March

BALTIMORE, MD – The Maryland Health Benefit Exchange announced today that it has extended the deadline of its Coronavirus Emergency Special Enrollment Period so that uninsured residents will have until July 15 to enroll in health coverage through Maryland Health Connection, the state’s health insurance marketplace.

The deadline extension comes as more than 43,000 residents have received coverage during this special enrollment period that began in March with Gov. Larry Hogan’s announcement of a State of Emergency in Maryland. Even before this extension, Maryland already offered one of the longest special enrollment periods in the country since the emergency began.

Individuals who enroll in health coverage through Maryland Health Connection today through July 15 will have a coverage start date of July 1.

“Access to health coverage is important every day. However, the coronavirus pandemic has heightened awareness of that need, and we’ve seen a tremendous response of people enrolling in health insurance. We want to ensure that as many people as possible get the coverage they need,” says Michele Eberle, executive director of Maryland Health Benefit Exchange.

While you do not have to be sick to seek coverage, health insurance companies on Maryland Health Connection cover testing, visits relating to testing, and treatment of COVID-19. These consumers will not be billed for a copay, coinsurance or deductible for services to test, diagnose and treat COVID-19.

“If you know someone in your family or community who needs health coverage, urge them to get covered by July 15. Illness or injury can happen to anyone at any time. Getting covered will give you and your family the peace of mind of knowing you’ve got health coverage,” says Michele Eberle, executive director of Maryland Health Benefit Exchange.

An additional special enrollment for Maryland tax filers runs through July 15. The Maryland Easy Enrollment Health Insurance Program gives tax filers the option to share information, like household size and income, with the Maryland Health Benefit Exchange to see if they are eligible for free or low-cost health insurance. Those who check the box on state tax forms (502 and 502B) will receive a letter from Maryland Health Benefit Exchange to let them know if they are eligible for free or low-cost health coverage. To date, nearly 4,000 Marylanders have enrolled in health insurance under this innovative program.

As the state faces high levels of unemployment, many Marylanders are losing health coverage offered by employers. Individuals who lose coverage through their jobs have 60 days from loss of coverage to enroll. If they've missed that deadline, they can get coverage through Maryland Health Connection's Coronavirus Emergency Special Enrollment Period through July 15.

To enroll, visit MarylandHealthConnection.gov. Individuals also can download the free "Enroll MHC" mobile app. Free consumer assistance is available by calling 855-642-8572 from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. on weekdays.

Help is available in more than 200 languages through the call center, as well as Relay service for the deaf and hard of hearing. Trained navigators and brokers statewide offer free help enrolling by phone. You can find information at MarylandHealthConnection.gov.

Last year, nine out of 10 Marylanders who enrolled through Maryland Health Connection were eligible for free coverage or financial help to lower the cost of their health insurance. This special enrollment period is for private health plans. Those who qualify for Medicaid may enroll any time of year.

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Maryland Health Benefit Exchange: (MHBE) is a public corporation and independent unit of the state government. It was established in 2011 in accordance with the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010 (ACA) and is responsible for the administration of Maryland Health Connection.

Maryland Health Connection: One of every six Marylanders receive their health coverage through Maryland Health Connection (MHC), the state-based health insurance marketplace. Residents can compare and enroll in health insurance as well as determine eligibility for Medicaid or financial help with private plans.

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