



For Immediate Release

February 2, 2021

New COVID-19 Open Enrollment Period February 15, 2021 – May 15, 2021

Tampa, Florida – In accordance with the Executive Order issued by President Biden, the Biden Administration announced a Special Open Enrollment Period for individuals and families to enroll in Health Insurance Marketplace coverage. This Special Open Enrollment is in response to the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency, which has left millions of Americans facing health problems, uncertainty and exceptional circumstances. This new Open Enrollment Period will allow individuals and families in states with Marketplaces served by the HealthCare.gov platform to enroll in 2021 health insurance coverage, and this includes Florida

With job losses continuing to mount amid the COVID-19 resurgence, and millions of people having lost their job-based health insurance since the start of this public health and economic crisis, the Biden Administration has re-opened the ACA Marketplace to give people who need health insurance a new opportunity to get covered. **Beginning February 15, 2021 and through May 15, 2021**, Marketplaces will operationalize functionality to make this opportunity available to all Marketplace-eligible consumers who are submitting a new application or updating an existing application. Floridians can enroll in comprehensive, affordable health insurance with the assistance of a Covering Florida Navigator, by scheduling an appointment via www.CoveringFlorida.org or (877) 813-9115. Statewide Navigator assistance is free, confidential, and unbiased.

“Florida sign-ups led the nation with more than 2.1 million Floridians enrolled in a health insurance plan during the recently concluded open enrollment period,” said Jodi Ray, director of Florida Covering Kids and Families based at the University of South Florida’s College of Public Health. “Floridians now have a new opportunity to enroll in health insurance for 2021, but only for a limited time. This new COVID-19 Open Enrollment Period begins on February 15, 2021 and ends on May 15, 2021. Consumers can reach out to us now for appointments through the **Covering Florida** website or by calling 877-813-9115, or by contacting any of our statewide partners.”

Covering Florida is the consortium of certified Navigator partner organizations headed by Ray, throughout the state. These include:

- **Big Bend Area Health Education Centers (AHEC)** - Serving Bay, Calhoun, Franklin, Gadsden, Gulf, Holmes, Jackson, Jefferson, Liberty, Leon, Madison, Taylor, Wakulla and Washington counties.

- **Covering Central Florida (Primary Care Access Network)** – Serving Lake, Orange, Osceola and Seminole counties.
- **Epilepsy Florida** – Serving Broward, Miami-Dade, Monroe, and Palm Beach counties.
- **Family Healthcare Foundation** – Serving Hillsborough, Pinellas, Pasco and Polk counties
- **Health Planning Council of Northeast Florida** – Serving Baker, Clay, Duval, Flagler, Nassau, St. Johns, and Volusia counties.
- **Health Planning Council of Southwest Florida** – Serving Charlotte, Collier, DeSoto, Glades, Hardee, Hendry, Highlands, Lee, Manatee and Sarasota counties.
- **Suwannee River Area Health Education Centers (AHEC)** - Serving Alachua, Bradford, Columbia, Dixie, Gilchrist, Hamilton, Lafayette, Levy, Marion, Putnam, Suwannee and Union counties.
- **University of South Florida Navigators** - Serving the entire State of Florida, to include Brevard, Citrus, Escambia, Hernando, Indian River, Martin, Okaloosa, Okeechobee, St. Lucie, Santa Rosa, Sumter and Walton counties.

Consumers enrolling in a plan on HealthCare.gov receive comprehensive coverage, with no pre-existing condition exclusions or markups. All plans cover essential benefits, including doctor and hospital visits, prescription drugs, mental health treatment, and maternity care. In addition, consumers receive free preventive care services, such as immunizations and health screenings. Testing and treatment of COVID-19 are considered essential health benefits and are covered by all Health Insurance Marketplace plans.

The Federal Health and Human Services Department is committed to ensuring that we deploy every available resource during the Public Health Emergency. This Special Enrollment Period will ensure that more individuals and families have access to quality, affordable health coverage during this unprecedented time," said HHS Acting Secretary Norris Cochran.

“Many people can find good deals on the Marketplace and receive financial assistance to help lower their monthly health insurance costs,” said Ray. “The health insurance landscape can be confusing, but free, local help is available. You can find someone to help you navigate the enrollment process by visiting www.CoveringFlorida.org or call 877-813-9115. Consumers should make an appointment starting now to get the comprehensive health insurance they need.”

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