

Election Notice Continuation Coverage 2024

This notice contains important information about your right to continue your group health care coverage with Blue Cross Blue Shield of Kansas City.

Why am I getting this notice?

You are getting this notice because your coverage under the Plan will end on _____ due to:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> End of employment | <input type="checkbox"/> Reduction in hours of employment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Death of employee | <input type="checkbox"/> Divorce or legal separation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Entitlement to Medicare | <input type="checkbox"/> Loss of dependent child status |

What is continuation coverage?

Continuation coverage is the same coverage that the Plan gives to other participants or beneficiaries under the Plan who are not receiving continuation coverage. Each qualified beneficiary who elects continuation coverage will have the same rights under the Plan as other participants or beneficiaries covered under the Plan, including open enrollment and special enrollment rights.

Who are qualified beneficiaries?

Each person ("qualified beneficiary") in the categories below can elect continuation coverage:

- Employee or former employee
- Spouse or former spouse
- Dependent child(ren) covered under the Plan on the day before the event that caused the loss of coverage
- Child who is losing coverage under the Plan because he or she is no longer a dependent under the Plan

How can you elect continuation coverage?

To elect continuation coverage, you must complete the Continuation Coverage Election Form on the last page of this packet and submit it according to the directions on the form. Each qualified beneficiary has a separate right to elect continuation coverage. For example, the employee's spouse may elect continuation coverage even if the employee does not. Continuation coverage may be elected for only one, several, or for all dependent children who are qualified beneficiaries.

<p>The Continuation Coverage Election Form must be completed and sent to Blue Cross Blue Shield of Kansas City within 60 days of the date coverage would otherwise terminate</p>

How much does continuation coverage cost?

Generally, each qualified beneficiary may be required to pay the entire cost of continuation coverage. The amount a qualified beneficiary may be required to pay may not exceed 102 percent (or, in the case of an extension of continuation coverage due to a disability, 150 percent) of the cost to the group health plan (including both employer and employee contributions) for coverage of a similarly situated plan participant or beneficiary who is not receiving continuation coverage. The required payment for each continuation coverage period for each option is described in this notice.

2024	Blue Saver HSA (PPO)	Blue Saver Plus HSA (PPO)	Spira Care EPO	Preferred Care Blue (PPO)
Individual	\$933.30	\$853.74	\$933.30	\$1,226.04
Individual + SP	\$1,983.90	\$1,817.64	\$1,884.96	\$2,476.56
Individual + Child(ren)	\$1,798.26	\$1,647.30	\$1,704.42	\$2,241.96
Family	\$2,492.88	\$2,283.78	\$2,506.14	\$3,296.64

When and how must payment for continuation coverage be made?

If you elect continuation coverage, you do not have to send any payment with the Election Form. However, you must make your first payment for continuation coverage no later than 45 days after the date of your election. (This is the date the Election Notice is post-marked, if mailed.)

If you do not make your first payment for continuation coverage in full more than 45 days after the date of your election, you will lose all continuation coverage rights under the Plan.

Your first payment and all periodic payments for continuation coverage should be sent to:

**Blue Cross Blue Shield of Kansas City
Attn: State Continuation Coverage
P.O. Box 801285
Kansas City, MO 64180-1285**

How long will continuation coverage last?

In the case of a loss of coverage due to end of employment or reduction in hours of employment, coverage generally may be continued only for up to a total of 18 months. In the case of losses of coverage due to an employee's death, divorce or legal separation, the employee's becoming entitled to Medicare benefits or a dependent child ceasing to be a dependent under the terms of the Plan, coverage may be continued for up to a total of 36 months. When the qualifying event is the end of employment or reduction of the employee's hours of employment, and the employee became entitled to Medicare benefits less than 18 months before the qualifying event, continuation coverage for qualified beneficiaries other than the employee lasts until 36 months after the date of Medicare entitlement. This notice shows the maximum period of continuation coverage available to the qualified beneficiaries.

Continuation coverage will be terminated before the end of the maximum period if:

- Any required premium is not paid in full on time,
- A qualified beneficiary becomes covered, after electing continuation coverage, under another group health plan that does not impose any pre-existing condition exclusion for a pre-existing condition of the qualified beneficiary,
- A qualified beneficiary becomes entitled to Medicare benefits (under Part A, Part B, or both) after electing continuation coverage, or
- The employer ceases to provide any group health plan for its employees.

Continuation coverage may also be terminated for any reason the Plan would terminate coverage of a participant or beneficiary not receiving continuation coverage (such as fraud).

How can you extend the length of continuation coverage?

If you elect continuation coverage, an extension of the maximum period of coverage may be available if a qualified beneficiary is disabled or a second qualifying event occurs. You must notify Plan Administrator of a disability or a second qualifying event in order to extend the period of continuation coverage. Failure to provide notice of a disability or second qualifying event may affect the right to extend the period of continuation coverage.

Disability

An 11-month extension of coverage may be available if any of the qualified beneficiaries is determined by the Social Security Administration (SSA) to be disabled. The disability has to have started at some time before the 60th day of continuation coverage and must last at least until the end of the 18-month period of continuation coverage. Each qualified beneficiary who has elected continuation coverage will be entitled to the 11-month disability extension if one of them qualifies. If the qualified beneficiary is determined by SSA to no longer be disabled, you must notify the Plan of that fact within 30 days after SSA's determination.

Second Qualifying Event

An 18-month extension of coverage will be available to spouses and dependent children who elect continuation coverage if a second qualifying event occurs during the first 18 months of continuation coverage. The maximum amount of continuation coverage available when a second qualifying event occurs is 36 months. Such second qualifying events may include the death of a covered employee, divorce or separation from the covered employee, the covered employee's becoming entitled to Medicare benefits (under Part A, Part B, or both), or a dependent child's ceasing to be eligible for coverage as a dependent under the plan. These events can be a second qualifying event only if they would have caused the qualified beneficiary to lose coverage under the plan if the first qualifying event had not occurred. You must notify the plan within 60 days after a second qualifying event occurs if you want to extend your continuation coverage.

Periodic payments for continuation coverage

After you make your first payment for continuation coverage, you will be required to make periodic payments for each subsequent coverage period. The amount due for each coverage period for each qualified beneficiary is shown in this notice. The periodic payments can be made on a monthly basis. Under the Plan, each of these periodic payments for continuation coverage is due on the First Day of Each Calendar Month for that coverage period. If you make a periodic payment on or before the first day of the coverage period to which it applies, your coverage under the Plan will continue for that coverage period without any break. Blue Cross will send periodic notices of payments due for these coverage periods.

Grace periods for periodic payments

Although periodic payments are due on the dates shown above, you will be given a grace period of 30 days after the first day of the coverage period to make each periodic payment. Your continuation coverage will be provided for each coverage period as long as payment for that coverage period is made before the end of the grace period for that payment. However, if you pay a periodic payment later than the first day of the coverage period to which it applies, but before the end of the grace period for the coverage period, your coverage under the Plan will be suspended as of the first day of the coverage period and then retroactively reinstated (going back to the first day of the coverage period) when the periodic payment is received. This means that any claim you submit for benefits while your coverage is suspended may be denied and may have to be resubmitted once your coverage is reinstated.

If you fail to make a periodic payment before the end of the grace period for that coverage period, you will lose all rights to continuation coverage under the Plan.

Keep Blue Cross Blue Shield Informed of Address Changes

In order to protect your and your family's rights, you should keep Blue Cross Blue Shield informed of any changes in your address and the addresses of family members. You should also keep a copy, for your records, of any forms, change notices or payments you send to Blue Cross Blue Shield.

Are there other coverage options besides continuation coverage?

Yes. Instead of enrolling in continuation coverage, there may be other more affordable coverage options for you and your family through the Health Insurance Marketplace, Medicaid, or other group health plan coverage options (such as a spouse's plan) through what is called a "special enrollment period." Some of these options may cost less than continuation coverage.

You may be eligible to enroll in coverage under another group health plan (like a spouse's plan), if you request enrollment within 30 days of the loss of coverage.

If you or your dependent chooses to elect continuation coverage instead of enrolling in another group health plan for which you're eligible, you'll have another opportunity to enroll in the other group health plan within 30 days of losing your continuation coverage.

You should compare your other coverage options with continuation coverage and choose the coverage that is best for you. For example, if you move to other coverage you may pay more out of pocket than you would under continuation coverage because the new coverage may impose a new deductible. When you lose job-based health coverage, it's important that you choose carefully between continuation coverage and other coverage options, because once you've made your choice, it can be difficult or impossible to switch to another coverage option.

What factors should I consider when choosing coverage options?

When considering your options for health coverage, you may want to think about:

- **Premiums:** Your previous plan can charge up to 102% of total plan premiums for continuation coverage. Other options, like coverage on a spouse's plan or through the Marketplace, may be less expensive.
- **Provider Networks:** If you're currently getting care or treatment for a condition, a change in your health coverage may affect your access to a particular health care provider. You may want to

check to see if your current health care providers participate in a network as you consider options for health coverage.

- **Drug Formularies:** If you're currently taking medication, a change in your health coverage may affect your costs for medication – and in some cases, your medication may not be covered by another plan. You may want to check to see if your current medications are listed in drug formularies for other health coverage.
- **Severance payments:** If you lost your job and got a severance package from your former employer, your former employer may have offered to pay some or all of your continuation coverage premiums for a period of time. In this scenario, you may want to contact the Department of Labor at 1-866-444-3272 to discuss your options.
- **Service Areas:** Some plans limit their benefits to specific service or coverage areas – so if you move to another area of the country, you may not be able to use your benefits. You may want to see if your plan has a service or coverage area, or other similar limitations.
- **Other Cost-Sharing:** In addition to premiums or contributions for health coverage, you probably pay copayments, deductibles, coinsurance, or other amounts as you use your benefits. You may want to check to see what the cost-sharing requirements are for other health coverage options. For example, one option may have much lower monthly premiums, but a much higher deductible and higher copayments.

Other health coverage options may be available to you, including coverage through the Health Insurance Marketplace at www.HealthCare.gov or call 1-800-318-2596. **You may be able to get coverage through the Health Insurance Marketplace that costs less than continuation coverage.** Please read the information in this notice very carefully before you make your decision.

What is the Health Insurance Marketplace?

The Marketplace offers “one-stop shopping” to find and compare private health insurance options. In the Marketplace, you could be eligible for a new kind of tax credit that lowers your monthly premiums and cost-sharing reductions (amounts that lower your out-of-pocket costs for deductibles, coinsurance, and copayments) right away, and you can see what your premium, deductibles, and out-of-pocket costs will be before you make a decision to enroll. Through the Marketplace you'll also learn if you qualify for free or low-cost coverage from [Medicaid](#) or the [Children's Health Insurance Program \(CHIP\)](#). You can access the Marketplace for your state at www.HealthCare.gov.

Coverage through the Health Insurance Marketplace may cost less than continuation coverage. Being offered continuation coverage won't limit your eligibility for coverage or for a tax credit through the Marketplace.

When can I enroll in Marketplace coverage?

You always have 60 days from the time you lose your job-based coverage to enroll in the Marketplace. That is because losing your job-based health coverage is a “special enrollment” event. **After 60 days your special enrollment period will end and you may not be able to enroll, so you should take action right away.** In addition, during what is called an “open enrollment” period, anyone can enroll in Marketplace coverage.

To find out more about enrolling in the Marketplace, such as when the next open enrollment period will be and what you need to know about qualifying events and special enrollment periods, visit www.HealthCare.gov.

If I sign up for continuation coverage, can I switch to coverage in the Marketplace? What about if I choose Marketplace coverage and want to switch back to continuation coverage?

If you sign up for continuation coverage, you can switch to a Marketplace plan during a Marketplace open enrollment period. You can also terminate your continuation coverage early and switch to a Marketplace

plan if you have another qualifying event such as marriage or birth of a child through something called a “special enrollment period.” But be careful though - if you terminate your continuation coverage early without another qualifying event, you’ll have to wait to enroll in Marketplace coverage until the next open enrollment period and could end up without any health coverage in the interim.

Once you’ve exhausted your continuation coverage and the coverage expires, you’ll be eligible to enroll in Marketplace coverage through a special enrollment period, even if Marketplace open enrollment has ended.

If you sign up for Marketplace coverage instead of continuation coverage, you cannot switch to continuation coverage under any circumstances.

For more information

This notice doesn’t fully describe continuation coverage or other rights under the Plan. If you have questions about the information in this notice, want more information about continuation coverage and rights under the Plan or if you want a copy of your summary plan description contact:

Brett Nieman – Human Resources
Diocese of Kansas City-St. Joseph
Email: nieman@diocesekcsj.org
Phone: (816) 714-2339
Fax: (816) 756-0380

Continuation Coverage Election Form

Instructions: To elect continuation coverage, complete this Election Form and return it to the address below. Under federal law, you have 60 days after the date of this notice to decide whether you want to elect continuation coverage under the Plan.

**Brett Nieman
Diocese of Kansas City-St. Joseph
20 West 9th Street, Suite 200
Kansas City, Missouri 64105
OR
Fax to: (816) 756-0380**

This Election Form must be completed and returned by mail to the address above. If mailed, it must be post-marked no later than 60 days past the coverage termination date.

If you don't submit a completed Election Form by the due date shown above, you'll lose your right to elect continuation coverage. If you reject continuation coverage before the due date, you may change your mind as long as you submit a completed Election Form before the due date.

I (We) elect continuation coverage in the Blue Cross Blue Shield (the Plan) listed below:

Name, Date of Birth, Relationship to Employee, BCBS Member ID number (or other identifier)

- a. _____
Coverage option elected: _____]
- b. _____
Coverage option elected: _____]
- c. _____
Coverage option elected: _____]

Employee Signature

Date

Print Employee Name

Relationship to individual(s) listed above

Print Employee Address

Employee Telephone number