



**GENERAL NOTICE OF COBRA  
CONTINUATION COVERAGE RIGHTS**

## **Introduction**

You are receiving this notice because you have recently become covered under a group health, dental and/or vision plan. This notice contains important information about your right to COBRA continuation coverage, which is a temporary extension of coverage through EGID. **This notice generally explains COBRA continuation coverage, when it may become available to you and your family and what you need to do to protect the right to receive it.** When you become eligible for COBRA, you may also become eligible for other coverage options that may cost less than COBRA continuation coverage.

The right to COBRA continuation coverage was created by a federal law, the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1985. COBRA continuation coverage can become available to you when you would otherwise lose your group health coverage. It can also become available to other members of your family who are covered through EGID when they would otherwise lose their group coverage. For additional information about your rights and obligations through EGID and under federal law, you should review your plan handbook or contact EGID.

You may have other options available to you when you lose group health coverage. For example, you may be eligible to buy an individual plan through the health insurance marketplace. By enrolling in coverage through the marketplace, you may qualify for lower monthly premiums and out-of-pocket costs. Additionally, you may qualify for a 30-day special enrollment period for another group health plan for which you are eligible, such as a spouse's plan, even if that plan generally does not accept late enrollees.

## **What is COBRA continuation coverage?**

COBRA continuation coverage is a continuation of coverage when coverage would otherwise end because of a life event known as a qualifying event. Specific qualifying events are listed later in this notice. After a qualifying event, COBRA continuation coverage must be offered to each person who is a qualified beneficiary. You, your spouse and your dependent children could become qualified beneficiaries if coverage is lost because of the qualifying event. Qualified beneficiaries who elect COBRA continuation coverage must pay for COBRA continuation coverage.

If you are an employee, you will become a qualified beneficiary if you lose your coverage through EGID because of these qualifying events:

- Your hours of employment are reduced.
- Your employment ends for any reason other than gross misconduct.

If you are the spouse of an employee (or former employee), you will become a qualified beneficiary if you lose your coverage through EGID because of these qualifying events:

- Your spouse dies.
- Your spouse's hours of employment are reduced.
- Your spouse's employment ends for any reason other than gross misconduct.
- Your spouse (former employee) becomes entitled to Medicare benefits (Part A, Part B or both).
- You become divorced or legally separated from your spouse.

Your dependent children will become qualified beneficiaries if they lose coverage because of these qualifying events:

- You die.
- Your hours of employment are reduced.
- Your employment ends for any reason other than gross misconduct.
- You become entitled to Medicare benefits (Part A, Part B or both).
- You and your spouse divorce or legally separate.
- The child stops being eligible for coverage under the plan as a dependent child.

Sometimes, filing a proceeding in bankruptcy under Title 11 of the United States Code can be a qualifying event. If a proceeding in bankruptcy is filed with respect to your employer, and that bankruptcy results in the loss of coverage of any retired employee covered through EGID, the retired employee will become a qualified beneficiary. The retired employee's spouse, surviving spouse, and dependent children will also become qualified beneficiaries if bankruptcy results in the loss of their coverage.

### **When is COBRA continuation coverage available?**

EGID will offer COBRA continuation coverage to qualified beneficiaries only after they have been notified in writing that a qualifying event has occurred. When the qualifying event is the end of employment or reduction of hours of employment, your death, the commencement of a proceeding in bankruptcy with respect to the employer, or you become entitled to Medicare benefits (Part A, Part B or both), the employer must notify EGID of the qualifying event.

### **You must give notice of some qualifying events.**

For all other qualifying events (divorce or legal separation of you and your spouse or a dependent child losing eligibility for coverage as a dependent child), you must notify EGID within 30 days after the qualifying event occurs. You must provide this notice to the insurance/benefits coordinator at your employing agency. The notification must be in writing; a telephone call is not sufficient. You may also be required to provide documentation or other required information.

### **How is COBRA continuation coverage provided?**

Once EGID receives notice that a qualifying event has occurred, COBRA continuation coverage will be offered to each of the qualified beneficiaries. Each qualified beneficiary will have a right to elect independent COBRA continuation coverage. Covered employees may elect COBRA continuation coverage on behalf of their spouses, and parents may elect COBRA continuation coverage on behalf of their children.

COBRA continuation coverage is a temporary continuation of coverage that generally lasts for 18 months due to employment termination or reduction of hours of work. Certain qualifying events or a second qualifying event during the initial period of coverage may permit a beneficiary to receive a maximum of 36 months of coverage. There are also ways in which this 18-month period of COBRA continuation coverage can be extended:

#### ***Disability extension of 18-month period of continuation coverage***

If you or anyone in your family covered by EGID is determined by the Social Security Administration to be disabled and you notify EGID within 60 days of the SSA determination and before the end of the first 18 months of continuation coverage, you and your entire family may be entitled to receive up to an additional 11 months of COBRA continuation coverage for a total maximum of 29 months. The disability would have to have started at some time before the 60th day of COBRA continuation coverage and must last at least until the end of the 18-month period of continuation coverage.

A copy of the Social Security disability determination must be sent to EGID, P.O. Box 11137, Oklahoma City, OK 73136-9998 before the expiration of the 18 months of COBRA, and within 60 days from the later of:

1. The date of the Social Security Administration disability determination.
2. The date of the qualifying event.
3. The loss of coverage date.
4. The date the qualified beneficiary is informed of the obligation to provide the disability notice.

### ***Second qualifying event extension of 18-month period of continuation coverage***

If your family experiences another qualifying event during the 18 months of COBRA continuation coverage, the spouse and dependent children in your family can receive up to 18 additional months of COBRA continuation coverage, for a maximum of 36 months, if notice of the second qualifying event is properly given to EGID. This extension may be available to your spouse and any dependent children receiving continuation coverage if you die, become entitled to Medicare benefits (Part A, Part B or both), get divorced or legally separated, or if the dependent child stops being eligible as a dependent child, but only if the event would have caused the spouse or dependent child to lose coverage through EGID had the first qualifying event not occurred.

### **Are there other coverage options besides COBRA continuation coverage?**

Yes. Instead of enrolling in COBRA continuation coverage, there may be other 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 COBRA continuation coverage. You can learn more about many of these options at [HealthCare.gov](https://www.healthcare.gov).

### **If you have questions**

Questions concerning your coverage or your COBRA continuation coverage rights should be addressed to the contact or contacts identified below. For more information about your rights under the Employee Retirement Income Security Act, including COBRA, the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act and other laws affecting group health plans, contact the nearest Regional or District Office of the U.S. Department of Labor's Employee Benefits Security Administration in your area or visit [DOL.gov/ebsa](https://www.dol.gov/ebsa). Addresses and phone numbers of regional and district EBSA offices are available through EBSA's website. For more information about the marketplace, visit [HealthCare.gov](https://www.healthcare.gov).

### **Keep your plan informed of address changes**

To protect your family's rights, keep EGID informed of any changes in the addresses of family members. You should also keep a copy of any notices you send to EGID.

### **Plan contact information**

Please contact the insurance coordinator at your employer. If you have additional questions about COBRA, send written questions to OMES EGID, Attention: Member Services, P.O. Box 11137, Oklahoma City, OK 73136-9998; or call 405-717-8780 or toll-free 800-752-9475. TTY users call 711. You can also visit the website at [Oklahoma.gov/omes](https://www.oklahoma.gov/omes), and in the menu under Services, select Employees Group Insurance Division.