

State Continuation

State law allows employees of smaller employers (fewer than 20 employees) to keep the same group health insurance coverage for up to nine months after loss of a job or loss of coverage because of a reduction in work hours. This is called **state continuation**. Additionally, many states provide for additional coverage upon exhausting COBRA where applicable. In some instances, these “mini-Cobra” state laws can add upwards of 6 months of additional coverage on top of your COBRA allowable.

Below you will find additional information specific to the state of Texas. Do not hesitate to reach out to us if you have questions concerning State Continuation in other states.

State Continuation of Group Coverage

Texas law requires some group plans to continue coverage for an additional six months after your COBRA coverage ends. For state continuation to apply, your plan must have been issued by an insurance company or HMO subject to Texas insurance laws and rules.

In addition, you must have been continuously covered under the group contract for at least three consecutive months immediately before the end of your employment. Your termination may be for any reason except involuntary termination for cause.

If you're not eligible for COBRA coverage, you can continue your group coverage for nine months. The continuation period begins immediately after your termination.

If you are eligible for COBRA as a...	COBRA applies for...		Texas continuation applies for...	For a total continuation period of...
Primary plan member (direct employee)	18 months	+	6 months	24 months
Secondary plan member (spouse, ex-spouse or dependent child)	36 months	+	6 months	42 months
If you are not eligible for COBRA as a...				

If you are eligible for COBRA as a...	COBRA applies for...		Texas continuation applies for...	For a total continuation period of...
Primary or secondary plan member	0 months	+	9 months	9 months

State continuation applies only to group health plans issued by insurance companies and HMOs that are subject to the Texas Insurance Code. State continuation does not apply to ERISA plans, which are exempt from state insurance laws. State and federal law requires employers to tell you about continuation of coverage within 30 days from the end of your employment. If you want to continue your insurance coverage, you must notify your employer in writing no later than the 60th day after coverage was terminated.

There are several federal, state, and local groups and agencies that offer help with health coverage or low-cost care. The following agencies and programs may be able to help:

	Agency / Program	Description	Contact
Federal	Medicare	Federal health insurance program for people 65 and older and certain people under age 65 with disabilities	1-800-MEDICARE (633-4227) medicare.gov
	Federal health insurance marketplace	Access to private health insurance plans and federal tax credits to reduce the cost of health insurance premiums	1-800-318-2596 healthcare.gov
	TRICARE	Health plan for active duty and certain retired U.S. military personnel	1-800-403-3950 (families and doctors and hospitals) www.mytricare.com 1-800-444-5445 (Humana Military Tricare South) humanamilitary.com

	Agency / Program	Description	Contact
	U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs	Offers health care for veterans	1-877-222-VETS (8387) va.gov
State	State Medicaid (administered by the Texas Health and Human Services Commission)	State/federal health insurance program for low-income Texans	1-800-252-8263 hhs.texas.gov/services/health/medicaid-chip
	Texas Health Steps	Provides medical and dental checkups and care to children from birth to age 21 who are on Medicaid	1-877-THSTEPS (847-8377) www.dshs.texas.gov/thsteps/default.shtm
	Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP)	Provides health care to children of families who earn too much money for Medicaid but can't afford health insurance	1-877-KIDS-NOW (543-7669) chipmedicaid.org
	Texas Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services	Provides rehabilitative services, including vocational training, for Texans with disabilities	1-800-628-5115 1-866-581-9328 (TTY) dars.state.tx.us
Local	Hill-Burton Program	Federally funded program that contracts with local hospitals, clinics, and nursing homes to provide free or low-cost care to individuals eligible	1-800-638-0742 www.hrsa.gov/getthehealthcare/affordable/hillburton/

	Agency / Program	Description	Contact
		because of income. Services vary by provider and may not be available in all areas	
	2-1-1	Provides free information about services in your area	2-1-1 www.211texas.org/211/

Get Help from TDI

For insurance questions or for help with an insurance-related complaint, call the **TDI Consumer Help Line** at 1-800-252-3439 or visit our website.

Visit HelpInsure.com to shop for automobile, homeowners, condo, and renters insurance, and TexasHealthOptions.com to learn more about health insurance and your options for coverage.

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For more information, contact: ConsumerProtection@tdi.texas.gov or 1-800-252-3439