

COBRA FAQ

Who Can complete the form, or request election?

Each qualified beneficiary has the right to make a separate independent election under COBRA.

- An employee who is qualified beneficiary may elect COBRA on behalf of his or her spouse and dependent children.
- A spouse who is a qualified beneficiary may make a COBRA election for his or her dependent children.
- Waivers during the 60-day election period.
- A qualified beneficiary who waives coverage and later revokes the waiver as described above need not be given retroactive coverage. That is, the employer is not required to provide coverage for the period between the date coverage terminated and the date the beneficiary revoked the waiver.

COBRA Coverage Periods Defined

Benefit Periods are 18, 29 and 36 months

- Termination or reduction in hours

*Example: Adam, a covered employee with family coverage, resigns from his job. He and his wife and child have the right to continue coverage under the group health plan for up to 18 months.

- Divorce or legal separation, employee's death, employee's Medicare, Child's dependent status is lost

*Example: John is killed in an auto accident. His spouse and children can continue the health plan for 36 months.

- Disability extension Any member first 60 days

*Example: Adam's wife, Sue, becomes disabled during the first 60 days of continuation coverage. Adam notifies the plan administrator of the Social Security Administrations' determination of disability with the 60-day notice period. Thus, Adam and Sue and their child each have the right to continue up to 29 months.

COBRA Coverage Periods Defined

What is a second qualifying event?

- Divorce or legal separation, Employee's Death, Employee's Medicare, Child's dependent status is lost

***Example:** Adam, a covered employee with family coverage, resigns from his job. He, his wife and child continue coverage under COBRA health plan for up to 18 months. Adam's wife Sue, leaves him and sues for a divorce which is granted. Her benefits are extended to 36 months.

***Example:** Adam, a covered employee with family coverage, resigns from his job. The family continues coverage under the COBRA health plan up to 18 months. Adam die's before the months expire. The benefits are extended to 36 months.

***Example:** Adam, a covered employee with Spouse Coverage, resigns from his job at age 64. He and his wife continue coverage under COBRA for up to 18 months. Adam turns age 65 and applies for Medicare. The benefits are extended to the spouse for 36 months.

Important Notice: The 36 Month Benefit Period is measured from the date of the qualifying event.

COBRA Notice Requirements

Plan Administrators and qualified beneficiaries must comply with the following notice requirements:

- General Notice
 - *When coverage first begins
- Employer notice of qualifying event
 - *Within 30 days of the event
- Qualified beneficiary notice of qualifying event
 - *Within 60 days after the date of the qualifying event
- Specific notice
 - *Within 14 days of receiving a notice of qualifying event
- Special notice requirements applicable disabled qualified beneficiaries
 - *Within 60 days after the date of the qualifying event

COBRA Premiums

- Initial premium for COBRA coverage cannot be required by the plan any earlier than 45 days from the date the beneficiary elected COBRA coverage.
- Subsequent premium payment for a period of COBRA coverage is generally considered timely if made within 30 days after the first day of the period. (The qualified beneficiary has a 30-day grace period, measured from the first day of the coverage period.)