

HEALTH BENEFITS E-NEWS

*Department of Human Resource Management
Office of Health Benefits*

July 6, 2011

Report Available on Dependents Added to Coverage Effective July 1

A report of dependents added to health coverage as of July 1, 2011 is now available in state agency FTP folders. The name of the file is "BES-Dependents-Effective-July-2011-nnn-07062011.csv" (nnn is the agency number). Data in the file may be used to distribute Extended Coverage (COBRA) General Notices. Questions and answers on this process are below.

Question:

When do I send an Extended Coverage (COBRA) Initial General Notice when a dependent is added at Open Enrollment or based on a qualifying midyear event?

Answer:

COBRA requires that a health plan provide an Initial General Notice to each covered employee and the covered spouse of the employee within 90 days of the start of plan coverage. Unlike an Extended Coverage (COBRA) Election Notice, providing an Initial General Notice to dependent children is currently not required, regardless of age.

The Initial General Notice should be sent by First Class Mail and addressed to the employee and/or spouse. If addressing to both the employee and spouse, the spouse may be identified by name or by status (spouse). If the spouse is added at Open Enrollment or due to a Qualifying Midyear Event, an Initial General Notice must be sent to the spouse (or you may update the Notice and send to both the employee and spouse). Mailing of the Notice should be documented in a consistent manner, which may include maintaining a copy of the Notice or maintaining a log of Notices mailed (including the date, name/s of recipient/s, address to which it was mailed, and event that generated the mailing).

Do not be concerned if you have already mailed Notices to dependent children added at Open Enrollment.