



Employer FAQ

Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Section 1 - Navigating Employee Benefits during COVID-19

Section 2 - Protecting the health of my Employees during COVID-19

Section 3 - COVID-19 Legislation for my Business

Section 1 - Navigating Employee Benefits during COVID-19

Q: If employee eligibility changes due to hours, furlough or layoff what happens to their coverage?

A: Employers will have the option to keep currently enrolled employees on their plans as active employees, even when hours are reduced below the average hours worked eligibility requirement or they are furloughed. Insurance carriers are providing flexibility in eligibility definition if premium payments continue as usual. If your group is terminating/laying off employees, COBRA applies.

Q: If I can't afford to keep my group health plan what other options can I offer my employees?

A: If your group is terminating coverage (no active employees/closing business), standard contract provisions apply, and the group contract will be terminated. In this case, COBRA does not apply. Individuals may obtain coverage on the individual market, which may be subsidy-eligible based on income. If you wish to continue to offer a benefit at a lower cost, employers now have the option to provide a defined contribution of any amount to help offset employee's individual health plan premiums through a Health Reimbursement Arrangement (HRA). Either an Individual Coverage Health Reimbursement Arrangement (ICHRA) or a Qualifying Small Employer Health Reimbursement Arrangement (QSEHRA) may be offered.

Q: If employees need to apply for individual coverage what guidance can I provide them?

A: Employees losing group coverage or seeking a COBRA alternative may obtain coverage on the individual market, which may be subsidy-eligible based on income. MNsure has declared a COVID-19 Emergency Special Enrollment Period until April 21, 2020, allowing uninsured individuals to enroll in health insurance coverage through MNsure with an April 1st, 2020 effective date.

Benafica

Saint Paul, MN • 651.287.3253 • Info@Benafica.com

For more information visit
Benafica.com/coronavirus-resource-center

Employer FAQ

Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Section 2 - Protecting the health of my Employees during COVID-19

Q: What are the insurance carrier's coverage commitments for COVID-19 testing and treatment?

A: Minnesota's health plans have agreed to waive costs for treatment of COVID. Minnesotans with commercial insurance including individuals, small businesses, and some large businesses are now eligible for the following benefits: expansion of telemedicine visits to include visits from a member's home, utilization of additional technologies such as FaceTime or Skype, no cost-sharing (copay, coinsurance, and deductible) charges for COVID testing, prior authorization requirements and cost-sharing have been waived for hospitalization related to COVID.

Q: How can I protect my essential employees during this time?

A: Empower employees by actively encouraging sick employees to stay home. To prevent others from getting sick develop policies on scheduling and telework. Practice hygiene etiquette and routine environmental cleaning. Promote conversations with employees about safety concerns and ways to minimize or limit face-to-face contact. Should an employee become sick they should be separated from other employees, customers, and visitors and sent home immediately.

Section 3 - COVID-19 Legislation for my Business

Q: Does the Coronavirus Act (CARES) apply to my business?

A: There are two types of loans that business owners can take advantage of from the CARES Act. The Paycheck Protection Program and the Economic Injury Disaster Loan. Paycheck protection will enable eligible companies can apply to borrow up to 2.5 times their average eligible monthly payroll costs, up to \$10 million, and interest rates on the loans will not exceed 4%. Depending on how much a business borrows and how it uses the funding, all the loan or a portion of it may be forgiven. SBA's Economic Injury Disaster Loan Program has historically offered disaster relief assistance to businesses, homeowners and renters in specific areas where federally declared disasters occurred. However, due to COVID-19, companies in all 50 states can apply for a disaster loan. They also can receive a \$10,000 advance on the loan.

Q: Does the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) apply to my business?

A: Yes, the FFCRA requires employers with fewer than 500 employees (further regulation expected April 2020) to provide their employees with paid sick or family leave for specified reasons related to COVID-19. Every dollar of required paid leave (plus the cost of the employer's health insurance premiums during leave) will be 100% covered by a dollar-for-dollar refundable tax credit available to the employer. For detailed summary on redeeming tax credits please visit the [IRS website](#).

For any additional questions or comments please contact our team of experts.

Justin Safranski
Director of Employee Benefits
justin.safranski@benafica.com

Benafica

Saint Paul, MN • 651.287.3253 • Info@Benafica.com

For more information visit
[Benafica.com/coronavirus-resource-center](https://benafica.com/coronavirus-resource-center)