



STATE OF NEW YORK
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
P.O. Box 11729
Albany, NY 12211

Notice of Decision

Decision Date: September 6, 2017

NY State of Health Account ID: [REDACTED]
Appeal Identification Number: AP000000017887

[REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED],

On July 26, 2017, you appeared by telephone at a hearing on your appeal of NY State of Health's verbal denial of your request for a special enrollment period.

The enclosed Decision, rendered after that hearing, is issued by the Appeals Unit of NY State of Health.

If you have questions about your Decision, you can contact us by:

- Calling the Customer Service Center at 1-855-355-5777
- Sending Mail to:
NY State of Health Appeals
P.O. Box 11729
Albany, NY 12211
- Sending a Fax to 1-855-900-5557

When contacting NY State of Health about your appeal and/or the Decision, please refer to the Appeal Identification number and the Account ID at the top of this notice.

Legal Authority

We are sending you this notice in accordance with 45 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) § 155.545.

If you need this information in a language other than English or you need assistance reading this notice, we can help you. Call 1-855-355-5777 (TTY - English: 1-800-662-1220) (TTY - Spanish: 1-877-662-4886).

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DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
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Decision

Decision Date: September 6, 2017

NY State of Health Account ID: [REDACTED]
Appeal Identification Number: AP000000017887

[REDACTED]

Issue

The issue presented for review by the Appeals Unit of NY State of Health is:

Did NYSOH properly determine you did not qualify to enroll in a new qualified health plan outside of the open enrollment period?

Procedural History

On November 18, 2016, NYSOH issued an eligibility determination notice, based on your November 17, 2016 updated application, stating you were eligible to receive up to \$79.00 per month in advance payments of the premium tax credit (APTC), effective January 1, 2017.

Also on November 18, 2016, NYSOH issued an enrollment notice, based on your November 17, 2016 plan selection, confirming you were enrolled in a Healthfirst bronze-level qualified health plan (QHP) with a \$4,000.00 deductible, effective January 1, 2017.

On April 10, 2017, you spoke to NYSOH's Account Review Unit and appealed the refusal of NYSOH to provide you with a special enrollment period to switch health plans.

On July 26, 2017, you had a telephone hearing with a Hearing Officer from NYSOH's Appeals Unit. The record was developed during the hearing and held open to August 9, 2017 to allow you to submit supporting documentation. No documentation was received by the deadline and the record closed thereafter.

Findings of Fact

A review of the record supports the following findings of fact:

- 1) You testified, and your account confirms, you were enrolled in a silver-level QHP with Healthfirst in 2016.
- 2) You contacted NYSOH on November 17, 2016 to renew your coverage for 2017. Your account confirms you selected a new bronze-level Healthfirst plan for 2017, that day.
- 3) You testified that on November 17, 2016, the NYSOH representative told you that you only qualified for a bronze plan and that you enrolled in a bronze-level plan based on that information. You testified that the representative did not explain the terms of the plan to you.
- 4) You testified that you went through your mail in April 2017, and first discovered the terms of your health plan. You testified you learned that you were responsible for 50% of costs after your deductible was paid. You testified you never would have enrolled in the plan if those terms were explained to you.
- 5) You testified you did not learn the specific terms of your health plan prior to April 2017, because you were very backed up on your mail due to health issues you were experiencing.
- 6) You testified you contacted NYSOH as soon as you discovered the terms of your plan to switch plans and you were told it was too late.
- 7) Your account confirms, you contacted NYSOH on April 10, 2017 to request to change your health plan.
- 8) There is no record that NYSOH issued a written denial of a request for a special enrollment period.
- 9) The Acknowledgement of Appeal notice, issued by NYSOH on April 11, 2017, indicates the reason for your appeal is a "Denial of Special Enrollment Period."
- 10) You testified you were seeking a special enrollment period to switch your health plan.
- 11) Your account indicates that subsequent to filing the appeal, NYSOH retroactively disenrolled you from your QHP for non-payment of the premium, effective January 31, 2017.

- 12) You testified that there have been no major changes to your household in 2017.
- 13) Your most recent application, filed on November 17, 2016, indicates you will file your 2017 tax return with a tax filing status of head of household, but that you will claim no dependents. You testified you will claim your mother as a dependent in 2017 as you did in 2016. You were directed to submit a copy of your 2016 tax return to confirm you claimed your mother as a dependent, but you failed to submit any documentation by the August 9, 2017 deadline.

Conflicting evidence, if any, was considered and found to be less credible than the evidence noted above.

Applicable Law and Regulations

Enrollment in a Qualified Health Plan

NYSOH must provide annual open enrollment periods during which time qualified individuals may enroll in a qualified health plan and enrollees may change qualified health plans (45 CFR § 155.410(a)(1)).

For the benefit year beginning on January 1, 2017, the annual open enrollment period began on November 1, 2016, and extended through January 31, 2017 (45 CFR § 155.410(e)(2)).

Special Enrollment Periods

After each open enrollment period ends, NYSOH provides special enrollment periods to qualified individuals. During a special enrollment period, a qualified individual may enroll in a qualified health plan, and an enrollee may change their enrollment to another plan. This is generally permitted when one of the following triggering events occur:

- (1) The qualified individual or his or her dependent either:
 - (i) Loses minimum essential coverage.
 - (ii) Is enrolled in any non-calendar year group health plan or individual health insurance coverage, even if the qualified individual or his or her dependent has the option to renew such coverage.
 - (iii) Loses pregnancy-related coverage.

(iv) Loses medically needy coverage as described under section 1902(a)(10)(C) of the Social Security Act only once per calendar year.

(2)(i) The qualified individual gains a dependent or becomes a dependent through marriage, birth, adoption, placement for adoption, or placement in foster care, or through a child support order or other court order.

(ii) the enrollee loses a dependent or is no longer considered a dependent through divorce or legal separation as defined by State law in the State in which the divorce or legal separation occurs, or if the enrollee, or his or her dependent, dies.

(3) The qualified individual, or his or her dependent, becomes newly eligible for enrollment in a qualified health plan because he or she gains citizenship, status as a national, or lawful present or is no longer incarcerated.

(4) The qualified individual's or his or her dependent's, enrollment or non-enrollment in a qualified health plan is unintentional, inadvertent, or erroneous and is the result of the error, misrepresentation, misconduct, or inaction of an officer, employee, or agent of NYSOH, its instrumentalities, or a non-NYSOH entity providing enrollment assistance or conducting enrollment activities.

(5) The enrollee or, his or her dependent adequately demonstrates to NYSOH that the qualified health plan in which he or she is enrolled substantially violated a material provision of its contract in relation to the enrollee;

(6) The enrollee or enrollee's dependent is newly eligible or ineligible for advance payments of the premium tax credit, or change in eligibility for cost-sharing reductions.

(7) The qualified individual or enrollee, or his or her dependent, gains access to new qualified health plan as a result of a permanent move and either—

(i) Had minimum essential coverage for one or more days during the 60 days preceding the date of the permanent move, or

(ii) Was living outside of the United States or in a United States territory at the time of the permanent move;

(8) The qualified individual or dependent who gains or maintains status as an Indian may enroll in a qualified health plan or change from one plan to another, once per month.

(9) The qualified individual or enrollee, or his or her dependent, demonstrates to the Exchange, in accordance with guidelines issued by HHS, that the individual meets other exceptional circumstances as the Exchange may provide;

(10) A qualified individual or enrollee—

(i) Is a victim of domestic abuse or spousal abandonment, including a dependent or unmarried victim within a household, is enrolled in minimum essential coverage and seeks to enroll in coverage separate from the perpetrator of the abuse or abandonment; or

(ii) Is a dependent of a victim of domestic abuse or spousal abandonment, on the same application as the victim, may enroll in coverage at the same time as the victim;

(11) A qualified individual or dependent—

(i) Applies for coverage through NYSOH during the annual open enrollment period or due to a qualifying event, is assessed as potentially eligible for Medicaid or Child Health Plus and is determined ineligible for Medicaid or Child Health Plus either after open enrollment has ended or more than 60 days after the qualifying event; or

(ii) Applies for coverage at their Local Department of Social Services or Human Resources Administration during the annual open enrollment period, and is determined ineligible for Medicaid or Child Health Plus after open enrollment has ended;

(12) The qualified individual or enrollee, or his or her dependent, adequately demonstrates to NYSOH that a material error related to plan benefits, service area, or premium influenced the qualified individual's or enrollee's decision to purchase a qualified health plan; or

(13) At the option of NYSOH, the qualified individual provides satisfactory documentary evidence to verify his or her eligibility for an insurance affordability program or enrollment following termination of enrollment due to a failure to verify such status within 90 days. NYSOH has not elected to adopt this subsection at this time.

(45 CFR § 155.420(d)).

Generally, if a triggering life event occurs, the qualified individual or enrollee has 60 days from the date of a triggering event to select a qualified health plan (45 CFR § 155.420(c)(1)).

However, a loss of health insurance coverage such as that referenced above does not include,

“voluntary termination of coverage or other loss due to—

(1) Failure to pay premiums on a timely basis, including COBRA premiums prior to expiration of COBRA coverage, or

(2) Situations allowing for a rescission as specified in 45 CFR [§] 147.128” such as failure to comply with other requirements (45 CFR § 147.128(b))

(45 CFR § 155.420(e)).

Legal Analysis

The issue under review is whether NYSOH properly determined you did not qualify to enroll in a new qualified health plan outside of the open enrollment period

NYSOH provided an open enrollment period from November 1, 2016 until January 31, 2017. Although you initially enrolled in a qualified health plan for 2017 during the open enrollment period, you subsequently contacted NYSOH, on April 10, 2017, and requested to change your health plan. This was after the open enrollment period for 2017 had ended.

Once the annual open enrollment period ends, a health plan enrollee must qualify for a special enrollment period to enroll in a health plan, or change to another health plan offered through NYSOH. To qualify for a special enrollment period, a person must experience a triggering event.

You testified that your enrollment in your health plan was based on misinformation received by a NYSOH representative on November 17, 2016, because the representative told you that you only qualified to enroll in a bronze-level plan and failed to explain the terms of that plan. It is noted that while enrollments based on misinformation by a NYSOH representative constitute a triggering event under the regulations, an applicant is only eligible for a special enrollment period for 60 days from the date of the triggering event. Accordingly, even if it was concluded that the January 1, 2017 start date of your enrollment constituted the triggering event, rather than the November 17, 2016 date the alleged misinformation was received, any resulting special enrollment period you

would have been eligible for would have expired by the time you contacted NYSOH on April 10, 2017 to request to switch your health plan. Thus, any alleged misinformation you received on November 17, 2016 could not be the basis for a special enrollment period as of April 10, 2017.

It is noted that although your account indicates that you were subsequently retroactively disenrolled from your QHP and, thus, you lost health coverage as a result, the loss of health insurance coverage in this case cannot be considered a triggering event for a special enrollment period, because your account indicates it was a result of non-payment of your premiums, which NYSOH considers a voluntary action causing the termination of your coverage.

You testified that you have not experienced any significant changes to your household in 2017 that may otherwise qualify you for a special enrollment period. However, you further testified that you intend to claim your mother as a dependent on your 2017 tax return as you did in 2016, which was not reported in your application and, thus, your eligibility was based on a household of one instead of two. It is noted that a change in household size could potentially result in a change in eligibility qualifying you for a special enrollment period. However, you failed to submit requested evidence establishing that you claim a dependent and your application has not been updated with any such information, thus, NYSOH is without sufficient information to redetermine your eligibility.

Accordingly, the credible evidence of record indicates that you were not eligible for a special enrollment period to switch your health plan on April 10, 2017.

Therefore, the verbal denial of your request for a special enrollment period was correct and is AFFIRMED.

Decision

The April 10, 2017 verbal denial of your request for a special enrollment period was correct and is AFFIRMED.

Effective Date of this Decision: September 6, 2017

How this Decision Affects Your Eligibility

You do not qualify for a special enrollment period at this time.

If You Disagree with this Decision (Appeal Rights)

This Decision is final unless you submit an appeal request to the Federal Marketplace or bring a lawsuit under New York Civil Practice Law and Rules, Article 78.

You may bring a lawsuit on any Appeals Unit decision in New York State court in accordance with Article 78 of the New York Civil Practice Law and Rules. This must be done within four months of the Decision Date, which appears on the first page of this Decision.

Additionally, Appeals Unit decisions on issues involving eligibility for qualified health plans, advance premium tax credits, and cost-sharing reductions may be appealed to the Federal Marketplace. This must be done within 30 days of the Decision Date, which appears on the first page of this Decision (45 CFR § 155.520(c)).

If you have questions about appealing to the Federal Marketplace, you can contact them in any of the following ways:

- By calling the Customer Service Center at 1-800-318-2596
- By mail at:
Health Insurance Marketplace
Attn: Appeals
465 Industrial Blvd.
London, KY 40750-0061
- By fax: 1-877-369-0129

If you wish to be represented by an attorney in bringing an outside appeal and do not know how to go about getting one, you may contact legal resources available to you. You may, for example, contact the local County Bar Association, Legal Aid, or Legal Services.

If You Have Questions about this Decision (Customer Service Resources):

You can contact us in any of the following ways:

- By calling the Customer Service Center at 1-855-355-5777
- By mail at:
NY State of Health Appeals
P.O. Box 11729

If you need this information in a language other than English or you need assistance reading this notice, we can help you. Call 1-855-355-5777 (TTY - English: 1-800-662-1220) (TTY – Spanish: 1-877-662-4886).

Albany, NY 12211

- By fax: 1-855-900-5557

Summary

The April 10, 2017 verbal denial of your request for a special enrollment period was correct and is AFFIRMED.

You do not qualify for a special enrollment period at this time.

Legal Authority

We are issuing this determination in accordance with 45 CFR § 155.545.

A Copy of this Decision Has Been Provided To:



Getting Help in a Language Other than English

This is an important document. If you need help to understand it, please call 1-855-355-5777. We can give you an interpreter for free in the language you speak.

Español (Spanish)

Este es un documento importante. Si necesita ayuda para entenderlo, llame al 1-855-355-5777. Le proporcionaremos un intérprete sin ningún costo.

中文 (Traditional Chinese)

這是重要的文件。如果您需要獲得關於瞭解文件內容方面的協助，請致電 1-855-355-5777。我們可以為您免費提供您所使用語言的翻譯人員。

Kreyòl Ayisyen (Haitian Creole)

Sa a se yon dokiman ki enpòtan. Si ou bezwen èd pou konprann li, tanpri rele nimewo 1-855-355-5777. Nou kapab ba ou yon entèprèt gratis nan lang ou pale a.

中文 (Simplified Chinese)

这是一份重要的文件。如果您需要帮助理解此文件，请打电话至 1-855-355-5777。我们可以为您免费提供相应语种的口译服务。

Italiano (Italian)

Questo è un documento importante. Per qualsiasi chiarimento può chiamare il numero 1-855-355-5777. Possiamo metterle a disposizione un interprete nella sua lingua.

한국어 (Korean)

중요한 서류입니다. 이해하는 데 도움이 필요하시면 1-855-355-5777 번으로 연락해 주십시오. 귀하의 언어에 대한 무료 통역 서비스가 제공됩니다.

Русский (Russian)

Это важный документ. Если Вам нужна помощь для понимания этого документа, позвоните по телефону 1-855-355-5777. Мы можем бесплатно предоставить Вам переводчика Вашего языка.

العربية (Arabic)

هذه وثيقة مهمة. إذا كنت بحاجة إلى مساعدة لفهم محتواها، يُرجى الاتصال بالرقم 1-855-355-5777. يُمكننا توفير مترجم فوري لك باللغة التي تتحدثها مجاناً.

বাংলা (Bengali)

If you need this information in a language other than English or you need assistance reading this notice, we can help you. Call 1-855-355-5777 (TTY - English: 1-800-662-1220) (TTY – Spanish: 1-877-662-4886).

এটি এক গুরুত্বপূর্ণ নথি। এটি বুঝতে আপনার যদি সাহায্যের প্রয়োজন হয় তাহলে, অনুগ্রহ করে 1-855-355-5777 নম্বরে কল করুন। আপনি যে ভাষায় কথা বলেন বিনামূল্যে আমরা আপনাকে একজন দোভাষী দিতে পারি।

Français (French)

Ceci est un document important. Si vous avez besoin d'aide pour en comprendre le contenu, appelez le 1-855-355-5777. Nous pouvons mettre gratuitement à votre disposition un interprète dans votre langue.

हिंदी (Hindi)

यह एक महत्वपूर्ण दस्तावेज़ है। अगर आपको इसे समझने में सहायता चाहिए, तो कृपया 1-855-355-5777 पर कॉल करें। हम आपकी भाषा बोलने वाला एक दुभाषिया निःशुल्क उपलब्ध करवा सकते हैं।

日本語 (Japanese)

これは重要な書類です。理解するために支援が必要な場合は、1-855-355-5777 にお電話ください。通訳を無料で提供いたします。

नेपाली (Nepali)

यो एउटा महत्वपूर्ण कागजात हो। यसलाई बुझ्न तपाईंलाई मद्दत चाहिन्छ भने, कृपया 1-855-355-5777 मा फोन गर्नुहोस्। हामीले तपाईंले बोल्ने भाषामा तपाईंलाई निःशुल्क दोभाषे उपलब्ध गराउन सक्छौं।

Polski (Polish)

To jest ważny dokument. W przypadku konieczności skorzystania z pomocy w celu zrozumienia jego treści należy zadzwonić pod numer 1-855-355-5777. Istnieje możliwość uzyskania bezpłatnej usługi tłumacza języka, którym się posługujesz.

Twi (Twi)

Krataa yi ye tow krataa a ho hia. Se wo hia eho nkyerekyeremu a, ye sre wo, fre 1-855-355-5777. ye bɛtumi ama wo obi a okyerɛ kasa a woka no ase ama wo kwa a wontua hwee.

(Urdu) اردو

یہ ایک اہم دستاویز ہے۔ اگر آپ کو اسے سمجھنے کے لیے مدد کی ضرورت ہے تو براہ کرم 1-855-355-5777 پر کال کریں۔ ہم آپ کو آپ کی مادری زبان میں ایک مفت مترجم فراہم کر سکتے ہیں۔

Tiếng Việt (Vietnamese)

Đây là tài liệu quan trọng. Nếu quý vị cần trợ giúp để hiểu tài liệu này, vui lòng gọi 1-855-355-5777. Chúng tôi có thể cung cấp thông dịch viên miễn phí nói ngôn ngữ của quý vị.

אידיש (Yiddish)

דאס איז א וויכטיגער דאקומענט. אויב איר דארפט הילף עס צו פארשטיין, ביטע רופט 1-855-355-5777. מיר קענען איר געבן א דאלמענטשער פריי פון אפצאל אין די שפראך וואס איר רעדט.

If you need this information in a language other than English or you need assistance reading this notice, we can help you. Call 1-855-355-5777 (TTY - English: 1-800-662-1220) (TTY – Spanish: 1-877-662-4886).

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