

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

Notice of Decision

Decision Date: September 26, 2017

NY State of Health Account ID: Appeal Identification Number: AP000000019415



On August 31, 2017, you appeared by telephone at a hearing on your appeal of NY State of Health's May 17, 2017 disenrollment notice and the May 18, 2017 and May 20, 2107 eligibility determination notices.

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.

This page intentionally left blank.



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

Decision

Decision Date: September 26, 2017

NY State of Health Account ID: Appeal Identification Number: AP000000019415



Issues

The issues presented for review by the Appeals Unit of NY State of Health are:

Does the Appeals Unit of NY State of Health (NYSOH) have the authority to review whether your enrollment in your qualified health plan (QHP) was properly terminated for non-payment of premium, effective May 1, 2017?

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

Procedural History

On May 3, 2017, NYSOH received your application for health insurance.

On May 4, 2017, NYSOH issued an eligibility determination notice stating you were eligible to receive up to \$208.00 per month in advance payments of the premium tax credit (APTC), effective June 1, 2017. The notice stated that you had until June 29, 2017 to confirm your health plan selection.

On May 11, 2017, NYSOH issued an enrollment notice, based on your May 10, 2017 plan selection, confirming your enrollment in a qualified health plan (QHP) with coverage effective May 1, 2017.

On May 17, 2017, NYSOH issued a disenrollment notice stating your enrollment in your QHP was retroactively terminated, effective May 1, 2017, because you had not paid your insurance bill by the payment deadline. On May 18, 2017 and on May 20, 2017, NYSOH issued eligibility determination notices, based on your updated applications, stating you were eligible to receive APTC of up to \$208.00 per month, effective July 1, 2017. The notices stated that you did not qualify to select a health plan outside the open enrollment period for 2017.

On May 31, 2017, you spoke to NYSOH's Account Review Unit and appealed insofar as you were not eligible to reenroll in a health plan outside of the open enrollment period.

On August 31, 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 allow you to submit supporting documents.

On September 1, 2017, NYSOH received the requested documentation and the record thereafter closed.

Findings of Fact

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

- An application for health insurance was submitted on your behalf on May 3, 2017. That application indicated that you lost your prior health coverage on April 30, 2017.
- 2) On August 31, 2017, NYSOH received a copy of a May 17, 2017 letter from your former employer confirming that your employer sponsored health insurance ended on April 30, 2017.
- 3) According to your account, you were determined eligible to receive APTC, effective June 1, 2017, and you were granted a 60-day special enrollment period, based on your loss of prior health coverage, until June 29, 2017.
- 4) According to your account, you selected a health plan on May 10, 2017.
- 5) You testified that you enrolled in a plan online with the help of an application counselor and you requested that your coverage begin on May 1, 2017, to avoid a gap in your health coverage.
- 6) Your account confirms your enrollment in your QHP began May 1, 2017.
- 7) You testified that you contacted the health plan on May 15, 2017, because you had not yet received an invoice and you were told that your coverage had been cancelled. You testified the health plan told you to send in your payment anyway and they would look into it.

- 8) You testified that you did not receive an invoice from the health plan until May 18, 2017. You testified you send the health plan a check for the May 2017 premium on May 23, 2017, and that you were subsequently assured by a representative for the health plan that your coverage was fine.
- 9) You uploaded to your account a copy of the initial invoice sent by the health plan **account a copy**. The letter is dated May 12, 2017 and indicates your initial payment is due no later than 15 days from May 1, 2017.
- 10) Your account confirms that your health plan initiated termination of your enrollment on May 16, 2017 for non-payment of the premium.
- 11) According to your account, updated applications were submitted on your behalf on May 17, 2017 and May 19, 2017. Subsequently you were found eligible to receive APTC, effective July 1, 2017, but you were denied a special enrollment period to reenroll into coverage for 2017.
- 12) You testified you have been receiving monthly invoices from the health plan and that you have continued to make the payment each month.
- 13) You testified that your health plan indicates your coverage is active, but you want to ensure NYSOH has the same information.
- 14) You testified there have been no significant changes to your household in 2017.

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

Applicable Law and Regulations

De Novo Review

NYSOH Appeals Unit must review each appeal de novo and "consider all relevant facts and evidence adduced during the appeals process" (45 CFR § 155.535(f)). "De novo review means a review of an appeal without deference to prior decisions in the case" (45 CFR § 155.500).

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 nonenrollment 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)).

Legal Analysis

The first issue under review is whether the Appeals Unit of NYSOH has the authority to review whether your enrollment in your QHP was properly terminated for non-payment of premium, effective May 1, 2017.

On May 10, 2017, you were enrolled into a QHP, effective May 1, 2017.

You testified that you contacted the health plan on May 15, 2017, because you had not yet received an invoice and you were told that your coverage had been cancelled. You testified the health plan told you to send in your payment anyway and they would look into it. You testified that you did not receive an invoice from the health plan until May 18, 2017, but that you sent the health plan a check for the May 2017 premium on May 23, 2017.

Your account confirms that your health plan initiated termination of your coverage on May 16, 2017 for non-payment of the May 2017 premium and that your coverage was retroactively cancelled, effective May 1, 2017. Although you testified that you were subsequently assured by a representative for the health plan that your May 23, 2017 payment had been accepted and your coverage was fine, there is no record of the health plan reinstating your coverage through NYSOH.

NYSOH Appeals Unit only has the authority to review issues related to the following: (1) an eligibility determination, including the amount of advance payments of the premium tax credit and level of cost-sharing reductions, (2) a redetermination of eligibility, including the amount of advance payments of the premium tax credit and level of cost-sharing reductions, (3) a failure to provide timely notice of an eligibility determination, and (4) a denial of a special enrollment period.

Since the Appeals Unit is not given the authority to review termination of enrollment due to non-payment of premiums, we cannot reach the merits as to whether you were properly terminated from your health plan for non-payment of premiums. Therefore, your appeal of the May 17, 2017 disenrollment notice is DISMISSED as a non-appealable issue.

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

NYSOH provided an open enrollment period from November 1, 2016 until January 31, 2017. Once the annual open enrollment period ends, a health plan enrollee must qualify for a special enrollment period to enroll in, or change to another health plan offered in NYSOH. To qualify for a special enrollment period, a person must experience a triggering event.

On May 3, 2017, an application for health insurance was submitted on your behalf. This was outside the open enrollment period for 2017. That application indicated that you lost prior health coverage on April 30, 2017. Pursuant to the regulations, loss of prior third-party insurance coverage is considered a triggering event. When a triggering life event occurs, the qualified individual has 60 days from the date of that event to select a qualified health plan.

Your account confirms that NYSOH determined you eligible to receive APTC, effective June 1, 2017, and granted you a 60-day special enrollment period, based on your loss of prior health coverage, until June 29, 2017. The evidence establishes that you selected a QHP on May 10, 2017 and that you elected to have your coverage through that plan begin on May 1, 2017. According to your account, this enrollment was subsequently terminated for non-payment of the premium.

According to your account, updated applications were submitted on your behalf on May 17, 2017 and May 19, 2017. Subsequently you were found eligible to receive APTC, effective July 1, 2017, but you were denied a special enrollment period to reenroll into coverage for 2017. However, you were still within your original 60-day special enrollment period, based on your April 30, 2017 loss of prior coverage, to enroll in a QHP. You were entitled to a special enrollment from May 1, 2017 continuing to June 29, 2017. Your account confirms you attempted to reenroll into a plan during this period. Accordingly, it was an error on that part of NYSOH to deny you the ability to do so.

Thus, the May 18, 2017 and May 20, 2107 eligibility determination notices, to the extend they deny you a special enrollment period, are not correct and must be RESCINDED.

Your case is RETURNED to NYSOH to assist you in enrolling into a new QHP as of May 17, 2017, the date of your first documented attempt to reenroll into a plan, or 60 days from the date of this decision.

Additionally, based on the evidence establishing that your first QHP invoice was issued to you on May 12, 2017 – four days before your coverage was terminated for nonpayment of premium, your case is RETURNED to Plan Management to confirm that this was the first invoice you were sent from your QHP for your 2017 QHP coverage.

If it is determined your health plan did not provide you with an initial invoice, at least ten days prior to cancelling your coverage for non-payment, then you will be eligible for an additional special enrollment period based on that error, and NYSOH will contact you to assist you in enrolling in coverage, beginning as early as May 1, 2017, if you so choose.

Decision

Your appeal of the May 17, 2017 disenrollment notice is DISMISSED.

The May 18, 2017 and May 20, 2107 eligibility determination notices, to the extend they deny you a special enrollment period, are RESCINDED.

Your case is RETURNED to NYSOH to assist you in reenrolling into a QHP. You may choose to enroll into a QHP effective July 1, 2017, based on your first reenrollment attempt on May 17, 2017. In the alternative, you may elect to enroll into coverage from this point forward. You will be responsible for premium payments for any months you are enrolled into coverage.

Your case is also RETURNED to Plan Management to confirm that the May 12, 2017 invoice was the first invoice you were sent from your QHP for your 2017 QHP coverage. If it is determined your health plan did not provide you with an initial invoice, at least, 10 days prior to cancelling your coverage for non-payment, then you will be eligible for a special enrollment period based on that error, and NYSOH will contact you to assist you in enrolling in coverage, beginning as early as May 1, 2017, or a later date of your choosing.

Effective Date of this Decision: September 26, 2017

How this Decision Affects Your Eligibility

NYSOH improperly prevented you from reenrolling during your previous special enrollment period.

Your case is being sent back to NYSOH to allow you to enroll into coverage effective July 1, 2017, if you so choose. In the alternative, you may elect to enroll from this point forward.

Your case is also being sent back to Plan Management to determine whether your health plan sent you a timely initial invoice prior to cancelling your enrollment for non-payment. If not, you will be eligible to have your QHP effective as early as May 1, 2017.

You will be responsible for any premium payments for any months you are enrolled into coverage.

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 Albany, NY 12211

• By fax: 1-855-900-5557

Summary

Your appeal of the May 17, 2017 disenrollment notice is DISMISSED.

The May 18, 2017 and May 20, 2107 eligibility determination notices, to the extend they deny you a special enrollment period are RESCINDED.

Your case is RETURNED to NYSOH to assist you in reenrolling into a QHP. You may choose to enroll into a QHP, effective July 1, 2017, based on your first reenrollment attempt on May 17, 2017. In the alternative, you may elect to enroll into coverage from this point forward.

Your case is also RETURNED to Plan Management to confirm that the May 12, 2017 invoice was the first invoice you were sent from your QHP for your 2017 QHP coverage. If it is determined your health plan did not timely provide you with an initial invoice at least 10 days prior to cancelling your coverage for non-payment, then you will be eligible for a special enrollment period based on that error, and NYSOH will contact you to assist you in enrolling in coverage, beginning as early as May 1, 2017, or a later date of your choosing.

NYSOH improperly prevented you from reenrolling during your previous special enrollment period.

You will be responsible for any premium payments for any months you are enrolled into coverage.

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.

<u>中文 (Simplified Chinese)</u>

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.

<u>한국어 (Korean)</u>

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.

(Arabic)العربية

هذه وثيقة مهمة. إذا كنت بحاجة إلى مساعدة لفهم محتواها، يُرجى الاتصال بالرقم 5777-355-1855. يُمكننا توفير مترجم فوري لك باللغة التي تتحدثها مجانًا.

<u>বাংলা (Bengali)</u>

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.

<u>हिंदी (Hindi)</u>

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।

<u>日本語 (Japanese)</u>

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。

<u>नेपाली (Nepali)</u>

यो एउटा महत्त्वपूर्ण कागजात हो। यसलाई बुझ तपाईंलाई मद्दत चाहिन्छ भने, कृपया 1-855-355-5777 मा फोन गर्नुहोस्। हामीले तपाईंले बोल्ने भाषामा तपाईंलाई नि:शुल्क 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.

<u>Twi (Twi)</u>

Krataa yi yɛ tow krataa a ho hia. Sɛ wo hia ɛho nkyerɛkyerɛmu a, yɛ srɛ wo, frɛ 1-855-355-5777. yɛbɛtumi ama wo obi a ɔkyerɛ kasa a woka no ase ama wo kwa a wontua hwee.

اردو (Urdu)

یہ ایک اہم دستاویز ہے۔ اگر آپ کو اسے سمجھنے کے لیے مدد کی ضرورت ہے تو براہ کرم5777-355-1855 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 אייך געבן א דאלמעטשער פריי פון אפצאל אין די שפראך וואס איר רעדט.