



Ed Gaelick

## 2019 OPEN ENROLLMENT IS COMING

On December 22, 2017, President Donald Trump signed into law the *Tax Cuts and Jobs Act*. Although a majority of the tax provisions included in the Affordable Care Act (commonly known as Obamacare) were not impacted by this legislation, the federal individual mandate penalty will be eliminated effective January 1, 2019. That being said, your state may have its own requirements, so be sure to check with your state's insurance department for any regulation updates.

For individuals and families without company sponsored health coverage, the most common time to obtain insurance is during the Annual Open Enrollment Period when there are no restrictions on who may enroll, what plan design to select, or which

carrier to choose. This is your opportunity to research options for the coverage that best fits your needs and/or budget for the upcoming year. Learn more at [www.healthcare.gov](http://www.healthcare.gov).

The 2019 Open Enrollment begins on November 1, 2018, and ends on December 15, 2018. This time frame has been extended in previous years, but the extension is not guaranteed. Plans sold during Open Enrollment will start on January 1, 2019.

Coverage may be purchased through a Marketplace (aka On-Exchange) or directly from a carrier (aka Off-Exchange). Insurance brokers can help you with both options. Subsidies for qualified persons are only available On-Exchange. If you are not eligible for a subsidy, you will most likely have a wider array of options Off-Exchange.

If you do not enroll in a plan during this time, you may not be able to obtain insurance until next year's Open Enrollment for a January 1, 2020, effective date.

So what happens if you miss the Open Enrollment Period?

You will need to wait until the following

year's Open Enrollment Period unless you have a "triggering event". Life events such as an involuntary loss of minimum essential coverage, moving to a new service area, getting married, as well as having or adopting a child would qualify you for a Special Enrollment opportunity. After 60 days your Special Enrollment Period will end and you may not be able to enroll, so you should take action right away.

While it is not required for employers with less than 50 full time equivalent employees to offer a company sponsored health plan, many recognize that by doing so they can attract and retain good employees. The ACA created an Open Enrollment Period for these small groups as well, which has similar, but slightly different, rules than the individual market.

Navigating all of the various insurance rules and regulations by yourself can be overwhelming. There are state and federal guidelines to consider as well as how the health insurers' are interpreting and implementing these guidelines. It is important to work with a professional you trust who will present all of your options and recommend the best alternative for your specific situation.

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*Since 1985, Ed Gaelick, CLU, ChFC, has helped people protect their families, their assets, their businesses and their employees. He specializes in life, disability and long term care insurance, employee and executive benefits. Ed has exceptional knowledge, integrity and a commitment to being relevant to his clients. Throughout his career, he has received many of the highest professional honors awarded in the insurance industry and is the go to insurance expert for various organizations.*  
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