

Baum, Beth - EBSA

From: Teela.Carmack@adph.state.al.us
Sent: Wednesday, April 07, 2010 3:34 PM
To: EBSA, E-OHPSCA - EBSA
Cc: Cathy.Caldwell@adph.state.al.us; Viki.Brant@adph.state.al.us
Subject: Premium Assistance Model Employer Notice

Comments from Alabama CHIP RE: the Premium Assistance Model Employer Notice

The Alabama CHIP program operates a customer service line, and receives all calls for the State of Alabama from the Insure Kids Now toll free number listed on the Model Employer Notice, and has therefore received many calls from parents who have received this notice. Alabama has a separate CHIP program, administered by the Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH). Medicaid is administered by the Alabama Medicaid Agency (AMA). Alabama CHIP does not offer a premium assistance program, however the AMA does have a very limited program.

Many parents are reading the introductory paragraphs and are then excited, believing that there is help for them. They see Alabama listed and they do not understand the differences between Medicaid and CHIP. They are upset to learn that Alabama does not have a program that can help them, and further, the Alabama CHIP program has crowd out provisions, including a ninety day wait for voluntarily dropping insurance. Many have become upset, stating the letter says to apply if they are unsure, and then they express their concern that they should have never received this notice and they wonder why their employer gave them this notice. We are offering to refer the calls to the AMA, however, their program is very limited, and most callers would not qualify.

Based on the experience that we have recently had with the Employer Model Notice, and recognizing the difficulty in drafting a model notice that is appropriate for all states, our comments for revision include:

- Add a short definition of Medicaid and CHIP or a short explanation of what Medicaid and CHIP offers
- Place a stronger emphasis on the fact that some states do not offer a program and for the states that do offer the program, the eligibility criteria may be very narrow
- Add language such as "low income" or "income based" to distinguish "must be income eligible" from "inability to afford"

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