



Kansas Insurance Department

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Commissioner's Corner-August 2013

By Sandy Praeger

Department plans statewide meetings to provide health insurance information

The talk about health insurance changes coming in 2014 has increased this summer, and the Kansas insurance Department wants to help answer your questions.

We are planning a series of informational meetings throughout the state in September and October that are designed to present facts about health insurance changes coming to Kansans. Along with the information we have, we will give you an opportunity to ask questions about how those changes might affect your situation and your family.

Here's the September schedule:

7 p.m. Tuesday, Sept. 17—Overland Park—KU Edwards campus, Best Conference Center, 12604 Quivira Road.

2 p.m. and 7 p.m. Thursday, Sept. 19—Wichita—Hughes Metropolitan Complex, 5015 E. 29th Street North.

2 p.m. Monday, Sept. 23—Hays—Hays Medical Center, Hadley Conference Rooms, 2220 Canterbury Road.

7 p.m. Monday, Sept. 23—Hays—Fort Hays State University Memorial Union Ballroom, College Drive.

7 p.m. Tuesday, Sept. 24—Dodge City—Dodge House Hotel and Convention Center, 2408 West Wyatt Earp Blvd.

7 p.m. Wednesday, Sept. 25—Salina—Salina Regional Health Center, Conference Rooms 6 & 7, 400 South Santa Fe.

7 p.m. Thursday, Sept. 26—Pittsburg—Memorial Auditorium and Convention Center, Auditorium B6/7, 503 North Pine.

2 p.m. and 6:45 p.m. Monday, Sept. 30—Topeka, Topeka and Shawnee County Public Library, Marvin Auditorium, 1515 SW 10th Avenue.

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At each event, either Linda Sheppard, our department health policy director and special counsel, or I will walk attendees through an overview of the new health law and explain who is affected by the coming health insurance changes (only some Kansans are). We will also explain and demonstrate how the new online insurance marketplace will operate.

The biggest part of the meeting will be answering your questions about the changes. Our department has been analyzing the changes since some of them went into effect in 2010, and we will do our best to present objective answers to specific questions.

We won't be debating the merits of the changes; that's not our job as employees of the insurance department. We just want to make sure that people have all the necessary information to work through the changes put in place by law.

Handouts with additional information will be available at the meetings. If you have questions after reading them, our Consumer Assistance Representatives can take your toll-free calls (in Kansas) at 800-432-2484. Also, by the time the meetings roll around, at least two new Kansas Navigator programs established by the federal government will provide more information. Watch for their announcements in your local news outlets later this month.

The insurance department is planning to post some short YouTube videos that address certain health insurance changes. And, there will be a new website, www.insureKS.org, that will provide much information about how the online marketplaces will operate.

We are planning to continue these public meetings in October in other Kansas cities. That information will be available in about a month.

Kansans who want to learn more about the changes are invited to join us at one or more of the meetings. We want to provide as much information to as many people as we can before and as the changes take place.

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The Kansas Insurance Department, established in 1871, assists and educates consumers, regulates and reviews companies and licenses agents selling insurance products in the state. More about the department is online at www.ksinsurance.org or at www.facebook.com/kansasinsurancedepartment.