

SHORT-TERM PLANS

The Basics

What are short-term plans?

Short-term plans are health insurance plans that last for a limited length of time, and limit the benefits covered. They were originally designed to help people who need temporary insurance while they are between jobs or waiting for other insurance coverage to begin.

Why are short-term plans cheaper than other health insurance plans?

Short-term plans cost less because they cover less. Be sure to consider your health needs before buying a short-term plan because a plan with cheaper premiums could leave you with big medical bills.

What do short-term plans cover?

It depends. Many won't cover pre-existing conditions like asthma, diabetes, high blood pressure, or chronic illnesses. Many don't cover emergency care or offer prescription drug coverage.

Do short-term plans have a full set of benefits?

No. Although the Affordable Care Act requires most health insurance plans to cover Essential Health Benefits such as doctor visits, hospital stays, and medications, short-term plans do not have the same requirements.

Are there times a short-term plan may be right for me?

Yes, when you need minimum coverage for a short period of time and have no other health insurance options.

THE RISKS

Short-term plans

- May deny or exclude coverage for pre-existing conditions
- Can charge more based on your health, age, and gender
- Exclude essential health services like mental health care, hospital care, and prescription drugs
- May leave you with higher out-of-pocket costs because they offer less coverage and more limitations

Questions to ask yourself before buying a short-term plan:

What coverage is important to address my health needs?

Short-term plans are not required to cover prescriptions, in-patient hospital stays, outpatient surgery or pre-existing conditions.

How often do I (or my family) need care?

No one can predict the future, but your past medical visits (and bills) are a place to start. They'll give you an idea of the medical services you'll need going forward. If you know of anything coming up that will impact your health, add that to your considerations, too.

What benefits do you need covered?

Think about the preventive care and wellcare (annual check-ups, lab tests and vaccinations), prescriptions, and maternity and newborn care benefits you or your family may need. If these medical services are important to you or your family, a short-term plan could come up short for your coverage.

For more information visit

colorado.gov/pacific/dora/short-term-health-plans