



A Service of the Maryland Health Benefit Exchange

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## **MARYLAND HEALTH CONNECTION ANNOUNCES CERTIFICATION PROGRAM FOR THIRD-PARTY ADMINISTRATORS**

### ***Authorization Packages Due Aug. 31 for Third-Party Administrators to Participate in Maryland Health Connection on Jan. 1, 2014***

BALTIMORE (August 23, 2013) Maryland Health Connection, the state-based insurance marketplace operated by the Maryland Health Benefit Exchange, will provide the opportunity for third-party administrators (TPAs) to become certified to participate in the administration of the Small Business Health Options Program (SHOP) scheduled to open Jan. 1, 2014. Application packages for TPAs are due by Aug. 31 for program participation.

**“We recognize the important role that third-party administrators play as we prepare to launch the state-based insurance marketplace,** said Becca Pearce, executive director of the Maryland Health Benefit Exchange. **“Nearly 70 percent of small businesses in Maryland utilize TPAs to enroll in health benefits, and small employers rely on their services.”**

As part of the SHOP, TPAs can become certified by the Maryland Health Benefit Exchange to perform several business functions including:

- Qualified health plan comparison and selection by employers and employees
- Administration of enrollment and eligibility changes
- Premium billing and collections

The TPA Certification Program allows TPAs to either use Maryland Health Connection or the TPA’s systems to present and administer qualified plan information. By leveraging the experience and technology of Maryland’s TPAs together with the power of Maryland Health Connection, small employers in the state will have the choice of using the health insurance shopping and administration processes that best meet their needs. This flexible model also allows agents and brokers to continue using the TPA systems they have become accustomed to as they advise small businesses on diverse insurance options and other benefits.

Organizations that wish to become certified as TPA business partners with MHBE must be approved through the MHBE Certification Process. The first step of the certification process, the application package, must be completed by Aug. 31, 2013 for TPAs that want to launch when the SHOP opens on January 1, 2014. Certification will consist of four components:

- 1) Complete the TPA Application Package
- 2) Complete systems & business operations validation
- 3) Training
- 4) Certification from MHBE

For more information about TPA certification, visit <http://marylandhbe.com/exchange-partners/third-party-administrators/>.

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**About Maryland Health Connection:** Maryland Health Connection is the marketplace for individuals, families and small businesses to compare and enroll in health insurance, as well as determine eligibility for Medicaid and other assistance programs, federal tax credits and cost-sharing reductions. Enrollment through Maryland Health Connection is scheduled to begin in October 2013, with insurance coverage beginning Jan. 1, 2014. An estimated 180,000 individuals are expected to enroll in qualified health plans (QHPs) during the first year. Additional information about Maryland Health Connection, the enrollment process and selecting coverage can be found at [www.MarylandHealthConnection.gov](http://www.MarylandHealthConnection.gov) and on social media channels: Facebook, <https://www.facebook.com/MarylandConnect>; Twitter, <https://twitter.com/marylandconnect> and YouTube, <http://www.youtube.com/marylandconnect>

**About Maryland Health Benefit Exchange:** The Maryland Health Benefit Exchange (MHBE) is a public corporation and independent unit of the State government established in April 2011 in accordance with the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010 (ACA). The (MHBE) has a nine member Board of Trustees that includes the Secretary of Health and Mental Hygiene, Maryland Insurance Commissioner and Executive Director of the Maryland Health Care Commission. The MHBE is responsible for the administration of the Maryland Health Connection. [www.MarylandHBE.com](http://www.MarylandHBE.com).