

MEDIA RELEASE

May 18, 2020

**30,000+ MARYLANDERS HAVE ENROLLED DURING THE
CORONAVIRUS EMERGENCY SPECIAL ENROLLMENT PERIOD**

Remaining uninsured residents have less than a month to get marketplace coverage

BALTIMORE, MD – The Maryland Health Benefit Exchange today reminded uninsured Marylanders that they have until June 15 to enroll in coverage through the state’s health insurance marketplace, Maryland Health Connection, under the Coronavirus Emergency Special Enrollment Period. As of May 15, nearly 31,000 residents across the state have taken advantage of this special enrollment period that began in March with Gov. Larry Hogan’s announcement of a State of Emergency in Maryland.

Individuals who enroll in health coverage through Maryland Health Connection today through June 15 will have a coverage start date of June 1. Of the nearly 31,000 residents who’ve already obtained health coverage through Maryland Health Connection during this special enrollment, 64 percent received Medicaid, while the remainder enrolled in private insurance. Young adults ages 18-34 made up 36 percent of Marylanders who have enrolled. A majority of those who enrolled in private insurance plans qualified for financial help to lower the cost of the plan.

“We know many people don’t access health care when they lack insurance, which is never good and particularly dangerous when dealing with a public health crisis like COVID-19,” said Robert R. Neall, secretary of the Maryland Department of Health. “Health insurance allows you to manage your and your family’s health, as well as help protect the health of the community. I urge Marylanders to use this opportunity to get coverage if they don’t already have it.”

“The coronavirus pandemic has affected the health of about 39,000 Marylanders and counting. And while we’ve seen a large number of people enrolling, there are still hundreds of thousands of people in this state who are without coverage,” explains Michele Eberle, executive director of Maryland Health Benefit Exchange. “We want to make sure every person who needs and does not have health insurance knows it is available and gets it.”

As job loss numbers hit historic levels in April, and layoffs continue across the state, many Marylanders are losing health coverage offered by employers. Individuals who lose coverage through their jobs have 60 days from loss of coverage to enroll. If they’ve missed that deadline, they can get coverage through Maryland Health Connection’s Coronavirus Special Enrollment Period through June 15.

An additional special enrollment for Maryland tax filers runs through July 15. The Maryland Easy Enrollment Health Insurance Program gives tax filers the option to share information, like household size and income, with the Maryland Health Benefit Exchange to see if they are

eligible for free or low-cost health insurance. Choosing to check the box on state tax forms (502 and 502B) will result in Maryland Health Benefit Exchange mailing the tax filer a letter to let them know if they are eligible for free or low-cost health coverage.

To enroll, visit MarylandHealthConnection.gov. Individuals also can download the free “Enroll MHC” mobile app. Free consumer assistance is available by calling 855-642-8572 from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. on weekdays.

Help is available in more than 200 languages through the call center, as well as Relay service for the deaf and hard of hearing. Trained navigators and brokers statewide offer help enrolling by phone. You can find information at MarylandHealthConnection.gov.

Last year, nine out of 10 Marylanders who enrolled through Maryland Health Connection were eligible for free coverage or financial help to lower the cost of their health insurance. This special enrollment period is for private health plans. Those who qualify for Medicaid may enroll any time of year.

Health insurance companies on Maryland Health Connection cover testing, visits relating to testing, and treatment of COVID-19. These consumers will not be billed for a copay, coinsurance or deductible for services to test, diagnose and treat COVID-19.

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Maryland Health Benefit Exchange: (MHBE) is a public corporation and independent unit of the state government. It was established in 2011 in accordance with the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010 (ACA) and is responsible for the administration of Maryland Health Connection.

Maryland Health Connection: One of every six Marylanders receive their health coverage through Maryland Health Connection (MHC), the state-based health insurance marketplace. Residents can compare and enroll in health insurance as well as determine eligibility for Medicaid or financial help with private plans.