191—35.26(509) Group health insurance coverage policy requirements.

35.26(1) Group health insurance coverage subject to the rules in this division is renewable with respect to all eligible employees or their dependents at the option of the employer, except for one or more of the following reasons:

a. The health insurance coverage sponsor fails to pay or to make timely payments of premiums or contributions pursuant to the terms of the health insurance coverage.

b. The health insurance coverage sponsors, performs an act or practice constituting fraud or makes an intentional misrepresentation of a material fact under the terms of the coverage.

c. Noncompliance with the carrier's minimum participation requirements or employer contribution requirements.

d. For a network plan, no enrollees connected to the plan live, reside, or work in the service area of the issuer.

e. A carrier may choose to discontinue offering and cease to renew a particular type of health insurance coverage in the large group market if the carrier does all of the following:

(1) Provides advance notice of its decision to discontinue the plan to the commissioner or director a minimum of three days prior to the notice for affected employers, participants, and beneficiaries.

(2) Provides notice of its decision not to renew a plan to all affected employers, participants, and beneficiaries no less than 90 days prior to nonrenewal of a plan.

(3) Offers to each plan sponsor of the discontinued coverage the option to purchase any other coverage currently offered by the carrier to other employers in this state.

(4) Acts uniformly, in opting to discontinue the coverage and in offering the option under subparagraph 35.26(1)*"e"*(3), without regard to the claims experience of the sponsors under the discontinued coverage or to a health status-related factor relating to any participants or beneficiaries covered or new participants or beneficiaries who may become eligible for the coverage.

f. A decision by the carrier to discontinue offering and cease to renew all of its health insurance delivered or issued for delivery to employers in this state shall do all of the following:

(1) Provide advance notice of its decision to discontinue such coverage to the commissioner or director. Notice to the commissioner or director, at a minimum, shall be no less than three days prior to the notice provided for in subparagraph 35.26(1)*"f"*(2) to affected employers, participants, and beneficiaries.

(2) Provide notice of its decision not to renew such coverage to all affected employers, participants, and beneficiaries no less than 180 days prior to the nonrenewal of the coverage.

(3) Discontinue all health insurance coverage issued or delivered for issuance to employers in this state and cease renewal of such coverage.

g. The membership of an employer in a bona fide association, which is the basis for the coverage which is provided through such association, ceases, but only if the termination of coverage under this subrule occurs uniformly without regard to any health status-related factor relating to any covered individual.

h. The commissioner or director finds that the continuation of the coverage is not in the best interests of the policyholders or certificate holders, or would impair the carrier's ability to meet its contractual obligations.

i. At the time of coverage renewal, a carrier may modify the health insurance coverage for a product offered under group health insurance coverage in the group market, if such modification is consistent with the laws of this state and is effective on a uniform basis among group health insurance coverage with that product.

35.26(2) A carrier that elects not to renew health insurance coverage under 35.26(1)*"f"* shall not write any new business in the group market in this state for a period of five years after the date of notice to the commissioner or director.

35.26(3) This rule applies only to a carrier doing business in one established geographic service area of the state and the carrier's operations in that service area.

35.26(4) Preexisting condition exclusions.

a. A carrier, with respect to a participant or beneficiary, may impose a preexisting condition exclusion only as follows:

(1) The exclusion relates to a condition, whether physical or mental, regardless of the cause of the condition, for which medical advice, diagnosis, care, or treatment was recommended or received within the six-month period ending on the enrollment date. However, genetic information shall not be treated as a condition under this subparagraph in the absence of a diagnosis of the condition related to such information.

(2) The exclusion extends for a period of not more than 12 months, or 18 months in the case of a late enrollee, after the enrollment date.

(3) The period of any such preexisting condition exclusion is reduced by the aggregate of the periods of creditable coverage applicable to the participant or beneficiary as of the enrollment date.

b. A carrier offering group health insurance coverage shall not impose any preexisting condition as follows:

(1) In the case of a child who is adopted or placed for adoption before attaining 18 years of age and who, as of the last day of the 30-day period beginning on the date of the adoption or placement for adoption, is covered under creditable coverage. This subparagraph shall not apply to coverage before the date of such adoption or placement for adoption.

(2) In the case of an individual who, as of the last day of the 30-day period beginning with the date of birth, is covered under creditable coverage.

(3) Relating to pregnancy as a preexisting condition.

c. A carrier shall waive any waiting period applicable to a preexisting condition exclusion or limitation period with respect to particular services under health insurance coverage for the period of time an individual was covered by creditable coverage, provided that the creditable coverage was continuous to a date not more than 63 days prior to the effective date of the new coverage. Any period that an individual is in a waiting period for any coverage under group health insurance coverage, or is in an affiliation period, shall not be taken into account in determining the period of continuous coverage. A health maintenance organization that does not use preexisting condition limitations in any of its health insurance coverage may impose an affiliation period. For purposes of this paragraph, "affiliation period" means a period of time not to exceed 60 days for new entrants and not to exceed 90 days for late enrollees during which no premium shall be collected and coverage issued is not effective, so long as the affiliation period is applied uniformly, without regard to any health status-related factors.

d. A group health plan or carrier offering group health insurance under the plan may not impose a preexisting condition exclusion with respect to a participant or dependent of the participant before notifying the participant under rule 191—35.29(509).

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