

NOTICE TO ENROLLEES IN A
SELF-FUNDED NON-FEDERAL GOVERNMENTAL GROUP HEALTH PLAN
GUADALUPE COUNTY EMPLOYEE BENEFIT PLAN

Under a Federal law known as the Health Insurance and Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA), Public Law 104-191, as amended, group health plans must generally comply with the requirements listed below:

1. Limitations on pre-existing condition exclusion periods.
2. Special enrollment periods.
3. Prohibitions against discriminating against individual participants and beneficiaries based on health status.
4. Standards relating to benefits for mothers and newborns.
5. Parity in the application of certain limits to mental health benefits.
6. Required coverage for reconstructive surgery following mastectomies.
7. Coverage of dependent students on a medically necessary leave of absence.

However, the law also permits State and local governmental employers that sponsor health plans to elect to exempt a Plan from some of these requirements for any part of the Plan that is “self-funded” by the employer, rather than provided through a health insurance policy. Guadalupe County has elected to exempt Guadalupe County Employee Benefit Plan from the following requirements:

5. Parity in the application of certain limits to mental health benefits.

This exemption from these Federal requirements will be in effect for the 2015 Plan Year beginning January 1, 2015 and ending December 31, 2015. This election may be renewed for subsequent Plan Years.

HIPAA also requires the Plan to provide covered employees and dependents with a “certificate of creditable coverage” when they cease to be covered under the Plan. There is no exemption from this requirement. This certificate provides evidence that you were covered under this Plan, because if you can establish your prior coverage, you may be entitled to certain rights to reduce or eliminate a pre-existing condition exclusion if you join another employer’s health plan, or if you wish to purchase an individual health insurance policy.