

# Families with Children

## THE TOP FIVE THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

The Affordable Care Act – the health care law – gives hard working families the security they need and important new benefits. Signed into law in March of 2010, the law holds insurance companies accountable, gets rid of the worst insurance industry practices and puts patients first.

Here are five ways the law helps you and your family:

**1. Insurance companies are held accountable.** If insurance companies don't spend at least 80 percent of your premium dollar on medical care rather than advertising and bonuses for executives, they will have to provide you a rebate. The first



rebates will be made in the summer of 2012. And starting

September 1, 2011, in every State and for the first time ever, insurance companies are required to publicly justify their actions if they want to raise rates by more than 10 percent.



**2. Insurers can no longer refuse to insure children with serious illnesses.** Insurance companies are no longer allowed to deny or exclude coverage for your children (under age 19) based on a pre-existing condition such as asthma, diabetes or other disability.

**3. Free preventive services.** All new health plans must now cover preventive services ranging from mammograms to vaccinations for your child, without any additional cost to you. For more details, visit [www.healthcare.gov/prevention](http://www.healthcare.gov/prevention).

**4. Insurers can't limit your care.** In the past, some people with cancer or other chronic illnesses ran out of insurance coverage because their health care expenses reached a dollar limit imposed by their insurance company. Under the health care law, insurers can no longer impose lifetime dollar limits on essential health benefits and annual limits are being phased out by 2014.

**5. You can keep any child under age 26 on your insurance.** Even if your children are married or live on their own, if your insurance plan covers dependents, your children can



stay on your plan until they turn 26. Your child may also be eligible for the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) or Medicaid coverage through your state.