

In 2014, the health care reform law creates a new type of online marketplace for purchasing health insurance coverage. This marketplace is referred to as a Health Insurance Marketplace or an Exchange. You are not required to purchase insurance coverage through the Marketplace. Hood College is continuing to offer health coverage as noted in the included New Health Insurance Marketplace Coverage Options and Your Health Coverage notice.

Health Care Reform requires employers to provide all new hires and current employees with a written notice about the Affordable Care Act's (ACA) health insurance exchanges (Exchanges). ACA requires employers to provide the Exchange notice by and after October 1, 2013. This compliance deadline, for providing the Exchange notices, coordinates with the start of the first open enrollment period under the Exchanges, as follows:

- New Hires—Employers must provide the notice to each new employee at the time of hiring beginning **Oct. 1, 2013**. For 2014, the Department Of Labor will consider a notice to be provided at the time of hiring if the notice is provided within **14 days** of an employee's start date.

In general, the notice must:

- Inform employees about the existence of the Exchange and give a description of the services provided by the Exchange;
- Explain how employees may be eligible for a premium tax credit or a cost-sharing reduction if the employer's plan does not meet certain requirements;
- Inform employees that if they purchase coverage through the Exchange, they may lose any employer contribution toward the cost of employer-provided coverage, and that all or a portion of this employer contribution may be excludable for federal income tax purposes; and
- Include contact information for the Exchange and an explanation of appeal rights.

The Department Of Labor provided a model Exchange notice which is part of this communication. Hood College has supplied all required information regarding the plans offered. If you have questions, please contact Meg Timmons, Benefits Manager, at timmons@hood.edu or 301.696.3542.