The Requirement to Buy Coverage Under the Affordable Care Act Beginning in 2014

Do any of the following apply?
- You are part of a religion opposed to acceptance of benefits from a health insurance policy.
- You are an undocumented immigrant.
- You are incarcerated.
- You are a member of an Indian tribe.
- Your family income is below the threshold requiring you to file a tax return ($9,350 for an individual, $18,700 for a family in 2010).
- You have to pay more than 8% of your income for health insurance, after taking into account any employer contributions or tax credits.

Yes

There is no penalty for being without health insurance.

No

Were you insured for the whole year through a combination of any of the following sources?
- Medicare.
- Medicaid or the Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP).
- TRICARE (for service members, retirees, and their families).
- The veteran’s health program.
- A plan offered by an employer.
- Insurance bought on your own that is at least at the Bronze level.
- A grandfathered health plan in existence before the health reform law was enacted.

Yes

The requirement to have health insurance is satisfied and no penalty is assessed.

No

There is a penalty for being without health insurance.

2014

Penalty is $95 per adult and $47.50 per child (up to $285 for a family) or 1.0% of family income, whichever is greater.

2015

Penalty is $325 per adult and $162.50 per child (up to $975 for a family) or 2.0% of family income, whichever is greater.

2016 and Beyond

Penalty is $695 per adult and $347.50 per child (up to $2,085 for a family) or 2.5% of family income, whichever is greater.

The penalty is pro-rated by the number of months without coverage, though there is no penalty for a single gap in coverage of less than 3 months in a year. The penalty cannot be greater than the national average premium for Bronze level coverage in an Exchange. After 2016, penalty amounts are increased annually by the cost of living.

Key Facts:
- Premiums for health insurance bought through Exchanges would vary by age. The Congressional Budget Office estimates that the national average annual premium in an Exchange in 2016 would be $4,500–5,000 for an individual and $12,000–12,500 for a family for Bronze coverage (the lowest of the four tiers of coverage that will be available).
- In 2010 employees paid $899 on average towards the cost of individual coverage in an employer plan and $3,997 for a family of four.