

plans offered under this chapter and for qualified companies offering the plans.

(b) Each contract may include more than 1 level of benefits that shall be made available to all eligible individuals.

(c) The benefits to be provided under enhanced vision benefits plans under this chapter may be of the following types:

- (1) Diagnostic (to include refractive services).
- (2) Preventive.
- (3) Eyewear.

(d) A contract approved under this chapter shall require the qualified company to cover the geographic service delivery area specified by the Office. The Office shall require qualified companies to include visually underserved areas in their service delivery areas.

(e) If an individual has vision coverage under a health benefits plan under chapter 89 and also has coverage under a plan under this chapter, the health benefits plan under chapter 89 shall be the first payor of any benefit payments.

(Added Pub. L. 108-496, § 3, Dec. 23, 2004, 118 Stat. 4008.)

Statutory Notes and Related Subsidiaries

EFFECTIVE DATE

Section effective Dec. 23, 2004, and applicable to contracts that take effect with respect to the calendar year 2006, see section 7 of Pub. L. 108-496, set out as a note under section 8951 of this title.

§ 8985. Information to individuals eligible to enroll

(a) The qualified companies at the direction and with the approval of the Office, shall make available to each individual eligible to enroll in a vision benefits plan information on services and benefits (including maximums, limitations, and exclusions), that the Office considers necessary to enable the individual to make an informed decision about electing coverage.

(b) The Office shall make available to each individual eligible to enroll in a vision benefits plan, information on services and benefits provided by qualified companies participating under chapter 89.

(Added Pub. L. 108-496, § 3, Dec. 23, 2004, 118 Stat. 4008.)

Statutory Notes and Related Subsidiaries

EFFECTIVE DATE

Section effective Dec. 23, 2004, and applicable to contracts that take effect with respect to the calendar year 2006, see section 7 of Pub. L. 108-496, set out as a note under section 8951 of this title.

§ 8986. Election of coverage

(a) An eligible individual may enroll in a vision benefits plan for self-only, self plus one, or for self and family. If an eligible individual has a spouse who is also eligible to enroll, either spouse, but not both, may enroll for self plus one or self and family. An individual may not be enrolled both as an employee, annuitant, or other individual eligible to enroll and as a member of the family.

(b) The Office shall prescribe regulations under which—

- (1) an eligible individual may enroll in a vision benefits plan; and
- (2) an enrolled individual may change the self-only, self plus one, or self and family coverage of that individual.

(c)(1) Regulations under subsection (b) shall permit an eligible individual to cancel or transfer the enrollment of that individual to another vision benefits plan—

(A) before the start of any contract term in which there is a change in rates charged or benefits provided, in which a new plan is offered, or in which an existing plan is terminated; or

(B) during other times and under other circumstances specified by the Office.

(2) A transfer under paragraph (1) shall be subject to waiting periods provided under a new plan.

(d) Coverage under a vision benefits plan under this chapter for any employee or a covered TRICARE-eligible individual enrolled in such a plan and who, as a result of a lapse in appropriations, is furloughed or excepted from furlough and working without pay shall continue during such lapse and may not be cancelled as a result of nonpayment of premiums or other periodic charges due to such lapse.

(Added Pub. L. 108-496, § 3, Dec. 23, 2004, 118 Stat. 4008; amended Pub. L. 116-92, div. A, title XI, § 1111(a)(2), Dec. 20, 2019, 133 Stat. 1601.)

Editorial Notes

AMENDMENTS

2019—Subsec. (d). Pub. L. 116-92 added subsec. (d).

Statutory Notes and Related Subsidiaries

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 2019 AMENDMENT

Amendment by Pub. L. 116-92 applicable to any contract for supplemental vision insurance under this chapter entered into before, on, or after Dec. 20, 2019, see section 1111(c) of Pub. L. 116-92, set out as a note under section 8956 of this title.

EFFECTIVE DATE

Section effective Dec. 23, 2004, and applicable to contracts that take effect with respect to the calendar year 2006, see section 7 of Pub. L. 108-496, set out as a note under section 8951 of this title.

§ 8987. Coverage of restored survivor or disability annuitants

A surviving spouse, disability annuitant, or surviving child whose annuity is terminated and is later restored, may continue enrollment in a vision benefits plan subject to the terms and conditions prescribed in regulations issued by the Office.

(Added Pub. L. 108-496, § 3, Dec. 23, 2004, 118 Stat. 4009.)

Statutory Notes and Related Subsidiaries

EFFECTIVE DATE

Section effective Dec. 23, 2004, and applicable to contracts that take effect with respect to the calendar