



Illinois Department of Insurance

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Guide to the Illinois Department of Insurance Individual Major Medical Health Policy Rate Filing Report

The Department provides this Report to inform Illinois health insurance consumers seeking to learn more about rate increases to individual major medical health policies. The Department does not receive small or large group health insurance rates or rate changes. The Department continues to improve the clarity and completeness of the information presented in this Report and encourages you to check back frequently for updates.

Illinois law allows for underwriting and rating of individual major medical health insurance policies based on health status as well as several other factors. Illinois law does not limit the amount an insurance company can charge based on health status.

The following columns of information are presented in the Department's Report:

- **Percent Rate Change.** This column reflects the change in the plan's base rate from that plan's most recently filed base rate. The base rate for a plan may be increased by an insurance company based on several reasons, including the claims submitted by every individual enrolled in your plan. A base rate is a starting point for a premium that applies before other factors are taken into account. Some factors, such as your health status, may only affect your premium at the time your policy is issued. Other factors, such as geographic location, may affect your premium both when your policy is issued and when it is renewed. Some of the factors that may affect the actual premium you will pay include:
 - **Health status.** Health status is perhaps the most important factor in determining the amount of premium you pay. Illinois law allows insurance companies to increase your premium based on your past or present medical conditions.
 - **Geographical location.** Your premium will vary depending on where you live in Illinois. For example, consumers living in urban areas like Chicago are typically charged more than consumers living in rural areas.
 - **Policy duration.** Your premium may be increased based on the amount of time you are enrolled in a plan. This factor is typically used by a company to account for the assumption that a policyholder is more likely to file a claim the longer he or she has had the policy.
 - **Gender.** Your premium will be affected by your gender, with women paying significantly more than men for the same policy, even without maternity benefits.
 - **Age.** Your premium will also be affected by your age, with premiums typically rising as you age.
- **Open/Closed.** This column indicates whether the plan listed is accepting (open) or not accepting (closed) new enrollees. Insurance companies routinely create new insurance plans and close new enrollment in existing plans. Pursuant to Illinois law, individuals can be denied major medical health insurance for any reason other than "race, color, religion or national origin." In addition, Illinois law requires that individual policies are guaranteed renewable. As a result, individuals with health care needs who are enrolled in a plan that is closed to new enrollees will remain in



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that plan, sometimes for many years. The insurance company will continue to adjust the plan's base and other rates as long as individuals are enrolled in the plan.

NOTE: HMOs do not regularly report whether a plan is open or closed. The Department is in the process of determining whether the listed HMO plans are open or closed and will update the Report accordingly.

- **Company Name.** The names reflected in the Report are the registered business names of the insurance companies offering a plan. HMO plans are distinguished from insurance plans by an “HMO” following the insurance company’s name. The insurance company name in the Report may not necessarily be the name you see on your policy form or health insurance card. For example, Health Care Service Corporation does business in Illinois as Blue Cross Blue Shield of Illinois. If you do not see the name of your insurance company in the Report you should contact your insurance company or the Department to determine the appropriate registered business name. In the process of compiling this public information, the Department observed that several insurers offering major medical insurance do not appear to have filed rates or rate changes. The Department is investigating.
- **Filing Date.** This column lists the date on which the insurance company rate filing was received by or placed on file with the Department.
- **Policy Name/Number.** This column lists the policy name or number assigned to a plan by the insurance company. This number can be used to track rate changes to your particular plan. The policy name/number should be on your policy but may not be the name by which you know your plan. Please contact your insurance company or the Department for more information on how to find your policy name/number.

More Information

The Department’s mission is to protect consumers by providing assistance and information, by efficiently regulating the insurance industry’s market behavior and financial solvency, and by fostering a competitive insurance marketplace. The Department assists consumers with all insurance complaints, including health, auto, life, and homeowner. Consumers in need of information or assistance should visit the Department’s Web site at insurance.illinois.gov or call our toll-free hotline at (866) 445-5364.