



Message from Oregon Insurance Division Administrator

July 2009

Legislative Session Wrap-Up

From HB 2190 (“total loss” legislation) to HB 2433 (extending state continuation benefits) to HB 2009 (health care reform and health insurance rate review changes), this was a busy session for the Insurance Division, but a successful one in terms of providing greater protections to Oregon’s consumers.

For those of you interested in tracking insurance-related legislation passed by the 2009 legislature, you can find a list of such bills, including brief summaries, on our Web site at: http://www.cbs.state.or.us/external/ins/legislature/2009_legislature/2009-ins_legislation-main.html.

I am also including a link to the department’s summary of key legislation in a variety of areas from debt management to mortgage borrowers. This document is available at: http://egov.oregon.gov/DCBS/docs/measures/2009report_leg.pdf.

What’s Next?

Now that the session is over, our work here at the Insurance Division shifts to the task of making new laws and consumer protections reality through rulemaking and other interim activities.

One of the division’s top priorities in the rules arena over the next several months is the rulemaking described in HB 2009 related to our health insurance rate review process. The new health insurance rate review provisions contained in HB 2009 apply to rate filings made on or after April 1, 2010. The rules to implement these changes will outline: what materials insurers must submit as part of a rate filing; what materials, if any, will be confidential; and how administrative expense information should be submitted for each filing.

As you can imagine, we also have a number of other issues we will be addressing through rulemaking. I hope to have a list of issues/bills for rulemaking, including proposed timelines for each, posted on our website shortly.

For those of you who want to closely track the division’s rulemaking, I would encourage you to go to our Web site (www.insurance.oregon.gov) and sign up for *e-mail notification* in the left column. You can then mark boxes to receive an e-mail about both “proposed” and “recently adopted” rules.

Medicare Supplement Insurance

One area where we recently completed rulemaking is Medicare supplement insurance. The amended rules we adopted provide dually eligible Medicaid/Medicare recipients guarantee-issue rights to purchase a Medicare supplement plan when they receive notice that their Medicaid coverage is terminated.

Other changes implement the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008 (GINA) and the Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act of 2008 (MIPPA). MIPPA, for example, authorized major revisions to the standardized Medicare supplement plans. Currently there are 17 different standardized Medicare supplement plans (Plans A-L, High Deductible Plan F and High Deductible Plan J). As of June 1, 2010, insurers will be able to offer 11 plans (Plans A-D, Plan F, High Deductible Plan F, Plan G, and Plans K-N).

You can find information about these rules and implementation of the new 2010 plans at: http://insurance.oregon.gov/rules/recent_admin_rules.html

Background on these changes is available at:

http://insurance.oregon.gov/rules/attachments/recently%20proposed/id03-2009_attachment.pdf

Consumer calls

Division consumer advocates are continuing to receive a lot of calls from consumers seeking information about ways to stay insured when faced with a job loss as well as calls requesting information about the federal subsidies available to pay for continuation coverage through a former employer. For those of you fielding similar calls, I am including a link below containing information about the federal subsidy as well as information about other options for continuing health insurance coverage for those not eligible for the federal subsidy:

<http://insurance.oregon.gov/consumer/consumer-issues/federal-stimulus-info/federal-stimulus-info.html>

We also continue to receive calls about how to get the best possible settlement on totaled cars. Below is a link to a tip sheet for consumers facing a “total loss”:

http://insurance.oregon.gov/consumer/consumer-tips/4845-4_vehicle-total-loss.pdf.

For those of you interested, we recently posted the 2008 Oregon Insurance Complaint data at:

http://www.cbs.state.or.us/external/ins/publications/consumer/annual_complaintreports/2008/complaint_statistics-2008.html.

Proposed Changes to Producer License Renewal Process

The Insurance Division is proposing to streamline its license renewal process and cut costs by moving to a fully electronic license renewal process. Use of an electronic process supports our sustainability goals and should result in over \$24,000 in annual savings from reduced mailing costs alone. This means:

- Producers would *not* get a paper renewal notice, as is currently the case.
- The Insurance Division will send producers an e-mail reminder about renewing. Producers will be responsible to keep their address updated through the National Insurance Producer Registry.
- Producers would renew licenses through (NIPR) but continue to send continuing education paperwork to the Insurance Division.

Your comments

We propose to make this change effective January 1, 2010. Please let us know if you have any concerns by contacting our Producer Licensing manager, Jim Thompson at james.t.thompson@state.or.us. Jim can be reached by phone at (503) 947-7247.

2009 Industry Training

The Oregon Insurance Division will be holding the 2009 Industry Training October 26-27, 2009. The first day will be a full day of life and health and the second day will be a half day of property and casualty.

Because of the economic realities facing us all, we recognize that traveling may be out of the question for some companies. To help get information to those who need it, we are excited to offer three different alternatives for participation. First, we have room for **75 in-person participants**. We are also taking advantage of current technology and will be offering **video conferencing participation**. For those companies who do not have access to video conferencing, we are offering **teleconferencing** with the additional option to view the meeting via **video-streaming**.

Watch for updates at

http://www.cbs.state.or.us/external/ins/insurer/rates_forms/rateform_whatsnew.html or sign up for e-notify to receive updates on this training opportunity.

As always, if you have questions/concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me.

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Insurance Division