

Miami Herald

Posted on Tue, Aug. 12, 2014

Feds warn 93,800 Floridians to prove immigration status or lose Obamacare

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Federal health officials are warning almost 94,000 people in Florida that they must prove they are U.S. citizens or legal immigrants in order to remain eligible for insurance under the Affordable Care Act.

The targeted consumers are part of a group of 310,000 newly insured people around the country who have not responded to requests from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services for documents that would establish their claim of legal residency, a condition of eligibility for the tax-supported healthcare marketplaces.

Over the past few weeks, HHS officials have used letters, e-mails and telephone calls to ask enrollees to send supporting documents in order to maintain their coverage. A new round of communications is being launched, officials said, and the coverage of policyholders who do not respond by Sept. 5 will expire at the end of September.

“We want as many consumers as possible to remain enrolled in marketplace coverage, so we are giving these individuals a last chance to submit their documents before their coverage through the marketplace will end,” said Marilyn B. Tavenner, administrator of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services.

In May there were unresolved questions about the legal status of 970,000 people nationwide, officials said in a conference call on Tuesday. About 450,000 of those cases have been resolved, while an additional 210,000 are being investigated after the consumers provided documents. The remaining 310,000 are the subject of the new outreach effort, which includes letters in English and Spanish.

More than 8 million people have enrolled in insurance plans under the ACA.

Maura Shiffman, a spokeswoman for the Health Council of South Florida, part of a network of 11 not-for-profit agencies that seek to improve access to healthcare, said representatives of the agencies would visit libraries, community health centers and other locations to get out the word about the eligibility requirements.

Consumers whose policies are being reviewed for questions about their income will be asked for more information at a later date, officials said.

The outreach effort announced Tuesday applies only to the three dozen states, including Florida, in which the insurance marketplaces are run by the federal government.

This story was produced in collaboration with Kaiser Health News, an editorially independent program of the Kaiser Family Foundation.

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