



Summary of the COBRA Premium Reduction Provisions under ARRA, as Amended



President Obama signed the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) on February 17, 2009. On December 19, 2009, the President signed the Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 2010. These laws give “Assistance Eligible Individuals” the right to pay reduced COBRA premiums for periods of coverage beginning on or after February 17, 2009 and can last up to 15 months.

To be considered an “Assistance Eligible Individual” and get reduced premiums you:

- **MUST** have a continuation coverage election opportunity related to an involuntary termination of employment that occurred at any time from September 1, 2008 through February 28, 2010;
- **MUST** elect the coverage;
- **MUST NOT** be eligible for Medicare; AND
- **MUST NOT** be eligible for coverage under any other group health plan, such as a plan sponsored by a successor employer or a spouse’s employer.*

Individuals whose nine month premium reduction ended also have an opportunity to make a payment to continue coverage at the reduced rates. These payments must be made by the later of February 17, 2010, 30 days from the date the notice regarding the ARRA amendment that extended the premium reduction to 15 months was provided, or the end of the otherwise applicable payment grace period.

◆ IMPORTANT ◆

- ◇ If, after you elect COBRA and while you are paying the reduced premium, you become eligible for other group health plan coverage or Medicare you **MUST** notify the plan in writing. If you do not, you may be subject to a tax penalty.
- ◇ Electing the premium reduction disqualifies you for the Health Coverage Tax Credit. If you are eligible for the Health Coverage Tax Credit, which could be more valuable than the premium reduction, you will have received a notification from the IRS.
- ◇ The amount of the premium reduction is recaptured for certain high income individuals. If the amount you earn for the year is more than \$125,000 (or \$250,000 for married couples filing a joint Federal income tax return) all or part of the premium reduction may be recaptured by an increase in your income tax liability for the year. If you think that your income may exceed the amounts above, you may wish to consider waiving your right to the premium reduction. For more information, consult your tax preparer or visit the IRS webpage on ARRA at www.irs.gov.

For general information regarding your plan’s COBRA coverage you can contact [*enter name of party responsible for COBRA administration for the Plan, with telephone number and address*].

For specific information related to your plan’s administration of the ARRA Premium Reduction or to notify the plan of your ineligibility to continue paying reduced premiums, contact [*enter name of party responsible for ARRA Premium Reduction administration for the Plan, with telephone number and address*].

If you are denied treatment as an “Assistance Eligible Individual” you may have the right to have the denial reviewed. For more information regarding reviews or for general information about the ARRA Premium Reduction go to:

www.dol.gov/COBRA or call 1-866-444-EBSA (3272)

* Generally, this does not include coverage for only dental, vision, counseling, or referral services; coverage under a health flexible spending arrangement; or treatment that is furnished in an on-site medical facility maintained by the employer.