

Trump Administration Considering Opening Obamacare Enrollment Amid Pandemic

As the administration backs a court fight to kill the Affordable Care Act, officials suddenly realize Americans need health insurance now.

5 The Trump administration is considering opening up a special enrollment period for the Affordable Care Act to help uninsured Americans during the coronavirus crisis, Politico and The Wall Street Journal reported Saturday.

At least nine states that run their own health insurance exchanges have already reopened Obamacare enrollment to uninsured residents so they can obtain coverage.

10 But most states depend on the insurance marketplace run by the federal government. Open enrollment for states that use the federal exchange ended on Dec. 15. But a spokeswoman for the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), which runs the Trump administration insurance marketplace, HealthCare.gov, said officials are now considering a new enrollment period.

15 “CMS is evaluating offering a Special Enrollment Period specifically designated for COVID-19,” she told the Journal. “We will continue to work with states and health plans around the country to assess what additional actions are necessary to ensure the American people have coverage for and access to the services they need during this time.”

The representative also encouraged people to check the HealthCare.gov site now to determine if they may already be able to enroll because of a change in circumstances, such as losing a job.

20 About 30 million people are currently uninsured, and that number is likely to grow significantly as businesses shut down.

Insurance lobby organizations America’s Health Insurance Plans and the Blue Cross Blue Shield Association urged lawmakers in a letter Thursday to include insurance plan subsidies in upcoming coronavirus stimulus packages. It also encouraged a “one-time special enrollment period for the individual market — regardless of an individual’s current health status or whether they have coverage today.”

25 The letter added: “Given the risk posed by COVID-19, it is more important than ever for people to have health coverage. This will give people the opportunity to get the security and peace of mind that health care coverage provides.”

Ironically, GOP officials in 20 states — with the backing of Donald Trump — are currently fighting in court to kill Obamacare. The Supreme Court will hear the case, likely next term.

30 The Affordable Care Act was passed 10 years ago.