



## **Re: Washington Healthplanfinder Tax Credit Miscalculation**

### **Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)**

Week of Nov. 11, 2013

#### **Background:**

Last month, Exchange staff uncovered and corrected a system error that has affected around 8,000 Washington Healthplanfinder applicants who applied for qualified health plans during the month of October. This error caused some applicants to qualify for higher than expected tax credit amounts than allowed based on their income level or household size.

The error did not impact any Medicaid enrollees or applicants or customers who purchased health plans without these tax credits, close to 91 percent of current enrollment, and the root cause of the miscalculation was corrected within 24 hours.

To ensure every customer's tax credit is correct, the Exchange spent the past week updating the eligibility determination for each tax credit recipient and confirming that all tax credit information is correct based on their income level and household size.

While the corrected tax credit differential may be less than a dollar a month for some, it may be more for those with higher income levels. On average the difference is about \$100 per month.

**The Exchange regrets this system error and is committed to helping each and every one of our customers ensure they have the correct tax credit amount and can choose the best plan to meet their needs and budget. This commitment will include personal calls from Exchange staff to customers who have initiated payment and are most affected by this error.**

As standard practice, we encourage all tax credit recipients to review their accounts for accuracy before initiating payment. It should be noted that no payments have been processed and individuals have until December 23, or the date in December that they scheduled payment, to approve applications that have been submitted.

#### **For those affected:**

- They have received a letter on their account dashboard and by US mail or email (depending on their selected preference). The letter explains the issue and provides an updated eligibility determination.
- They have been invited back to Washington Healthplanfinder to complete their shopping experience, including changing their health insurance plan if they had previously selected a health plan.
- If they call our toll-free customer support center, they can select a prompt on the welcome menu to be directed to dedicated staff who can assist with this particular issue.



- WAHBE staff will also reach out directly to some customers via phone in the upcoming weeks.

#### **FAQs – Week of Nov. 11, 2013:**

##### **Q: What are you doing for customers who were affected by the problem?**

- We are working directly with each of our affected customers to re-determine their eligibility and help them correct their application before Dec. 23, 2013, or the date in December that they scheduled payment, for coverage that begins on Jan. 1, 2014.
- The Exchange has provided all tax credit recipients with a correspondence that includes their eligibility determination with their corrected tax credit amount and simple steps for accessing Washington Healthplanfinder to either approve or modify their current health plan selection.
- This correspondence is also available electronically through the customer's account dashboard.
- We have also provided a prompt on the welcome menu of our toll-free customer support center where a customer with questions related to this issue may choose to be directed to dedicated staff who can assist with this particular issue.

##### **Q: How was this issue not identified earlier?**

- Staff received reports of issues from our customer support network in the first 10 days of operations but correctly identified the issue on October 22.
- This issue did not result in any error messages and only affected a specific portion of customers who submitted applications for Qualified Health Plans and are eligible for Health Insurance Premium Tax Credits.

##### **Q: How can residents trust that your system will provide the correct data amounts in the future?**

- We want to ensure residents that this particular tax credit miscalculation was an isolated issue. To ensure every consumer's tax credit is correct, the Exchange spent the past week updating the eligibility determination for each tax credit recipient and confirming that all tax credit information is correct based on their income level and household size. That being said, we are currently evaluating our testing processes moving forward to ensure we avoid similar issues in the future.
- As standard practice, we encourage all tax credit recipients to review their accounts for accuracy before initiating payment, including customers who have already selected a plan and scheduled payment in December. It should be noted that no payments have been processed and individuals have until December 23, or the date in December that they scheduled payment, to approve applications that have been submitted.

##### **Q: Will the IT issues occurring with Healthcare.gov, the Federal Exchange, impact my account and application? Will the changes being done to Healthcare.gov, the Federal Exchange, change my tax credit amount or eligibility status?**

- To determine whether an individual or family is eligible for a Qualified Health Plan with financial help to lower the cost of their coverage, the Washington Healthplanfinder portal interfaces with

the Federal Data Services Hub. The Federal Data Services Hub is separate from the Federal Exchange, known as Healthcare.gov.

- To address the miscalculation of tax credits, Washington Healthplanfinder IT staff fixed a file format in Healthplanfinder so that it matches information that we verify through our connection to the Federal Data Services Hub.
- IT changes being done to Healthcare.gov do not have an impact on customer accounts, application or eligibility status.

**Q: I received a letter from Washington Healthplanfinder stating that my tax credit amount changed. However, when I signed in to my account and checked my tax credit amount, my amount hasn't changed. What's going on?**

- Washington Healthplanfinder sent the letter to some customers whose accounts were experiencing an additional display error. The display error means that the letter as well as your Washington Healthplanfinder application are still displaying an incorrect tax credit amount. We ask that you wait to continue your shopping experience in Washington Healthplanfinder until you receive an updated eligibility determination in the next 7-10 days.
- Unfortunately, our system generated the letter before the error was completely resolved. We continue to work to resolve this issue and will send you an updated letter within the next 7-10 days. We apologize for this miscommunication and inconvenience. In the meantime, if you have any questions, please feel free to respond to this email or call us at 1-855-923-4633.
- Again, we sincerely apologize for this situation and thank you for your patience.

**Q: If I have already selected a plan and want to keep it, what do I need to do?**

- If you have already selected a plan that you would like to keep, you will need to complete your shopping experience through Washington\_Healthplanfinder by December 23, 2013, or the date in December that you scheduled your payment, for coverage to begin on January 1, 2014.
- Simply sign in to your Healthplanfinder account and click on "enrolled" from your Healthplanfinder account dashboard. Confirm your plan selection or select a new health plan with your correct tax credit amount applied to the monthly premium cost.

**Q: How do I dis-enroll from my plan?**

- To dis-enroll from your plan means to cancel your current health plan enrollment. If you choose to cancel your enrollment without confirming your current plan or purchasing a new plan, you must contact the Customer Support Center and request to cancel your enrollment. Please call us at 1-855-923-4633 to dis-enroll. We will save your application and account information in case you decide to return to Washington Healthplanfinder at a later date.

**Q: How do I change my plan?**

- *If you have already selected a plan*, sign in to your Healthplanfinder account and click on “enrolled” from your Healthplanfinder account dashboard.
- *If you have not yet selected a plan*, sign in to your Healthplanfinder account and click on “select a plan” from your Healthplanfinder account dashboard.
- Confirm your plan selection or select a new health plan with your correct tax credit amount applied to the monthly premium cost. **You will need to complete your shopping experience by December 23, 2013 (or the date in December that you scheduled your payment) for coverage to begin on January 1, 2014.**

**Q: What happens if I decide to not act?**

- You will need to complete your shopping experience by December 23, 2013 for coverage to begin on January 1, 2014. If you do not confirm your plan selection or select a new health plan with your correct tax credit amount applied to the monthly premium cost, you will be disenrolled.

**Q: I received my membership card from the health insurance carrier that I enrolled for coverage through. What do I do with it given that I received a letter from Washington Healthplanfinder that I need to complete my shopping experience by December 23, 2013 for coverage to begin on January 1, 2014?**

- Soon, you should hear from the health insurance carrier about the membership card that they sent you.
- You will need to complete your shopping experience through Washington Healthplanfinder by December 23, 2013 for coverage to begin on January 1, 2014. Even though you received a membership card, your coverage is not final until you complete the following actions through Healthplanfinder:
  - *If you have already selected a plan*, sign in to your Healthplanfinder account and click on “enrolled” from your Healthplanfinder account dashboard.
  - *If you have not yet selected a plan*, sign in to your Healthplanfinder account and click on “select a plan” from your Healthplanfinder account dashboard.
  - Confirm your plan selection or select a new health plan with your correct tax credit amount applied to the monthly premium cost.

**Q: Why is my original payment still scheduled? What will happen when I make a change?**

- You may have noticed that your original payment is still showing as “scheduled” through the billing and payments section of your Healthplanfinder account dashboard.
- Once you complete your shopping experience, your original payment will be canceled and you will make a new payment according to your confirmed or new health plan selection.
- You can verify the canceled and newly-scheduled payment by viewing the Billing and Payments tab on your account dashboard.

**Q: How do I document my final tax credit amount? Is the letter I just received from Washington Healthplanfinder my final documentation? What will I use when I file my federal tax return?**

- You will receive an invoice from Washington Healthplanfinder in 2015 so that you have the documentation you need to file your federal tax return for 2014. The letter that you received from Washington Healthplanfinder does not serve as official documentation about the tax credit amount that you decided to claim.
- The IRS has published additional resources available at [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov)

**Q: What are my health care coverage and consumer rights?**

- On [wahealthplanfinder.org](http://wahealthplanfinder.org), we have posted [Health Care Coverage Rights & Responsibilities](#) in the Consumer Info Center under “Legal Policies.”
- In addition to the policies listed in that document, you can apply for an exemption from the federal government’s requirement to purchase health insurance. The Affordable Care Act exempts several groups from the individual mandate, meaning that they are not required to get health coverage. Exemptions can be filed for religious, financial, and other reasons. For example, taxpayers with an income below the filing threshold and individuals who cannot afford coverage (when required contribution is more than 8 percent of household income) will be exempt. American Indians/Alaskan Natives and Indians eligible for services through an Indian health care provider are also exempt.
- The exemption application and determination are not handled by Washington Healthplanfinder. The exemption form will be available soon through the IRS. More information is also available at <http://www.irs.gov/uac/Questions-and-Answers-on-the-Individual-Shared-Responsibility-Provision>.