

December 7, 2009

Additional Information about Employment-Based Coverage

The changes in employment-based coverage shown in Table 3 of the [cost estimate](#) for the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act are themselves the net result of several flows, which can be illustrated using the estimates for 2019. For that year, under the proposal, CBO and the JCT staff estimate that about 157 million nonelderly people would have their primary insurance coverage through an employer, or about 5 million fewer than under current law.

- We estimate that about 6 million people would be covered by an employment-based plan who would not be covered by one under current law (largely because the mandate for individuals to be insured would increase workers' demand for insurance coverage through their employers).
- We estimate that between 9 million and 10 million other people who would be covered by an employment-based plan under current law would not have an offer of such coverage under the proposal. Firms that would choose not to offer coverage as a result of the proposal would tend to be smaller employers and employers that predominantly employ lower-wage workers—people who would be eligible for subsidies through the exchanges—although some workers who would not have employment-based coverage because of the proposal would not be eligible for such subsidies. Whether those changes in coverage would represent the dropping of existing coverage or a lack of new offers of coverage is difficult to determine.
- In addition, between 1 million and 2 million people who could be covered by their employer's plan (or a plan offered to a family member) would instead obtain coverage in the exchanges, either because the employer's offer would be deemed unaffordable and they would therefore be eligible to receive subsidies in the exchanges, or because the "firewall" for those with an offer of employer coverage would be imperfectly enforced. (Those people are counted as enrollees in the exchanges.)