Cuts to Tax Credits for ACA Marketplace Plans

Will you pay more for insurance?

Without congressional intervention, hundreds of billions of dollars of health care tax credits will expire at the end of this year. In 2025, **919,453 North Carolinians** benefited from these tax credits.[1]

Who will be impacted?

Gig workers, contractors, and small business owners are especially likely to be impacted. If you don't receive health insurance through your job, but make too much to qualify for Medicaid, these cuts may affect you.

How do I know if I receive these tax credits?

Enhanced premium tax credits ensure that everyone who **buys health insurance on the individual marketplace pays no more than 8.5% of their income** in insurance premiums, and that many pay a lot less than that.[2] If you buy marketplace insurance, it is very likely that you benefit from this subsidy.

How much more could I pay?

Blue Cross Blue Shield of North Carolina recently published an eye-popping estimate: a middle-income couple, making $125,000 a year, could pay $24,392 more in insurance premiums next year. A single adult making $25,000 a year could pay $1,200 more.[3] Your specific circumstances will depend on your income, your age, and the number of people in your household, but most people will see a significant increase in their monthly premiums.

Free help is available.

NC NAVIGATOR CONSORTIUM

AFFORDABLE HEALTH COVERAGE: Let's find it together.

This year, open enrollment will be a bit more complicated, but **free and unbiased** help is available through the NC Navigator Consortium. They will work with you to find the most affordable health insurance options for you and your family. Schedule an appointment:

[ncnavigator.org/get-help]

1-855-733-3711

Without these tax credits, there is no way for me to afford health coverage. I work hard to make a living as a ride share driver, and the marketplace insurance helps me keep up with my health. I'm worried that if I don't have insurance and I get sick, I will be facing a chronic illness, and large bills. I really hope these tax credits get extended.

\- Kevan, Wilmington, North Carolina

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What steps should I take?

Uncertainty about when and if Congress will extend these tax credits is going to make knowing when to enroll* in health insurance more confusing. We suggest taking the following steps:

1. Schedule an appointment NOW with an NC Navigator for early December 2025 (before 12/15) at ncnavigator.org/get-help.
2. Starting a week before open enrollment, which begins on November 1, you can check on the availability of the tax credits by scanning the QR code or visiting healthcare.gov/see-plans and entering your information.
3. If premiums are too high and/or you don't see any tax credits, **check back weekly to see if there are any updates.**
4. If tax credits become available before your scheduled appointment, you can try to make an earlier appointment or keep your scheduled appointment to get help enrolling.
5. If the tax credits are not extended the Navigators will still be there to help.

*** Note:** You **MUST** enroll in a plan by December 15, 2025, to have a policy that starts on January 1, 2026. However, you can continue to make changes to your plan until January 15, 2026, but those policies will start on February 1.

Tips for Navigating Upcoming Affordable Care Act (ACA) Open Enrollment

Keep up to date with what is happening with your current policy. Often, if you do nothing, your old policy will just auto-renew. **Open any mail from your current insurer** to make sure you will not be hit with a surprise large bill in the middle of December and left scrambling to find a new plan before December 15.

TELL CONGRESS: Extend Enhanced Premium Tax Credits

Affordable health care should not be a partisan issue

If you want to take action, the NC Justice Center has set up a webpage where you can contact your members of Congress, regardless of their party, and tell them to extend the enhanced premium tax credits: bit.ly/APTCNC

Sources

1. Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services. "2025 Marketplace Open Enrollment Period Public Use Files." May 12, 2025. https://www.cms.gov/data-research/statistics-trends-reports/marketplace-products/2025-marketplace-open-enrollment-period-public-use-files
2. Kaiser Family Foundation. "Premium Payments if Enhanced Premium Tax Credits Expire." September 19, 2025. https://www.kff.org/affordable-care-act/premium-payments-if-enhanced-premium-tax-credits-expire/
3. Blue Cross Blue Shield of North Carolina. "Understanding what's ahead: changes for Marketplace plans in 2026." https://acrobat.adobe.com/id/urn:aaid:sc:VA6C2:e4a31578-d668-4c08-8838-bd81575e9301
4. Kaiser Family Foundation. "How Much More Would People Pay in Premiums if the ACA's Enhanced Premium Tax Credits Expire?" September 12, 2025. https://www.kff.org/interactive/how-much-more-would-people-pay-in-premiums-if-the-acas-enhanced-subsidies-expired/#state=nc&zip=&income-type=&income=&alternate-plan-family=

Got a story about how losing these tax credits have harmed you or your family? Share your story today by contacting Rebecca Cerese at rebecca@ncjustice.org.

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