
SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 2554

State of Washington

66th Legislature

2020 Regular Session

By House Health Care & Wellness (originally sponsored by Representatives Stonier, Cody, Macri, Riccelli, Robinson, Tharinger, Senn, Peterson, Valdez, Davis, Doglio, Dolan, Fitzgibbon, Walen, Frame, Ramel, Pollet, Ryu, Goodman, Lekanoff, Ormsby, and Chapman)

READ FIRST TIME 02/07/20.

1 AN ACT Relating to mitigating inequity in the health insurance
2 market caused by health plans that exclude certain mandated benefits;
3 adding a new section to chapter 48.43 RCW; and adding a new section
4 to chapter 43.71 RCW.

5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

6 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** A new section is added to chapter 48.43
7 RCW to read as follows:

8 (1) A health carrier that excludes, under state or federal law,
9 any benefit required or mandated by this title or rules adopted by
10 the commissioner from any health plan or student health plan shall:

11 (a) Notify each enrollee in writing of the following:

12 (i) Which benefits the health plan or student health plan does
13 not cover; and

14 (ii) Alternate ways in which the enrollees may access excluded
15 benefits in a timely manner;

16 (b) Ensure that enrollees have prompt access to the information
17 required under this subsection; and

18 (c) Clearly and legibly include the information specified in
19 (a)(i) and (ii) of this subsection in any of its marketing materials
20 that include a list of benefits covered under the plan. The

1 information must also be listed in the benefit booklet and posted on
2 the carrier's health plan or student health plan web site.

3 (2) For the purpose of mitigating inequity in the health
4 insurance market, the commissioner may assess a fee on any health
5 carrier offering a health plan or student health plan if the health
6 plan or student health plan excludes, under state or federal law, any
7 essential health benefit or coverage that is otherwise required or
8 mandated by this title or rules adopted by the commissioner.

9 (a) The commissioner shall set the fee in an amount that is the
10 actuarial equivalent of costs attributed to the provision and
11 administration of the excluded benefit. As part of its rate filing, a
12 health carrier subject to this subsection (2) must submit to the
13 commissioner an estimate of the amount of the fee, including
14 supporting documentation of its methods for estimating the fee. The
15 carrier must include in its supporting documentation a certification
16 by a member of the American academy of actuaries that the estimated
17 fee is the actuarial equivalent of costs attributed to the provision
18 and administration of the excluded benefit.

19 (b) Fees paid under this section must be deposited into the
20 general fund.

21 (3) Nothing in this section limits the authority of the
22 commissioner to take enforcement action if a health carrier
23 unlawfully fails to comply with the provisions of this title.

24 (4) The commissioner shall adopt any rules necessary to implement
25 this section.

26 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 43.71
27 RCW to read as follows:

28 (1) Beginning November 1, 2021, the exchange shall provide
29 individuals seeking to enroll in coverage on its web site with access
30 to the information a health carrier must provide under section 1 of
31 this act for any qualified health plan the health carrier offers that
32 excludes, under state or federal law, any benefit required or
33 mandated by Title 48 RCW or rules adopted by the commissioner.

34 (2) The exchange may provide the access required under this
35 section directly on its web site, through a link to an external web
36 site, or in any other manner that allows consumers to easily access
37 the information.

1 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** If any provision of this act or its
2 application to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the
3 remainder of the act or the application of the provision to other
4 persons or circumstances is not affected.

--- **END** ---