

INSURANCE MATTERS

A Newsletter for Delawareans

September 2023

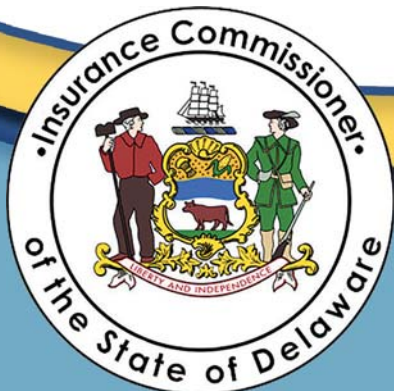


In This Issue

- *DOI Goes to the Fair*
- *A More Convenient New Castle County Office*
- *Health Insurance Trends*
- *What's Happening Around DOI*
 - *Ask the Commissioner*

DOI Goes to the Fair

From July 20 to July 29th, the Delaware Department of Insurance operated a booth at the Delaware State Fair to engage fairgoers and encourage them to get insured. This is one of our biggest outreach opportunities each year. We provided important information to consumers about all kinds of insurance coverage, claims processes, and other consumer protections. We sent folks home with informational guides and branded giveaways to help people remember how to get in touch with us. If you missed us, do not worry – we will be back again next year, and continue to conduct outreach at many of our state's big community events.



Trinidad Navarro
Insurance Commissioner
Delaware Department of Insurance
1351 West North Street, Suite 101
Dover, DE 19904

A More Convenient New Castle County Office



In order to increase accessibility for residents in need of assistance, we have relocated our New Castle County Offices to the Rockwood Business Park, 503 Carr Rd, Suite 301 in 19809. The new office has easy access to I-95, and ample free parking, making it more convenient than our former downtown offices. We were able to make the transition into the newly renovated building while saving over \$200,000. We look forward serving the people of Delaware from our new Wilmington home.

If you have an appointment to visit us, why not also plan to enjoy the neighborhood?

We are right by the beautiful Bellevue State Park, where you can walk, bike, and play.



Health Insurance Trends



It is estimated that 16.3 million people enrolled in a Marketplace plan during the 2022 open enrollment period – with over 3 million being new participants. This is a record level of enrollment – Delaware saw its highest enrollment ever as well with 35,000 residents acquiring coverage from the Health Insurance Marketplace. Increased enrollment has many causes, including enhanced subsidies and the correction of the “Family Glitch.” About 6,000 Delaware residents were

eligible for a premium of \$10 a month or less, and the vast majority of participants accessed advance premium tax credits which brought average costs to below \$200 a month.

In Delaware, we also have seen premiums decrease roughly 12% since 2019 and have improved carrier competition. As recently as 2022, Delaware consumers had only one insurer and 12 plans to choose from. During this year’s Open Enrollment, which starts November 1, Delawareans will have four insurers and 57 plans to choose from. The insurers are Celtic Insurance Company, Ambetter Health of Delaware, Aetna Health, AmeriHealth Caritas, Highmark Blue Cross Blue Shield of Delaware.

Nationally, there are continued concerns about the impact inflation will have on health care costs – and on premiums. In Delaware, our independent actuaries and the Office of Value-Based Healthcare Delivery carefully review rate requests thoroughly to ensure they are not excessive, and insurers are required to spend at least 80% of premium on medical claims.

The end of the Public Health Emergency has necessitated Medicaid “unwinding,” which restarts the eligibility redeterminations that were paused by the pandemic. Nationally, this could result in 15-18 million people losing their Medicaid coverage, transitioning to employer-sponsored coverage, or using a Special Enrollment Period to access the Health Insurance Marketplace.

One of the other issues state regulators are tracking closely is participation in the small group market. Some states are reporting a shrinking small group market due to a variety of factors – businesses closing during the pandemic; moving to self-insurance; participating in a Health Reimbursement Arrangement (HRA) to cap costs. This is a trend states will be watching. In Delaware, we are excited to share that six carriers have filed 62 small group plans for the coming plan year: Aetna Health, Aetna Health (as a PA Corp), Aetna Life, Highmark, Optimum Choice, and United Healthcare.

What's Happening at DOI

DOI Employee Recognition Day

On July 7th, DOI staff was able to spend some quality time with each other and our families during an employee recognition day at Killens Pond. Our incredible and selfless Sunshine Committee did a wonderful job securing us a great location and a delicious meal. We're so appreciative of everyone who volunteered and made it a great afternoon!

We were happy to have many kids join the celebration, and they know the best way to cool off is with some cold water... and best way to deliver that cold water is via water balloons! Even Commissioner Trinidad Navarro (The Ringleader) got in the spirit – and suffered the consequences – as he battled the fierce competition. The employee recognition day concluded with a variety of delicious food options and many (full) happy DOI members.



ASK THE COMMISSIONER

Preparing For a Flood

Many people wish to believe that flooding could never happen to them, but if you live where it rains, you live where it could flood. Unfortunately, the reality is that flooding can happen to anyone, anywhere. These severe weather events are happening more and more often, so it's important to always be prepared.

Some people may think that regular property insurance will cover flooding damage to a home or commercial building and it's contents. It doesn't. Consumers actually need to purchase flood insurance separate from property insurance to make sure you are covered in case of an emergency. You should also take all precautions to limit the amount of damage that your home may sustain when flood waters come barging in.

Properties in certain areas may be required to carry flood insurance, which is offered both by private insurers and through the National Flood Insurance Program. But more than 20% of flood damage happens in areas outside of the "flood plains" where coverage is required. Flood insurance often has a waiting period before coverage begins, so be aware that purchasing flood insurance right before a storm may not protect you.

If you have any concerns about flood insurance or where to find it, call us at 302-674-7300 or visit <https://content.naic.org/consumer/flood-insurance.html> to learn more.



Trinidad Navarro
Delaware Insurance Commissioner

Main Office
1351 W North St
Suite 101
Dover, DE 19904

Georgetown Office
28 The Circle, Suite 1
Georgetown, DE 19947

Wilmington Office
Rockwood Office Park
503 Carr Rd.,
Suite 301
Wilmington, DE 19809

The consumer comes first.

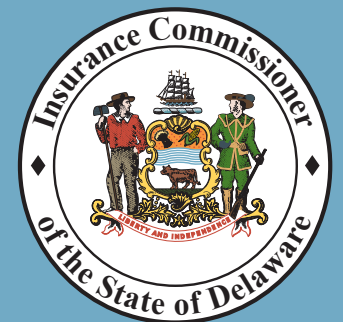
Our office is here to help if you have questions about or problems with your insurance coverage or insurance company.

Questions about insurance or complaints about an insurance company or insurance agent can be made to the Consumer Services Division by phone, by fax, by letter, by email or with an online complaint form.

Phone: 302-674-7300

Fax: 302-739-6278

consumer@delaware.gov



Our Mission

Protecting Delawareans through regulation and education while providing oversight of the insurance industry to best serve the public.