



# ACA 101: Understanding the Affordable Care Act

*A Client Education Presentation*



# What is the Affordable Care Act (ACA)?



Passed in 2010, the ACA aims to provide affordable health insurance to more Americans.



Requires most people to have minimum essential coverage.



Expands Medicaid eligibility and provides subsidies for those who qualify.

The ACA was created to make healthcare more accessible and protect consumers from unfair insurance practices. Understanding how it works will empower you to choose the best health insurance plan for your situation.

# Who is Eligible for ACA Plans?

To qualify, you must:

- **Be a U.S. citizen or legal resident**
- **Live in the U.S.**
- **Not be incarcerated**
- **Not be eligible for Medicare or Medicaid (in most cases)**

Eligibility rules can vary based on income, household size, and residency status. It is important to review your situation to determine what options are available to you.



# ACA Plan Categories

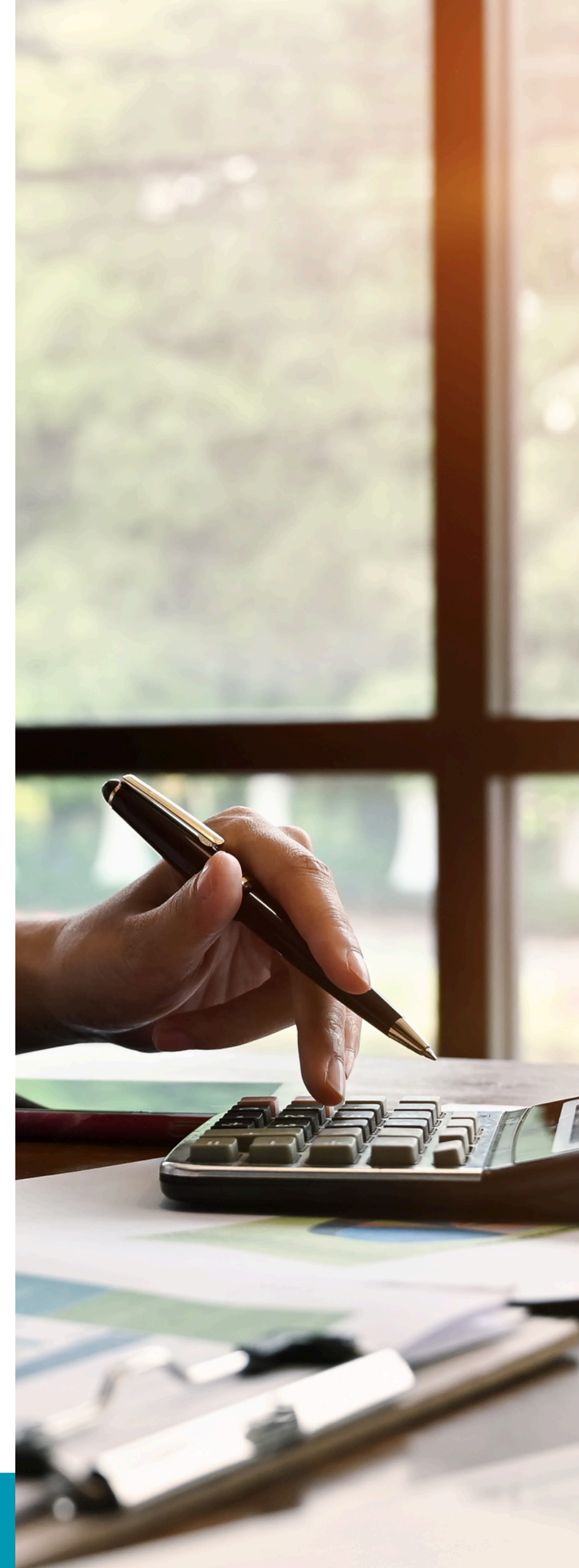
- ✓ **Bronze:** Lowest premiums, highest out-of-pocket costs. Good for young, healthy individuals.
- ✓ **Silver:** Moderate premiums and costs. Best for cost-sharing reductions (if you qualify).
- ✓ **Gold:** Higher premiums but lower out-of-pocket costs when you need care.
- ✓ **Platinum:** Highest premiums, but lowest out-of-pocket costs for frequent care users.

Understanding these plan categories is crucial in choosing the right coverage. Each plan balances monthly costs with potential out-of-pocket expenses, so selecting the right category depends on your expected healthcare usage.

# How Subsidies & Tax Credits Work

- Premium Tax Credits lower the cost of monthly premiums.
- Cost-Sharing Reductions (**CSRs**) lower out-of-pocket expenses for Silver plans.
- Subsidies are based on income and household size (Federal Poverty Level - FPL).
- Use the Marketplace calculator to check your eligibility for savings.

Many individuals qualify for subsidies but may not be aware of them. Checking eligibility can significantly reduce your healthcare costs and make coverage more affordable.



# Special Enrollment Periods (SEPs)

You may qualify for an SEP if you experience:

- **Loss of employer coverage**
- **Marriage, divorce, or legal separation**
- **Moving to a new coverage area**
- **Having a baby or adopting a child**
- **Gaining eligibility for Medicaid/CHIP**
- **Losing Medicaid eligibility**



If you miss Open Enrollment, a Special Enrollment Period may allow you to get coverage based on significant life changes. It's important to act quickly when qualifying for an SEP, as these windows are time-sensitive.



# Common ACA Myths & Facts

**Myth:** ACA plans are too expensive.

**Fact:** Most people qualify for subsidies that reduce costs.

**Myth:** I can enroll anytime.

**Fact:** You must enroll during Open Enrollment or a Special Enrollment Period.

**Myth:** ACA plans only cover basic care.

**Fact:** Plans cover essential health benefits, including doctor visits, prescriptions, hospitalization, maternity care, and more.

There is a lot of misinformation about ACA plans. Knowing the facts will help you take full advantage of the benefits available to you.

# Essential Benefits Covered

- **Preventive Care & Wellness Visits**
- **Emergency Services**
- **Hospitalization**
- **Maternity & Newborn Care**
- **Mental Health & Substance Use Services**
- **Prescription Drugs**
- **Rehabilitative Services**
- **Pediatric Services (including dental & vision)**



All ACA plans are required to cover these essential health benefits, ensuring you have access to comprehensive care when needed.



# ACA vs. Short-Term Health Plans

Short-term plans may seem like a cheaper option but often lack essential benefits. Understanding the differences will help you avoid coverage gaps and unexpected medical costs.

| Feature                         | ACA Plans | Short-Term Plans |
|---------------------------------|-----------|------------------|
| Conditions Covered?             | ✓ Yes     | ✗ No             |
| Essential Health Benefits?      | ✓ Yes     | ✗ No             |
| Financial Assistance Available? | ✓ Yes     | ✗ No             |
| Year-Round Coverage?            | ✓ Yes     | ✗ No             |

# How to Enroll in an ACA Health Plan

- **Work with an insurance professional to review your healthcare needs and budget.**
- **Check your eligibility & subsidies at Healthcare.gov or your state exchange.**
- **Compare plan options and select the best fit.**
- **Complete your enrollment online, by phone, or with professional assistance.**
- **Pay your first premium to activate coverage.**
- **Use your benefits!**

Knowing the steps to enroll will ensure you secure coverage within the enrollment window and avoid delays in accessing care.



# Work with a Insurance Professional

Taking the time to understand your options and choosing the right coverage is one of the most important financial decisions you can make. If you're ready to explore your health insurance needs, now is the perfect time to take the next step toward securing your future.



Have any questions or want to  
schedule a consultation?

**(800) 998-7715**

[www.psmbrokerage.com](http://www.psmbrokerage.com)