Employee Benefits Tracker, IRS issues price transparency rules for group health plans, (Oct. 7, 2026)

Employee Benefits Tracker

The Treasury Department and IRS, in collaboration with the Departments of Labor and Health and Human Services, have finalized price transparency regulations that apply to group health plans and health insurance issuers. The regulations align the transparency in coverage requirements under the Public Health Service Act (PHSA) with the cost-sharing requirements under the No Surprises Act. The cost-sharing rules generally are effective January 1, 2027, with later effective dates for certain technical requirements.

The final rules require the pricing information that is made available to consumers online and in paper form (upon request) to also be available by phone. Compliance with the final regulations also satisfies cost-sharing requirements under the No Surprises Act, even for grandfathered health plans that are not otherwise subject to the PHSA.

The regulations also restructure machine-readable file (MRF) reporting. Specifically, in-network rate files are to be organized at the provider-network level rather than by individual health plan. Out-of-network allowed amount reporting will be aggregated by market segment rather than plan. Each MRF must include an executive attestation (i.e., CEO, president, or other senior official) that the information is complete and accurate. The effective date for these rules is March 6, 2027.

Plans and issuers will be required to publish contextual information with additional data elements under the final regulations. These provisions are effective September 6, 2027.

SOURCE: 91 Fed. Reg. (Oct. 6, 2026).

Healthinsurancenews; IRSnews; HHSnews; DOLnews; Welfarenews

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