

For Immediate Release

Friday, February 10, 2012

Washington, DC – The National Health Law Program (NHeLP) expressed optimism in response to the White House announcement today that employers must provide insurance coverage for contraception, at no additional cost, while offering religious-affiliated organizations an accommodation to the law.

“We thank President Obama for affirming that all women, regardless of where they are employed, will have access to essential preventive health care, including contraception,” said Emily Spitzer, NHeLP executive director. “We will continue to work with the Administration over the coming year to ensure that the religious-employer accommodation is implemented in a manner that maximizes access and eliminates barriers to care.”

Under today’s announcement, insurance companies must directly provide coverage for contraception, at no additional cost, if a religious-affiliated employer raises an objection. The Administration will work to implement this provision over the next year to determine which entities fall under this accommodation and how the accommodation will operate. The final rule will retain the exemption published in the Department of Health and Human Services August 2010 interim final rule, which exempted religious employers meeting certain requirements.

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