

HHS Secretary Azar's Renewal Declaration Extends COVID-19 Public Health Emergency Period into 2021

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On October 2, 2020, U.S. Health and Human Services Secretary Alex Azar quietly announced that he has renewed the COVID-19 public health emergency declaration, effective October 23, 2020. This is the third extension of the public health emergency declaration. With this 90-day renewal, the COVID-19 public health emergency period is now set to expire on January 21, 2021, unless an earlier termination date is announced or a further extension is granted.

The renewal of the public health emergency period impacts a number of temporary rules, such as requiring medical plans to cover COVID-19 diagnostic testing and related services at no cost, and providing additional time to elect and pay COBRA premiums and to submit benefit claims and appeals. (See our prior blog posts, including [Departments Issue Further Guidance Under FFCRA and CARES Act Affecting Health Plans](#), [Labor and Treasury Departments Provide Retirement Plan Relief and Extend Notice and Claim Deadlines](#), and [Agencies Issue Guidance Extending Certain Employee Benefit Plan Deadlines](#).)

Please contact a member of the Winston & Strawn Employee Benefits and Executive Compensation Practice Group or your Winston relationship attorney for further information.

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