

The Affordable Care Act

The Affordable Care Act (ACA) is federal legislation that requires employers to provide health insurance coverage for all employees who work an average of 30+ hours a week, or to pay a penalty of \$2,000 per full-time USNH employee. The only employee group excluded from coverage eligibility are work study students. The USNH Board of Trustees made the decision to offer the health coverage, rather than pay the fine.

- Eligibility for health coverage is determined through a “look-back period” which is used to evaluate how many hours employees worked. The look-back period for USNH is mid-October of one calendar year through mid-October of the following calendar year.
- For each adjunct faculty/staff, all jobs worked for any USNH institution are added together to determine eligibility.
- Since eligibility is based on hours worked per week, all FTE calculations for adjunct staff have been revised to reflect hours per week.
- Regulations require that 1.25 hours be added to each hour an adjunct faculty spends in the classroom, so there are new FTE rates for adjunct faculty.
- The regulations require that higher education employees cannot be penalized for not working over academic break periods; so, for purposes of determining eligibility, USNH must credit the average hours worked in the previous semester to the weeks in the break period.
- A post card will be mailed to eligible employees’ home addresses the week of October 27, notifying them of eligibility and directing them to the appropriate USNH HR web site link for information and a printable enrollment form.
- The USNH adjunct health coverage, a High Deductible Health Plan called the Select Plan, will offer single, two-person and family coverage with an employer monthly subsidy of \$500, regardless of the number of dependents covered. The total annual cost of the plan to USNH will be \$6,000 for each adjunct who enrolls.
- The adjunct plan will not include a Health Savings Account.
- The open enrollment period this year for eligible adjuncts is November 3 – 14, 2014.
- To enroll, adjunct employees must complete the enrollment form and take it to their campus Human Resources Office along with dependent verification, if they are covering dependents. Campus HR administrators will then code the enrollment data into the USNH benefit system. (Adjunct employees do not have access to MyUSNHBenefits.net.)
- Employees that enroll will be billed monthly by our third party administrator for the employee portion of their premium, based on the plan that they have chosen: single, two-person or family. Employees will be required to pre-pay for the following month of medical coverage.
- The cost of the plan to USNH is \$6,000 annually for each adjunct who enrolls, regardless of the number of dependents covered.
- Those determined to be eligible in October will remain eligible for the entire 2015 calendar year, even if they work less than 30 hours a week during 2015. They are also immediately eligible if they are not working in January, but are rehired within 26 weeks.
- The employer cost for the first six months of 2015 will be borne by the System benefit budget.
- Those that enroll must be monitored carefully to ensure correct billing for late hires and timely coding of termination dates when appointments end in order to be in compliance with COBRA notification regulations.