

## **Affordable Care Act FAQs**

### **1. What is the Affordable Care Act?**

The Affordable Care Act (ACA) was signed into law on March 23, 2010. Under the ACA, the federal government, state governments, insurers, employers and individuals are given shared responsibility to reform and improve the availability, quality and affordability of health insurance coverage in the United States.

For more information on ACA, go to:

- HHS.gov- (Link to : <http://www.hhs.gov/healthcare/>)
- IRS.gov (Tax Provision) (Link to: <https://www.irs.gov/Affordable-Care-Act/Affordable-Care-Act-Tax-Provisions>)
- OPM.gov- (Link to: <https://www.opm.gov/healthcare-insurance/changes-in-health-coverage/changes-in-health-coverage-faqs/#url=Affordable-Care-Act>)

### **2. What is Individual Shared Responsibility?**

As of January 2014, the Individual Shared Responsibility (ISR) provision calls for individuals to have qualifying health care coverage known as Minimum Essential Coverage (MEC) for each month of the year; qualify for an exemption; or make a payment when filing his/ her federal income tax return.

The provision applies to individuals of all ages, including children. Individuals who do not have qualifying minimum essential coverage and do not qualify for an exemption will need to make an individual shared responsibility payment for each month they do not have adequate coverage. The fee will be collected when tax returns are filed.

For more information on Individual Shared Responsibility, visit the IRS [ACA Individual Shared Responsibility Provision](https://www.irs.gov/Affordable-Care-Act/Individuals-and-Families/Individual-Shared-Responsibility-Provision) webpage. (Link to: <https://www.irs.gov/Affordable-Care-Act/Individuals-and-Families/Individual-Shared-Responsibility-Provision> )

### **3. What is Employer Shared Responsibility?**

Effective Jan. 1, 2015, under the Employer Shared Responsibility (ESR) provision, certain Applicable Large Employers (ALE) must offer either minimum essential coverage (MEC) that is “affordable” and that provides “minimum value” to their full-time employees or potentially make an ESR payment to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS).

The same employers subject to ESR provisions also have information reporting responsibilities regarding MEC offered to employees. These responsibilities require employers to send reports to employees and the IRS using the new forms that the IRS created for this purpose.

An employer (including federal employers) who averages at least 50 full-time employees (including full-time-equivalent employees) during the preceding calendar year are subject to the ESR provisions and reporting responsibilities.

**4. What is my employer's reporting responsibilities (IRS Form 1095-C)?**

- a. Applicable Large Employers (ALE) must report to the IRS information about health care coverage, if any, they offered to employees.
- b. ALEs must furnish to employees a statement that includes the same information provided to the IRS

Based on these requirements, Interior Business Center (IBC) will issue IRS Form 1095-C (for federal civilian employees) to the IRS and each employee to report tax year 2015 health care coverage information.

**5. What if I have additional health insurance, like VA or Medicare Coverage?**

Each additional health insurance agency will report the additional coverage offered under their plan to the Internal Revenue Service and provide you with an IRS 1095-C form.

**6. Does Federal Health Benefits (FEHB) and Military Health Care System (Tricare) qualify as MCE?**

Yes. All FEHB plans are eligible employer-sponsored plans and provide MEC. Most types of TRICARE coverage count as MEC.

Get more info on TRICARE's (link should be to: <http://www.tricare.mil/ACA>) minimum essential coverage or get MEC info for FEHB policy holders.

For more information on FEHB's minimum essential coverage, visit the [Office of Personnel Management's \(OPM\) website](https://www.opm.gov/healthcare-insurance/changes-in-health-coverage/changes-in-health-coverage-faqs/#url=Affordable-Care-Act). (Link should be to: <https://www.opm.gov/healthcare-insurance/changes-in-health-coverage/changes-in-health-coverage-faqs/#url=Affordable-Care-Act>)

**7. When can I expect to receive my Affordable Care Act IRS form from IBC?**

IBC will issue health care related IRS form 1095-C no later than February 1, 2016 for the 2015 tax year. You will receive a mailed hard copy, unless you elect to receive the form

electronically through employee express. Please go to [www.employeeexpress.gov](http://www.employeeexpress.gov) to log in to your account. Select 1095-C from the Miscellaneous menu to turn off the hard copy. For the 2015 tax year, you must turn off the hard copy by December 31, 2015.

**8. How do I request a replacement of my 1095-C from IBC?**

The 1095-C forms are available in Employees Express. The quickest and most secure way to get the form is from Employee Express. Log into your employee express account at [www.employeeexpress.gov](http://www.employeeexpress.gov). If you do not have access into Employee Express contact your servicing personnel office and a representative from your agency will have access to reprint for you.

**9. Who do I contact for help with reviewing or using my Affordable Care Act form?**

As a payroll provider, IBC cannot provide guidance on filing your taxes. Consult a professional tax advisor for assistance.

**10. How will I receive a copy of my 1095-C form?**

On February 1, 2016, IBC will begin providing IRS Form 1095-C. The form will be mailed, hard copy, to all employees unless you have elected to receive the form electronically. Please go to [www.employeeexpress.gov](http://www.employeeexpress.gov) to log in to your account. Select 1095-C from the Miscellaneous menu to turn off the hard copy. For the 2015 tax year, you must turn off the hard copy by December 31, 2015.

**11. Who should I contact for general Affordable Care Act (ACA) questions?**

Assistance is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week by calling 1-800-318-2596 (TTY: 1-855-889-4325). You can also get information online at <https://www.healthcare.gov/contact-us/>.

**12. What if I do not have Minimum Essential Coverage (MEC)?**

If you do not have minimum essential coverage and are eligible for FEHB you may apply for health coverage during the next Annual Federal Benefits Open Season Nov. 9 - Dec. 14, 2015. An employee may also apply for health coverage outside the Open Season if they have a qualifying life event such as the birth of a child. **NOTE:** Open season FEHB enrollments will become effective the first full pay period in January 2016.

**For more information about the FEHB Program, go to**  
<https://www.opm.gov/healthcare-insurance/healthcare/>.

Employees who are ineligible for FEHB may find other health care coverage options through the health insurance marketplace.

**13. Who do I contact to verify my FEHB coverage or other ACA inquiries?**

For questions, you should contact the appropriated POC listed on your 1095-C form. Their contact telephone number will be listed in Block 10 of your form. You may also contact your servicing personnel office for questions regarding your specific FEHB coverage.

**14. What if you and your dependents had minimum essential coverage for each month of the tax year?**

Simply check the appropriate box on Form 1040, 1040A or 1040EZ; no further action is required. For more information on the Affordable Care Act, go to the IRS.gov website and visit the following pages:

<https://www.irs.gov/Affordable-Care-Act/Individuals-and-Families/Health-Care-Law-and--You>.

<https://www.irs.gov/Affordable-Care-Act/Individuals-and-Families/Health-Care-Law-and-Your-Tax-Return>.

**15. Who will receive a copy of the 1095-C form?**

Any employee meeting the IRS definition of full time for at least one calendar month will receive a copy of the 1095-C filed with the IRS. By IRS definition an employee is a full-time employee for a calendar month if he or she averages at least 30 hours of service per week. For purposes of determining full-time employee status, 130 hours of service in a calendar month is treated as the monthly equivalent of at least 30 hours of service per week.

**16. What Information will be contained on the 1095-C form?**

**Part I** – Identifying information for the employee and their employer.

**Part II** – Employee’s health insurance offer and coverage information.

**Block 14** – Identifies whether you received an affordable offer of [minimum essential coverage](https://www.irs.gov/Affordable-Care-Act/Employers/Minimum-Value-and-Affordability). (Link to: <https://www.irs.gov/Affordable-Care-Act/Employers/Minimum-Value-and-Affordability>)

**Block 15** – Provides the premium amount for the lowest cost self-only health plan coverage available to Federal employees. *This block does not reflect the employee's premium amount for the plan they are currently enrolled in.*

**Block 16** – Specifies codes applicable under Section 4980H of the Internal Revenue Code that afford legal protection to the employer with regard to offers made.

**Part III** – Not applicable to federal employers.

**17. What If my 1095-C shows incorrect information?**

Information on the 1095-C form is based on a servicing personnel action or an election you have made on Employee Express. If corrective action is required the agency servicing personnel office (SPO) should be contacted. Please notify your SPO to discuss any applicable corrections. When the correction is completed, if it changes information in Block 14, 15 and 16 a new 1095-C will be created for you. This corrected 1095-C will be provided in April 2016.

**Please note: Some corrective actions that add FEHB plan coverage retroactively could result in a FEHB debt for premiums.**