



Affordable Care Act (ACA)

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Brain injury advocates may have heard of health insurance exchanges (exchanges). As one of the key elements of the Affordable Care Act (ACA), exchanges are designed to provide a one-stop shopping for individuals and employers to search health insurance options and apply for and enroll in coverage. Of late, the implementation of exchanges has been delayed. Notwithstanding, members of the New Jersey Legislature have been appointed to be actively involved with exchanges.

In New Jersey, a state-level task force has been created to oversee the implementation and operation of exchanges relative to New Jersey. The "Joint Legislative Task Force on Health Insurance Exchange Implementation" was created by the Legislature in response to Governor Christie's decision to turn over creation of New Jersey's health insurance exchange to the federal government.

The task force membership consists of:

- Senators Nia Gill, Fred Madden, Joseph Vitale, Loretta Weinberg; and,
- Assemblymembers Herb Conaway, Angel Fuentes, Gary Schaer, Valerie Vainieri Huttle.

The task force is charged with: 1) analyzing and overseeing the operation of a federal health exchange in New Jersey; 2) developing recommendations on the scope of the State's role in health insurance exchange operations to ensure that the State benefits to the maximum extent practicable from the health insurance exchange; and, 3) making such recommendations as will best ensure a coordinated effort among the relevant State agencies, health care providers, third party payers, and the federal government to implement the health insurance exchange in New Jersey.

The task force is required to: provide the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the General Assembly with quarterly updates of its activities, findings, conclusions, and recommendations for legislation or administrative action. It is also required to issue annual reports of its activities, findings, conclusions, and recommendations for legislation or administrative action, including any recommendations to expand the role of the State in implementing the health insurance exchange in New Jersey, to the Governor, the President of the Senate, the Speaker of the General Assembly, and the Minority Leaders of the Senate and General Assembly.

The Task Force can be particularly useful to people impacted by brain injury. Members of the Task Force – particularly if they represent you in the New Jersey State Legislature – may be helpful to you with any matters concerning the Affordable Care Act. If you are interested in speaking with any of the members, wish to obtain their contact information, and/or seek counsel on interacting with the members, contact Tom Grady, Director of Advocacy & Public Affairs, at 732.745.0200 or tgrady@bianj.org.

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