

Guidance for **BUSINESS OWNERS**

Health Insurance planning is an important part of the financial planning process for small businesses. Securing the right insurance begins with selecting the right insurance adviser.

Make sure you have a broker who is responsive and shows flexibility and understands both your business and your business needs. You also need a broker who is capable of adhering to your desires and goals – it is not what is best and the fastest thing for the broker, it is what is best for you as the client and what is the best way to achieve your goals in the short and long term.



The following checklist will help you find the right broker:

► **YOUR PERSONAL ADVOCATE**

An experienced, trustworthy, and competent insurance broker should be your personal representative and advocate to point out the pros and cons of policy comparisons from various insurers, as well as to alert you to the company's claims paying policies and ratings. Although the DC Health Link system will provide automatic price and plan comparisons based on information provided in the marketplace that you are interested in, a broker will work on your behalf and is your personal adviser, looking out for your company's best interest.

▶ **DEPENDABLE ADVISOR**

Your relationship with your insurance broker does not end once the policy is active. When you select a broker as your agent, they will serve as your representative throughout the plan coverage period and should be easily accessible at claim time to help you resolve any issues that may arise regarding your health plan coverage. A quality broker also should take initiative to schedule a periodic review of coverage.

▶ **COMMUNICATION STYLE**

Each one of us has a unique communication style. Make sure your broker's communication style is aligned with yours. Clear communication is essential to selecting the right form and amount of insurance. If your communication style does not match with the insurance broker's style, move on.

▶ **COMPENSATION**

There is no cost to businesses to obtain or use an insurance broker.

▶ **EXPECT EASY ACCESS**

Expect your calls and emails to be returned promptly. You should feel like you have easy access to your insurance broker, including after your policy is active and in effect. Your broker will be there for you when you need him or her, whether you just have a question you would like answered or you need assistance with a claim.

▶ **MEET FACE-TO-FACE**

Although your initial contact with a broker may be through transfer from the DC Health Link Contact Center Representative or online selection, you may want to consider whether an in-person meeting could help in better understanding the options a broker may present or in further establishing the broker client relationship.

▶ **EMPLOYER NEEDS BASED APPROACH**

Your broker will make recommendations based on your specific needs. The right form of coverage depends on your goals, current financial position and budget. A solution based on your specific needs will consider your goals and current financial picture. Once your goals and current financial position are identified, your broker can begin reviewing the marketplace of recommendations within your budget.

▶ **BE AN INFORMED AND SMART CONSUMER**

Insurance is a long-term promise and it can be helpful to have an insurance broker. Health insurance is a safeguard to ensure that you and your family are protected from unforeseen, unpredictable and unanticipated health events that may occur in life. You should select a professional that provides you with competent and quality service so that you have confidence that you are properly taking care of your employees and your business.