

Insurers extend premium deadline

December 18 2013, by Ricardo Alonso-Zaldivar

The health insurance industry says consumers will get an extra 10 days to pay their first month's premium under President Barack Obama's health care overhaul.

With tight deadlines around the holidays, plus lingering problems with federal and state sign-up systems, the voluntary decision Wednesday by the board of America's Health Insurance Plans does more than give extra time:

It also reduces the risk that [consumers](#) switching plans could suffer an interruption in coverage due to technology woes.

Consumers still must select a plan by Dec. 23—next Monday. But instead of having to pay their first month's premium by New Year's Eve, they now have until Jan. 10. That would let them get coverage retroactive to Jan. 1.

The industry trade group represents about 90 percent of health insurers.

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