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# ***THE GROUP BENEFIT NEWS BULLETIN***

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## Health Care Reform Update

### **IRS Issues Transition Relief Regarding Employer Reporting Requirements**

As you are aware through our earlier bulletin, the Employer Shared Responsibility Provision was delay until 2015. Last week, the IRS announced transitional relief for certain employer reporting requirements related to the Employer Shared Responsibility Provision. Section 6055 relating to minimum essential coverage reporting and Section 6056 relating to reporting requirements of Large Employers subject to the Employer Shared Responsibility Provision will not be required for the 2014 calendar year and will begin in 2015.

Per the guidance that was released, this transitional relief will provide additional time for input from employers and other reporting entities in an effort to simplify information reporting consistent with effective implementation of the law. This transitional relief is also intended to provide employers, insurers, and other providers of minimum essential coverage time to adapt their health coverage and reporting systems.

Proposed rules regarding these two sections are anticipated to be published later this summer. Employers, insurers, and other reporting entities are encouraged to voluntarily comply with these reporting provisions for 2014 (once the information reporting rules have been issued) in preparation for the full application of the provisions for 2015. However, reporting under these two sections will be optional for 2014; accordingly, no penalties will be applied for failure to comply with these provisions for 2014.

TBPG's recommendation regarding this latest guidance is that for Employers whose plans pass all of the associated tests to go ahead and voluntarily report the information for 2014 providing a "dry run" for 2015. For those Employers whose plans do not pass the associated tests, TBPG's recommendation is not to voluntarily report for 2014. This would allow time to come into compliance before any reporting is provided.

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