

Does North Carolina have a mini-COBRA law?

Q. Our company employs fewer than 20 employees, so federal COBRA does not apply to us. Is there a state law that allows continued health care coverage following termination of employment?

A. Yes. Many years ago, the North Carolina General Assembly passed the Group Health Insurance Continuation and Conversion Privileges law, part of the statute governing insurance companies doing business in North Carolina.

It requires group insurance policies to provide for continued coverage of health insurance upon termination of employment or eligibility for coverage. The continuation period is for 18 months. This law applies only to group insurance policies concerning hospital, surgical and major medical insurance. Thus, it generally does not apply to dental or vision plans. The state law is more restrictive than COBRA in many ways.