

# Trump Officials Make it Easier to Avoid ObamaCare Mandate Penalty

September 13, 2018

---

Source: The Hill

The Trump administration is making it easier for individuals to opt out of ObamaCare's individual mandate.

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) says it is streamlining the way taxpayers can claim "hardship exemptions" from the mandate, which requires everyone have health insurance or pay a fine.

Under new guidance announced Wednesday, the agency will allow individuals to claim hardship exemptions on their tax returns without providing any documentation or written explanation.

Individuals would merely have to note the exemption on their tax returns, according to CMS, though the agency advised taxpayers to hold on to any documentation in case of any followups.

An individual may be eligible for a hardship exemption if they experience certain circumstances that prevent them from obtaining health-care coverage, such as bankruptcy or homelessness, or experience a fire, flood, or other natural disaster.

If a taxpayer doesn't have an exemption, he or she must pay the penalty for 2018, which is either \$695 per person or 2.5 percent of income, whichever is higher.

The guidance will only be in effect for tax year 2018, the final year that the mandate is in place. The GOP tax law that passed in December removed the tax penalty associated with the mandate, effectively repealing it.

"Although the tax cuts signed by the President earlier this year eliminate the mandate penalty starting in 2019, Americans are still under threat of the penalty for this tax year of 2018," CMS Administrator Seema Verma said in a statement Wednesday.

## Source Link

Filed Under: [ACA/Health Reform](#)