COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
Office of Consumer Affairs and Business Regulation
DIVISION OF INSURANCE
1000 Washington Street, Suite 810 • Boston, MA 02118-6200
(617) 521-7794 • Toll-free (877) 563-4467
http://www.mass.gov/doi

CHARLES D. BAKER
GOVERNOR

KARYN E. POLITO
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

JAY ASI
SECRETARY OF HOUSING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

JOHN C. CHAPMAN
UNDERSECRETARY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND BUSINESS REGULATION

GARY D. ANDERSON
COMMISSIONER OF INSURANCE

Bulletin 2018-04

To: Commercial Health Insurers, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Massachusetts, Inc., and Health Maintenance Organizations

From: Gary D. Anderson, Commissioner of Insurance

Date: July 27, 2018

Re: Guidance Regarding Open Enrollment Period for Benefit Year 2019

The Massachusetts Division of Insurance ("Division") issues this Bulletin 2018-04: Guidance Regarding Open Enrollment Period for Benefit Year 2019 ("Bulletin") to provide guidance in connection with the 2019 open enrollment period for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The Division has collaborated with the Commonwealth Health Insurance Connector Authority (the "Connector") in developing this Bulletin, which supplements Bulletin 2014-11: Open Enrollment for Insured Health Benefit Plans.

Pursuant to 45 C.F.R. § 155.410, for the 2018 benefit year and beyond, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services ("HHS") has established that the annual exchange open enrollment period will commence on November 1st and extends through December 15th of the calendar year preceding the benefit year. However, HHS has permitted states with their own state-based exchanges to implement a Special Enrollment Period to extend open enrollment under existing authority.

The Connector has implemented a Special Enrollment Period and has informed the Division that the Massachusetts open enrollment period for eligible individuals will begin November 1, 2018, and will end on January 23, 2019.

M.G.L. c. 176J, § 4(a)(3) provides that the "open enrollment period shall be from October 15 to December 7, inclusive, unless otherwise designated by the Commissioner." To ensure that the dates of the open enrollment period both on and off the Connector are the same, the 2019 benefit-year open enrollment period for the commercial non-group market will also run from November 1, 2018 through January 23, 2019. For persons enrolling through the Connector, the January 23rd open enrollment closing date aligns with the Connector's plan selection and due dates for payment on the 23rd of the month and will allow consumers some additional time to enroll in or switch health plans.

If you have any questions about this Bulletin, please contact Tracey McMillan, Director of Bureau of Managed Care at (617) 521-7347 or Tracey.T.McMillan@mass.gov.