

LEGAL UPDATE

President Trump Issues Health Care Plan in an Executive Order

On Sept. 24, 2020, President Donald Trump introduced his plan for affordable, high-quality health care, called the **America First Health Care Plan**. This plan, issued in an [executive order](#), is primarily aimed at protecting people with preexisting conditions and combating surprise medical billing.

An executive order is a broad policy directive used to establish how laws will be enforced by the administration. The order does not make any changes to existing laws or regulations, but directs federal agencies to issue new guidance to implement the order's policies. As a result, the executive order's specific impact will remain largely unclear until agencies issue further guidance or Congress takes action in response to the order.

The America First Health Care Plan

The executive order directs the Departments of Health and Human Services (HHS), Labor and the Treasury to maintain and build upon existing actions to:

- Expand options for affordable health care;
- Expand access to affordable medicines, including accelerating the approvals of new generic and biosimilar drugs and facilitating the safe importation of affordable prescription drugs from abroad;
- Ensure consumers have access to meaningful price and quality information before the delivery of care; and
- Reduce waste, fraud and abuse in the health care system.

The executive order specifically directs HHS to work with Congress to reach a legislative solution to end surprise medical billing by Dec. 31, 2020. If a legislative solution is not reached by that date, the executive order directs HHS to take administrative action to prevent out-of-pocket expenses that cannot be reasonably foreseen.

Highlights

- President Trump has issued an executive order that outlines a new plan for affordable health care and medical billing.
- The plan aims to expand health care options and increase consumer access to price and quality-of-care information.
- Executive orders do not, by themselves, make any changes to existing laws or regulations.

The America First Health Care Plan is primarily aimed at protecting people with preexisting conditions and combating surprise medical billing.

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