



# QUALIFIED HEALTH PLANS (QHPs)

## What is a Qualified Health Plan?

A qualified health plan (QHP) is a major medical health insurance plan that covers all the mandatory benefits of the PPACA. A qualified health plan is also eligible to be purchased with a subsidy, also known as an advanced premium tax credit.

### **Mandatory health benefits**

A qualified health plan must offer a certain number of mandatory benefits, as explained in the graphic below. Since the PPACA has been in place, most people had to have a qualified plan with minimum essential benefits, or else face a fine. At the end of 2017, the individual mandate was repealed, so as of January 1, 2019 there are no longer fines at a federal level for not having a qualified health insurance plan. *\*Some states, such as California, are creating their own legislation and continue to require individuals to enroll in a qualified health plan.*

Until 2018, a qualified health insurance plan was required to provide the following in order to avoid a fine.

The PPACA requires each plan to cover 10 essential health benefits and have a metallic benefit level starting at a minimum of 60% of their actuarial value or average annual costs, per person. Catastrophic plans for people under the age of 30 with fewer benefits will also be available.

The following benefits must have coverage:

- Laboratory Services
- Emergency Services
- Prescription Drugs
- Mental Health & Substance Use Disorder Services
- Maternity & Newborn Care
- Pediatric Services, Including Oral & Vision Care
- Rehabilitative & Habilitative Services & Devices
- Ambulatory Patient Services
- Preventive & Wellness Services, and Chronic Disease Management
- Hospitalization