DOL ISSUES COVID-19 RELIEF AND GUIDANCE FOR PLANS



The U.S. Department of Labor's Employee Benefits Security Administration (EBSA) has issued deadline relief and other guidance under Title I of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA) to help employee benefit plans, plan participants and beneficiaries, employers and other plan sponsors, plan fiduciaries, and other service providers impacted by the coronavirus outbreak.

"EBSA will continue to safeguard the employee benefits of American workers while ensuring that employers and plans have the flexibility they need to continue delivering benefits during this challenging time," said Assistant Secretary of Labor for EBSA, Preston Rutledge.

A Department of Labor notice, jointly issued with the Department of the Treasury and Internal Revenue Service, extends certain time frames affecting participants' rights to healthcare coverage, portability, and continuation of group health plan coverage under COBRA, and extends the time for plan participants to file or perfect benefit claims or appeals of denied claims. These extensions provide participants and beneficiaries of employee benefit plans additional time to make important health coverage and other decisions affecting their benefits during the coronavirus outbreak. The joint notice is posted on EBSA's website and will be published in an upcoming edition of the Federal Register.

EBSA Disaster Relief Notice 2020-01 extends the time for plan officials to furnish benefit statements, annual funding notices, and other notices and disclosures required by ERISA so long as they make a good faith effort to furnish the documents as soon as administratively practicable. The notice explains that good faith includes the use of electronic

alternative means of communicating with plan participants and beneficiaries who the plan fiduciary reasonably believes have effective access to electronic means of communication, including email, text messages, and continuous access websites. The notice also includes compliance assistance guidance on plan loans, participant contributions and loan payments, blackout notices, Form 5500 and Form M-1 filing relief, and other general compliance guidance on ERISA fiduciary responsibilities. The Disaster Relief Notice is posted on EBSA's website.

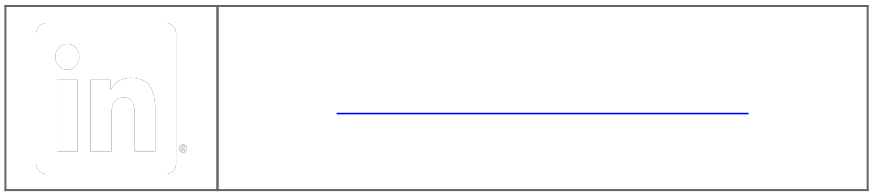
The DOL also issued a set of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) on health benefit and retirement benefit issues to help employee benefit plan participants and beneficiaries, plan sponsors, and employers impacted by the coronavirus outbreak understand their rights and responsibilities under ERISA.

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Who We Are

Torrillo & Associates, LLC specializes in employee benefit plan audits including 401k audits, 403b audits, pension plan audits, and other retirement plan audits. We are licensed in 10 states including Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware, New York and Florida. We are also able to practice in additional states that have passed firm mobility.

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