

White House Announces Compromise on Birth Control

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The White House announced a compromise on birth control coverage on Friday to respond to religious groups' objections, saying it would shift the costs of providing contraceptives to health insurers when religious employers object to it.

"Under the new policy announced today, women will have free preventive care that includes contraceptive services no matter where she works," the White House said in a statement.

"If a woman works for religious employers with objections to providing contraceptive services as part of its health plan, the religious employer will not be required to provide contraception coverage but her insurance company will be required to offer contraceptive care free of charge," it said.

Women will not be charged a co-pay, the White House said.

In a fact sheet providing background information on the new policy, the White House Office of Legislative Affairs said, "Covering contraception saves money for insurance companies by keeping women healthy and preventing spending on other health services. For example, there was no increase in premiums when contraception was added to the Federal Employees Health Benefit System and required of non-religious employers in Hawaii. One study found that covering contraception lowered premiums by 10% or more."