

## Healthcare Reform, Think About It Now

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The recent U.S. Supreme Court case upholding several key portions of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA), *National Federation of Independent Businesses v. Sebelius*, caught many employers by surprise. Most believed that the U.S. Supreme Court would declare unconstitutional the individual mandate to obtain healthcare coverage. In light of the court's ruling, employers have to figure out how to provide health benefits to all full-time employees and their dependents by 2014 in order to avoid penalties for non-compliance.

While much of the focus has been on the individual mandate, there are several other key provisions for which employers should be preparing:

- The employer "play or pay" mandate
- Nondiscrimination requirements
- Automatic enrollment

In addition to these "long-term issues," ACA has a host of additional requirements that employers must address right now. The following are just a couple significant requirements:

- New Summary of Benefits and Coverage (SBC) requirement
- Reporting the cost of coverage on 2012 W-2 forms

Employers may be tempted to delay addressing these and other ACA related issues because they are focused on compliance in 2014. However, these provisions (and the rest of the ACA) will pose a serious challenge to employers irrespective of when they go into effect. Noncompliance will result in penalties. The better approach is to start working on these issues now.

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