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CNN sources: Religious organizations can opt out of contraceptive coverage

Pam Cohen | Feb. 1, 2013 NCR Today

CNN is reporting [1] that under the new mandate from the Department of Health and Human Services, which is scheduled to be unveiled today, religious organizations will be able to opt out of providing their employees with insurance coverage for contraceptives.

"Religiously affiliated organizations will be given the option of exempting themselves from the requirement of providing their employees with contraceptive access or service that they are morally opposed to," one source told CNN.

If an organization opts out of paying for contraceptive coverage, employees will be able to get coverage paid for by the insurance company through a third entity, CNN reports.

President Barack Obama's administration has been under fire from religious groups since the mandate, which was part of the Affordable Care Act and required all employers to provide contraception for no cost to their employees, was announced [2] Jan. 20, 2012. On Feb. 10, 2012, Obama announced he had revised the mandate [3] to say that insurance companies would be required to offer contraceptive coverage free of charge when a religious organization declined to provide coverage.

Some religious organizations denounced the revision, and numerous lawsuits are pending in courts, including one filed in May [4] by 43 Catholic organizations.

CNN notes that the policy proposals are not final and could change depend on public reaction. An official announcement from the Obama administration is expected later this morning.

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