

EMPLOYER LETTER OVERVIEW

Thanks to the Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act of 2008 (also known as the Federal Parity Law), most of the health plans large employers purchase through insurance companies and offer to their employees must cover illnesses of the brain, such as depression or addiction, no more restrictively than illnesses of the body, such as diabetes or cancer.

Unfortunately, many insurers do not comply with the law and treatment services for mental health and substance use disorders are often denied or severely limited.

An employer may not know that their chosen insurance company has been found in violation of the law because insurance companies are not required to disclose such information. Or they may know and choose not to act for a variety of reasons.

Mental health and substance use disorders ultimately cost employers billions in productivity and health care related expenses. It is in their best interest to make sure employees have access to care. And given their collective purchasing power, employers are in a unique position to drive systemic change when it comes to mental health care coverage.

Large employers have the power to demand that the health plans they choose offer equal access to mental health and addiction care.

As advocates, it is our responsibility to remind them of this.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Customize the attached letter by completing the flagged fields.
2. Obtain email addresses and/or general mailing addresses for large employers in your state.
3. Finalize the letter and save to your computer.
4. If you were able to obtain an email address, copy and paste the text from your letter into the body of the email and attach the document as a back-up.
5. Mail a print out of your letter to the company.

NEXT STEPS

Advocates are encouraged to let their social media followers know that they have contacted state employer(s) in an effort to increase access to care for those with mental health and substance use disorders and fight for mental health equity. Make sure to “tag” the employer in your posts. And please include #DontDenyMe as well as a link to www.DontDenyMe.org.