



## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Participating Employer (PE) Health Benefits Administrators  
**FROM:** Employee Benefits Division  
**SUBJECT:** *NYSHIP General Information Book for Participating Employers*  
(Empire Plan and HMO)  
**DATE:** July 7, 2016

We are pleased to announce that a revised *NYSHIP General Information Book (GIB)* for active and retired employees of Participating Employers is at the printer and will soon be mailed to enrollee homes and PE agencies.

### **A Single Book!**

In a departure from past practices, this publication applies to both Empire Plan and HMO enrollees as well as active and retired enrollees. The front half of the book is for actives, and the back half is for retirees.

This book completely replaces the *General Information Book* for HMO enrollees and will partially replace the *General Information Book/Empire Plan Certificate* for Empire Plan enrollees (see attached list for specific publications that should be recycled). We believe this initiative will simplify our NYSHIP materials for both enrollees and HBAs and should significantly reduce costs. **NOTE:** The back cover of the version being mailed to Empire Plan enrollees instructs them to keep the new *GIB* and their existing *General Information Book/Certificate* until they receive their new *Empire Plan Certificate*. The version of the PE *GIB* that will be mailed to agencies and used for any future orders from inventory is the same one that HMO enrollees will receive.

The 2016 *General Information Book* for PEs contains information regarding NYSHIP eligibility rules, enrollment options, requirements and costs. This revision represents the most substantial revision to the *GIB* undertaken in years, so we highly recommend that all HBAs take the opportunity to review it upon receipt. Please also note that the new book is divided into sections for active enrollees and retirees for the purpose of clarity.

## **Empire Plan Certificates Update**

In the fall of 2015, the *Empire Plan Certificates* were updated online to include amendments through January 1, 2014. An updated print version of the *Empire Plan Certificate* for PEs is now underway, with an anticipated release date in 2016. When both are completed, the updated publications will replace the existing *PE GIB/Empire Plan Certificate* and significantly streamline our fulfillment system. We will send another HBA memo to let you know when this change is occurring and include a list of Empire Plan materials that you can recycle. Future revisions to the *GIB* and *Empire Plan Certificates* will be handled separately, and our intent is to stop issuing amendments in favor of revising the books instead.

## **Distribution**

We will send you a supply of five copies for your use. This publication will begin mailing to enrollee homes in early July. Mail files were pulled from NYBEAS on June 23, 2016. Any enrollee not on the file as of that date will not receive this mailing. You may, however, order a Quick Order (QO) package on HBA Online for any new hire or retiree, and that will include this publication. Otherwise, you should include a copy of the new *GIB* in the package of information you give to new hires, new retirees or those who otherwise separate from service.

## **Publications Available on Our Web Site: [www.cs.ny.gov/employee-benefits](http://www.cs.ny.gov/employee-benefits)**

Please check our web site for new publications. We generally post publications when we sign off for printing. Publications are available under Using Your Benefits.

## **Ordering Publications**

You may order additional copies of the *PE General Information Book* (PE0099/PE GIB 2016) on HBA Online under Publications & Forms. **Please wait until you receive your shipment of the new publication before you place an order.**

If you need help accessing HBA Online, email the AGS-ITS Enterprise Service Desk at [its.sm.esd.ags@its.ny.gov](mailto:its.sm.esd.ags@its.ny.gov).

If you are unsure of how to order publications or have questions about this distribution, please call the EBD Communications Unit at 518-457-7577.

Attachment