



PE23-11

MEMORANDUM

TO: Health Benefits Administrators of Participating Employers
FROM: Employee Benefits Division
SUBJECT: Communications Plan: 2024 Option Transfer (OT) Period
DATE: September 26, 2023

We are pleased to announce the communications schedule for the 2024 Option Transfer Period.

Option Transfer Posters

The OT posters help to remind enrollees about the OT Period and other program deadlines. This year's version includes a QR code providing quick access to option transfer-related resources and tools via our online Option Transfer Guide. See "Information on the Web" in this memo for additional information.

We recently sent you five OT posters; please post them in high-traffic, highly visible locations and keep them up until the end of the OT Period, typically through year end. Additional copies can be ordered on HBA Online. If your agency distributes information for employees electronically, please use the attached PDF.

Health Insurance Choices for 2024

Choices is a guide to the OT Period that details the benefits, services and programs available to NYSHIP enrollees, including The Empire Plan and NYSHIP-approved Health Maintenance Organizations (HMOs). Procedures for changing options, tips on how to decide which coverage may be best for the enrollee and updates on plan changes are also included in this publication.

In late October, we will post *Choices* online and ship you a supply equal to two percent of your active NYSHIP enrollment or a maximum of 10 copies, whichever is less. Please distribute to employees who request them as this publication is not mailed to enrollee homes.

Option Transfer Information for Participating Employers Flyer

The *Option Transfer Information for Participating Employees* flyer provides the deadline for option changes, as well as information about how to change options outside the OT Period and things to consider when retiring or vesting in 2024.

The flyer will be mailed to enrollee homes once the OT Period dates have been announced. We also will send you a supply equal to one percent of your NYSHIP enrollment or a maximum of 5 copies, whichever is less.

Note: Communication of 2024 rates to active enrollees is the agency's responsibility.

Option Transfer Policy for NYSHIP Enrollees with Retiree Benefits

NYSHIP enrollees with retiree benefits* are permitted to change health insurance options at any time *once* during a 12-month period.** This policy allows retirees more flexibility and time to consider personal factors affecting their health insurance option.

**NYSHIP enrollees with retiree benefits include: Retirees, Vestees, Dependent Survivors and Enrollees Covered under Preferred List Provisions of New York State Government and COBRA enrollees with their NYSHIP benefits.*

*** An option change made during the June 2023 Special Option Transfer Period (due to the Empire Plan benefit changes that were administratively extended to retirees of Participating Employers effective July 1st) does not count toward the once-in-a-12-month-period limit for retirees.*

Distribution of Publications for Retirees

Once rates have been approved, we will mail a packet of OT materials to retiree homes. The 2024 *NYSHIP Rates & Information for Retirees of Participating Employers* flyer includes the most common rates for each health insurance option for PE agency retirees. This flyer will be mailed to individuals for whom these rates apply, along with *Health Insurance Choices for 2024* and a personalized insert with the retiree's sick leave credit value, if applicable. **Note:** *Retiree Choices* is mailed only to retirees living in New York State; however, the Rates flyer is mailed to all retirees.

We will send you five copies of *Retiree Choices* and five copies of the *Rates* flyer to distribute to new retirees. You may order additional copies throughout 2024, if needed.

Information on the Web

The Option Transfer Guide, which will be accessible beginning in October from the NYSHIP Online homepage at www.cs.ny.gov/employee-benefits for active enrollees and www.cs.ny.gov/employee-benefits/login/index-retiree.cfm for retirees, provides easy access to option transfer-related information, tools and instructions for changing options. Alternatively, enrollees can navigate to group- and plan-specific option transfer resources by using the Enrollee Group Wizard and then selecting Health Benefits & Option Transfer and Rates and Health Plan Choices.

All 2024 Option Transfer publications, including the *Rates* flyer, will also be available on the Employee Benefits Division's administrative website, HBA Online, at www.cs.ny.gov/employee-benefits/hba. Select Health Plan Choices on the homepage to view OT information.

This information also will be available on NYSHIP Online at www.cs.ny.gov/employee-benefits. Select Health Benefits & Option Transfer, then choose Rates and Health Plan Choices.

We will remove the 2023 OT information from both the public and administrative websites once 2024 rates have been approved and the 2024 OT Period begins. If you need to view this information, it will be available in the archives of each site. From NYSHIP Online, select the group, if prompted, and then Using Your Benefits. Choose Publications and scroll down to Archived Publications. From the HBA Online homepage, select Current Publications and Forms then scroll down to Archived Publications.

NYSHIP's Plan Comparison Tool

Enrollees can generate a side-by-side comparison of the NYSHIP plans available in their area using the Plan Comparison Tool, which is located in the Option Transfer Guide on NYSHIP Online. The system announcement on rate approval will note the availability of 2024 benefit information on the Plan Comparison tool.

To Order Health Benefits Materials

The Employee Benefits Division keeps inventory for all Option Transfer publications to accommodate agencies that need more than the supply shipped. To order OT materials both during and after the OT Period, please use the online publication ordering system via HBA Online at www.cs.ny.gov/employee-benefits/hba. **Please do not order publications until you have received your shipments of the desired publication.**

If you need help accessing HBA Online, contact the ITS Service Desk at 844-891-1786, fixit@its.ny.gov or via chat at <https://chat.its.ny.gov>. If you have any questions about OT publications or distribution, please call the Communications Unit at (518) 457-7577.

Attachment: PE OT Poster (PDF)