



Guidelines for NYSHIP Participation at Agency Health Fairs Sponsored by NYSHIP Participating Agencies (PAs) or Participating Employers (PEs)

Planning Your Health Fair

Are you interested in hosting a health fair? Health fairs or employee information/wellness days are popular events for personnel offices to schedule to meet employee's needs and interests. To ensure appropriate use of NYSHIP resources and avoid scheduling conflicts, any participation in an agency health fair by NYSHIP health plans (The Empire Plan or Excelsior Plan for PAs and The Empire Plan and NYSHIP HMOs for PEs) **must be approved and coordinated through the Employee Benefits Division (EBD).**

When you plan your next health fair, please be sure to follow these simple steps.

1. To request a Plan representative for your health fair, **submit a request to EBD's Communications Unit at least four weeks prior to the event date**, using the Employee Information Day/Health Fair Planning Information Form available on HBA Online. This is the quickest, most direct way to submit your request. From the homepage select: Publications and Forms> Employees of PAs OR Employees of PEs> Employee Information Day/Health Fair Planning Information Form> Choose the document or form, and then scroll down to the online request form. **Note:** If you do not have access to HBA Online, you should complete the form and email it to: HealthFairPE@cs.ny.gov.
2. After you have submitted your health fair request, we will contact you either by phone or email to confirm your request has been received. If you do not receive confirmation within 3-5 business days, please call the EBD Communications Unit at (518) 457-7577.

Please do not contact The Empire Plan representatives directly. The EBD Communications Unit will contact the representative when your request is approved and will confirm the scheduling of The Empire Plan representatives with you. The scheduling process generally takes 5 to 7 business days.

Remember, Empire Plan representatives do not give benefit presentations, or participate in 'town hall' style question and answer sessions; and they cannot assist employees with completing enrollment forms. All representatives have a general knowledge of Empire Plan benefits, however, they do not represent any other NYSHIP benefit programs, such as the NYS dental or vision programs (applicable only to some PEs). If your agency offers employees the NYS dental or vision program and you would like a representative to attend your health fair, please make this request in the designated field on the request form.

3. To prevent a delay in the scheduling of your event, please complete the request form accurately and in its entirety. Scheduling for health fairs is on a first-come, first serve basis; incomplete requests will be returned and we cannot hold or reserve dates. Please be aware that due to limited availability, it may be necessary to reduce the duration of

time an Empire Plan representative is available to staff your health fair. If this is necessary you will be notified prior to your event and we ask that you publicize to your employees the times our representative will be available.

4. Following the approval of your event and the scheduling of an Empire Plan representative by EBD, PE agencies may contact the NYSHIP Health Maintenance Organizations (HMOs) in their area to invite them to participate. A courtesy list of NYSHIP HMO Contact Information will be provided to assist you in the planning process.

5. We require that the agency Health Benefits Administrator help coordinate and be **present for the entire duration of the health fair to answer questions and provide support to employees.**

To ensure NYSHIP participation, please follow these general guidelines for coordinating health fairs:

- NYSHIP policy does not permit participation in events organized or sponsored by for-profit entities such as event planners, even if there is no charge to NYSHIP participants. **NYSHIP information is provided free of charge to NYSHIP enrollees and we will not pay event admission fees, allow raffles or contribute to gift baskets.**
- **We make every effort to provide representation at every event; however, multiple events from the same agency received within a one-year timeframe will not receive priority scheduling.** We strongly encourage agencies to work collectively, by location, to allow for the most efficient use of NYSHIP resources and to increase the likelihood that a representative will be available for all groups.
- **Notify the EBD Communications Unit of any changes in date or location as soon as possible.**
- **If you are planning an outdoor event, you must provide coverage (a tent or similar structure);** or designate an indoor location in case of inclement weather.

Promoting Your Event

To optimize the use of resources, we ask agencies to do everything possible to maximize the number of enrollees who attend the health fair. Work cooperatively with your agency sponsors to promote your event and invite other NYSHIP agencies in your area to increase attendance. Display posters with the date, time and location in lunchrooms or other high traffic areas, and advertise via email or on an agency internal website.

Using Handouts and Giveaways

We arrange for a complimentary supply of the most recent benefit publications as handouts at your health fair that reflect your population, including our popular NYSHIP Online website flyer, an assortment of Empire Plan *Reporting On* and other publications with current health benefits information. In most cases, we will also send Empire Plan giveaway items. If your attendee population has possible unique concerns or issues that may affect our selection of giveaways, please be sure to inform us of this ahead of time. EBD will ship these materials in advance and will provide specific information regarding delivery.