

Planning for Retirement **Benefits Checklist** for Employees of **Participating Employers**



Retirement is a wonderful opportunity to spend time with family and friends, enjoy leisure activities or even find new work. The New York State Department of Civil Service and the New York State Health Insurance Program (NYSHIP) want to make sure that you don't have to worry about your health insurance coverage as you enter this new phase of your life.

We have resources available for you to use before you talk with your Health Benefits Administrator (HBA), including a *Planning for Retirement* booklet, this *Benefits Checklist* and the NYSHIP Online website, www.cs.ny.gov/employee-benefits, under the Planning to Retire? section.

These materials will help you make decisions and prepare questions for your visit with your HBA. Now, let's plan your retirement!

Before You Retire

Review pre-retirement materials available from your HBA and online including:

- *Planning for Retirement* booklet.
- *Retiree Health Insurance Choices* (summary of health insurance plans available to retirees under NYSHIP).
- *Rates and Information for Retirees of Participating Employers* lists the monthly premiums for NYSHIP health insurance coverage. **Note:** Please check with your HBA if you have questions regarding whether any of these rates apply to you.
- *Welcome to EBD* (the Employee Benefits Division [EBD] becomes your HBA when you retire).

Meet with your HBA to discuss:

- Eligibility requirements for continuing health insurance coverage as a retiree and whether you meet them.

- How sick leave credit* may reduce the cost of your health insurance coverage.
- The Dual Annuitant Sick Leave Credit Option.*
- Your option to defer health insurance coverage after you leave the payroll.*
- Your dental, vision and life insurance benefits after you retire.*
- Whether your current NYSHIP health insurance option, The Empire Plan or Health Maintenance Organization (HMO), will meet your needs in retirement.
- Medicare and your health insurance benefits, especially when you must enroll in Medicare.

If you have more questions after meeting with your HBA, contact the Employee Benefits Division of the New York State Department of Civil Service.

If your employer allows you to use sick leave credit, meet with your HBA before you retire to:

- Calculate the value of your sick leave credit.
- Complete Form PS-410, *State Service Sick Leave Credit Preservation*, if your NYSHIP coverage is through your spouse or domestic partner. Keep this form for your records.
- Tell your HBA if you want the Dual Annuitant Sick Leave Credit Option. If you elect this option, keep a copy of your signed Form PS-405, *Dual Annuitant Sick Leave Credit Election*, for your records.

You must decide no later than your last day on the payroll. The Dual Annuitant Sick Leave Credit Option is a one-time offer and cannot be discontinued later. Electing not to choose this option at retirement will not affect your dependents' eligibility for coverage if you die before them.

* Not all PEs offer. Please check with your agency for eligibility.

- Tell your HBA if you want to defer the start of your health insurance coverage. If you choose this option, keep a copy of your signed Form PS-406.2, *Enrollment Form for Employees Eligible to Defer Health Insurance Coverage and Sick Leave Credit Calculation Indefinitely in Retirement*, for your records.

- Tell your HBA if you want to change your health insurance option when you retire.

If you do, this will be the one change permitted to you as a retiree at any time during the 12-month period following retirement, unless you move into or out of an HMO's service area or add a new dependent to your coverage under certain conditions.

- Request copies of the benefit materials you will need as a retiree, including the current retiree version of the *NYSHIP General Information Book*.
- Ensure EBD has your correct address. Once you are retired, information will be mailed to your address of record. Be sure to keep it updated if you move. Your HBA will also have copies of these materials for you.

After You Retire

Watch your mail for your *Retiree Notification Letter* from EBD.

Watch your mail for your bill for health insurance (and other coverage, if applicable) from EBD.

- Keep your payments up to date until your pension deductions begin. If you do not wish to have pension deductions, notify EBD.
- Once your health insurance premium begins to be deducted from your pension, you will no longer be billed directly.

Contact EBD if:

- Your address has changed. *Welcome to EBD* provides a convenient form. Or, you can make address changes by going to MyNYSHIP Enrollee Self-Service at www.cs.ny.gov/mynyship, a secure portion of NYSHIP Online.
- You need to add or delete a dependent. (The change must be in writing; no telephone changes accepted.)
- You or a dependent becomes eligible for Medicare before age 65 due to disability. Send EBD a copy of your Medicare card.

- You want to change your health insurance option. As a retiree, you can change your NYSHIP option once at any time during a 12-month period. Go to MyNYSHIP at www.cs.ny.gov/mynyship or send a written request to EBD.
- You have questions about your enrollment or benefits.

For claims questions, call:

- The Empire Plan at 1-877-7-NYSHIP (1-877-769-7447) and choose the appropriate options to reach a representative.
- Your HMO.

New York State Department of Civil Service Employee Benefits Division (EBD)

After you retire, EBD serves as your HBA. You can call, click, write or visit the Employee Benefits Division of the New York State Department of Civil Service in person.

Call

518-457-5754
1-800-833-4344

(U.S., Canada, Puerto Rico, Virgin Islands)

Click

NYSHIP Online website
www.cs.ny.gov/employee-benefits

Write

New York State Department of Civil Service
Employee Benefits Division
Albany, NY 12239

Visit

After you retire, if you need further assistance with your benefits, you may call EBD to schedule a personal consultation at the New York State Department of Civil Service weekdays from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Walk-in consultations are available as time permits weekdays from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. EBD is located in Core 1 of the South Swan Street building at the Empire State Plaza. Directions to EBD are available on NYSHIP Online. Select About Us and scroll down to Location.