

The Connection

January 2009

To provide a high quality plan of health and other benefits that are affordable to the employee and the employer

Weight Watchers Update

Hundreds of PEBB members have been asking for details about the new Weight Watchers benefit. Good for you!

“Thank you for the decision to make Weight Watchers a part of our benefits,” says one PEBB member who participates. “I look better in my clothes, I can run two miles without stopping to catch my breath, I keep up with my four-year old granddaughter, and I get compliments on how great I look.”

Learn how to join here: www.mypowwr.com/downloads/PEBB.pdf.

This site steps you through the process no matter where you live in Oregon and no matter how you choose to participate – through community meetings, at-work meetings or online. Read more about your Benefit Board’s support for this program: www.oregon.gov/DAS/PEBB/WeightWatchers.shtml.

Here’s to Your Health

PEBB members offer tips and resources to help you care for your health without breaking the bank

Prescriptions

Taking a brand drug? Ask your provider if a generic would work.

“I tried to switch to the generic drug...but my stomach couldn’t take them. So, my doctor returned me to the brand name. The real story here is **TRY** the generic. If it works, you win. If it doesn’t you can go back. It’s a no-lose situation.” – *PEBB member*

FDA search tool: www.accessdata.fda.gov/scripts/cder/drugsatfda/

RegenceRx search tool: www.regencerox.com

Compliance

Compliance means following doctor’s orders – on lifestyle as well as medicine.

“I am down 140 pounds from when I started the process...My doctor has taken me off diabetes medication altogether...This

summer I got to do things I have not done in years, like hiking, fishing and walking on the beach.” – *PEBB member*

Weight Watchers: www.mypowwr.com/downloads/PEBB.pdf

Gym discounts: www.oregon.gov/DAS/PEBB/Stories/FitnessDiscounts.shtml

Prevention

The sweetest savings may come from not having to pay the piper in the first place.

“I quit smoking in 2008 and I save about \$600 a year just in cigarette costs – not including not going to the doctor for bronchitis twice a year.” – *PEBB member*

Quit for Life: www.quitnow.net/PEBB

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Contact PEBB

PEBB strives to provide excellent service to its members and clients. Excellent service requires two-way communication. So please contact PEBB whenever you think staff or the Board can help.

If you have a question about your personal benefits, contact PEBB's Client Services group. E-mail: inquiries.pebb@state.or.us. Call (503) 373-1102 in Salem; (800) 788-0520 statewide. They can answer questions about eligibility, coverage and timelines.

To share a success story, e-mail mystory.pebb@state.or.us.

To comment about your benefits in general, send e-mail to your Benefit Board at pebb.connect@state.or.us. The Board is eager to learn your thoughts about the benefit program.

If you want to speak to the Board in person, you can do so during public-comment portions of meetings. View agendas and sign up for public comment at <http://www.oregon.gov/DAS/PEBB/members.shtml>.

Survey Results

More than 8,500 PEBB members responded to last year's annual member survey. Questions asked you to rate your benefits package and describe your experience with the healthcare system.

Of the respondents, 90 percent rated their 2009 benefits as excellent or good.

Almost 95 percent reported they have a regular place of care. Of those, 77 percent said they could contact their medical provider by phone when needed.

Your Benefit Board uses your feedback to improve PEBB. Thank you for your input.

Check Your Benefits

Be sure to compare your first pay stub or statement for 2009 with your online benefit record at <https://pebb.benefits.oregon.gov/members>. Make sure you don't pay for benefits you didn't choose or use benefits for which you're not eligible.

This is especially important if you:

- Cover a dependent age 19 to 24
- Enrolled in or changed your optional life insurance
- Signed up for a flexible spending account

Deadline

If you see any errors, contact your payroll or benefits office immediately. Agency employees have until Jan. 31 to ask for corrections. University employees have until Feb. 28.

Dependents

PEBB rules define eligible dependents. They state when you may add them to coverage and when you must remove them from coverage.

Your benefit record shows the current coverage status for your dependents.

During Open Enrollment, members with dependents age 19 to 24 had to certify the dependents' eligibility for coverage in the next year. If they didn't, the dependents lost coverage Jan. 1.

Life Insurance

Open Enrollment gave you the chance to increase your optional life insurance coverage to \$40,000 without a medical history. If you took this opportunity, you should see it in your deductions.

Other additions and increases require approval of a medical history by The Standard Insurance Company. Your coverage won't begin until after approval - either the first day of the new plan year or the first day of the following month. If you changed coverage, and you don't see the deduction you anticipated, contact The Standard.



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Connect with your Benefit Board

pebb.connect@state.or.us

Voting members

Chair, Sue Nelson; *Vice Chair*, Rich Peppers; Peter Callero; Rocky King; Diane Lovell; Paul McKenna;

Jeanene Smith; Bret West

Advisory Members: Rep. Tina Kotek; Sen. William Morrisette

Resources

oregon.gov/das/pebb
inquiries.pebb@state.or.us

(503) 373-1102

(800) 788-0520

Medical Plans

Kaiser Permanente my.kp.org/nw/pebb

Providence Choice providence.org/pebb

Regence BCBSO or.regence.com/pebb

VSP (Vision Service Plan) vsp.com

Mail-order Prescriptions

PPS ppsr.com

Walgreens walgreenshealth.com

Dental Plans

Kaiser Permanente my.kp.org/nw/pebb

ODS odscompanies.com/pebb

Willamette Dental willamettedental.com

Optional Plans

The Standard standard.com

UnumProvident unumprovident.com/enroll/pebb

Other Benefits

FSAs orpebb.asiflex.com

EAP cascadecenters.com (800) 433-2320

Check Your Benefits

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Flexible Spending Accounts

These accounts, called FSAs, let you set aside funds pre-tax to cover qualified expenses for healthcare and dependent care. By IRS rules, these are annual accounts.

If you thought you enrolled for an FSA but don't see the deduction, contact your payroll or benefit office.

Stay in Touch

Make sure PEBB can get in touch with you about your benefits. You can update your address, phone and work e-mail in your benefit record at any time. Log on at <https://pebb.benefits.oregon.gov/members>.

Here's to Your Health

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Screenings

Cancer screenings? Priceless.

"I went in for a routine check-up...If my PCP had not ordered the labs, the cancer would not have been detected until much later. By then it would have been much more advanced and difficult treat."
– *PEBB member*

National screening guidelines: www.cancer.gov/cancertopics/screening

The Value Equation

For consumers, Value equals Quality divided by Cost.

"For the last two years [my husband] received his ...therapy at an infusion center monthly, at the cost of \$15,000-\$17,000 per treatment. This year, by changing infusion centers, he was able to access a different brand and it costs \$5,000-\$6,000 per treatment—a whopping savings!"
– *PEBB member*

Compare hospital quality:

www.oregon.gov/OHPPR/HQ/detailed-summaries/main.shtml

Check treatment costs:

www.regence.com/about/myRegence.jsp