

EMPLOYEE BENEFITS SPECIALIST

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF THE CLASS: An employee in this class is responsible for assisting employees and retirees with their health insurance benefits. The incumbent provides assistance and guidance concerning entitlements under benefits as established in collective bargaining agreements and personnel policies. The employee also has responsibility over notifying employees who are separating from service of their options under the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA) and assisting those employees prior to the termination of their health insurance. The work is performed under the direct supervision of the Employee Benefits Administrator with leeway allowed for the exercise of independent judgment and initiative in work methods. Difficult technical or policy problems are referred to the Employee Benefits Administrator for decision or review of judgment. Supervision is not a responsibility of an employee in this class. Does related work as required.

TYPICAL WORK ACTIVITIES: The typical work activities listed below, while providing representative examples of the variety of work assignments in the title do not describe any individual position. Incumbents in this title may perform some or all of the following, as well as other related activities not described.

Conducts orientation of new employees advising them of health insurance options and their eligibility for health insurance coverage during and after employment, retirement information and other employee benefits provided for County employees;

Assists employees in health insurance sign-up procedures, following through by notifying appropriate insurance carriers and payroll personnel;

Responds to inquiries regarding health insurance coverage, health benefits, rates, claims, etc., and contacts insurance carriers regarding eligibility and various problems that arise;

Notifies employees who are leaving County employment of Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA) option, assists them with sign-up procedures and conducts conversion prior to termination of regular health insurance;

Notifies employees and insurance carriers of termination of health insurance, provides for any necessary refunds and makes necessary adjustments to health insurance reports, as needed;

Meets with employees who previously declined health insurance or whose benefit status is changing to advise of health insurance options;

Meets with employees and retirees needing assistance in filing health insurance claims;

Notifies employees on an annual basis of options and/or changes in health insurance coverage, including insurance buy-out and open-enrollment period;

Notifies retirees of options and/or changes in health insurance coverage, including change in rates, coverage, etc.;

Assists with the coordination of open-enrollment activities for benefit plans and assists with organizing and conducting employee benefit fairs;

Prepares and maintains monthly Retirement Report for billing, monitors retiree payments and makes appropriate adjustments;

Verifies retiree roster for accuracy;

Stays abreast on employee's leave of absences to monitor when the employee's benefit is exhausted and notifies employee of further health insurance options;

Keeps in contact with payroll personnel when an employee is on Disability Leave or Worker's Compensation, to ensure that the leave does not affect the employee's health benefits.

FULL PERFORMANCE KNOWLEDGES, SKILLS, ABILITIES AND PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS: Good knowledge of health insurance benefits; good knowledge of employer responsibilities under COBRA; working knowledge of retirement benefits, eligibility requirements, retirement procedures and retirement system informational resources; working knowledge of State and Federal regulations and mandates and their impact on health insurance benefits; skill in disseminating information of a complex nature to others; ability to maintain accurate and complete records and reports; ability to understand and interpret statistical reports; ability to understand and interpret complex written material; ability to maintain a high degree of confidentiality; good judgment; resourcefulness; dependability; tact; courtesy; physical condition commensurate with the demands of the position.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS: Either:

A. Graduation from a regionally accredited or New York State registered college or university with an Associate's Degree in Healthcare Administration, Healthcare Management, Human Resources or a closely related field and two (2) years of full-time paid, or its' part-time equivalent, work experience in a position responsible for providing information about employee benefit plans, including employee health insurance programs, COBRA benefits and retirement benefits; **OR**

B. Graduation from high school or possession of a high school equivalent diploma and four (4) years of full-time paid, or its' part-time equivalent, work experience in a position responsible for providing information about employee benefit plans, including employee health insurance programs, COBRA benefits and retirement benefits; **OR**

C. An equivalent combination of training and experience as described in A and B above.

ULSTER COUNTY
2923 EMP BEN SP
Classification: Competitive
Grade: 12
Union: CSEA

Adopted: April 2, 2007