

Retirement Letter Ruling Update

We have still not received a formal response to the request to the Internal Revenue Service to allow members of OTRS who joined prior to July 1, 2004, to withdraw from OTRS. However, the IRS recently issued a Letter Ruling which may have an impact. In essence, the IRS appears to be taking a hard line against any changes in election. In other words, regardless of whether the first election was mandated by the State as is the case in most OTRS elections, the IRS is refusing to consider the possibility of a change.

Retirement legal counsel for OSU, OU, and OTRS continue to have discussions with the IRS, but at this point, it is possible that OSU/OU will be unable to provide an option to those who joined OTRS prior to July 1, 2004, to withdraw. We will keep you informed.

Considering an Individual Insurance Policy?

Remember that individual insurance policies may have plan restrictions that could limit your coverage (ie, pharmacy, maternity, pre-existing clauses). These are questions you should ask when comparing premiums and trying to determine if a private policy would work for you. You also need to know if the insurance agent will notify you of approval or denial before our deadline, October 31. If you voluntarily drop State Insurance coverage during Option Period for an individual policy, it will be 12 months before you will be eligible to re-enroll and the pre-existing limits will apply.

OSU Human Resources developed this information for the convenience of OSU employees. It is a brief interpretation of more detailed and complex materials. If further clarification is needed, the actual law, policy and contract should be consulted as the authoritative source. OSU continually monitors benefits, policy and procedures and reserves the right to change, modify, amend, or terminate benefit programs at any time.

Training Opportunities

Seminars

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| Sept 12 | Monthly Accounting Reports FBM |
| Sept 12 | The Indispensable Employee |
| Sept 13 | Purchasing Card Training |
| Sept 13 | Fixed Assets |
| Sept 14 | Promoting a Positive Workplace |
| Sept 19 | Disbursements |
| Sept 19 | FERPA Training |
| Sept 22 | HRS, Time Input and Confirmation |
| Sept 26 | Cutting-Edge Skills for the Extraordinary Assistant (Full) |
| Sept 27 | Financial Reporting System (FRS) and Purchasing |
| Sept 27 | ADA - Civil Rights vs. Legal Headache |
| Sept 28 | OSU-Oklahoma City Branch Campus Visit (Exclusive to ALP) |
| Sept 28 | Sexual Harassment/Gender Discrimination Policy Training |

Computer Training

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| Sept 12 | HTML Introduction |
| Sept 13&14 | FOCUS |
| Sept 13&14 | Excel Level 1 |
| Sept 15 | PHP Hypertext Preprocessor (PHP) Level 2 |
| Sept 19 | PHP Level 3 |
| Sept 20 | Publisher |
| Sept 21 | Dreamweaver |
| Sept 21 | Outlook |
| Sept 25&26 | PowerPoint Level 1 |

For a description of the classes, go to www.okstate.edu/osu_per/hr/training.html Training Services, (405) 744-5374

Annual Benefits Enrollment

Annual enrollment in Flexible Benefits, Life Plan, and other benefit programs, occurs immediately after Option Enrollment ends. Watch campus mail for the October issue of *News You Can Use* for more information.



News You Can Use!

**Important Information for Employees of
Oklahoma State University**

September 2006

Major HealthChoice Changes Require Your Attention

The State Plan has announced major changes for 2007 that may affect you and your family. Changes include:

- Increased premiums. HealthChoice premiums will increase as much as 26%; HMOs premiums will increase as much as 50%.
- Blended rates with higher spouse premium
- Higher deductibles and out-of-network coinsurance changes.

These changes are a result of increased claims and a legislative mandate to blend the current employee rates with the pre-medicare employee rates.

It is most important that you and your family review your coverage, consider the total cost to your family, and determine if you would benefit by a change to other coverage.

Watch your home mail for Option Enrollment information which will be mailed from the State Plan around the middle of September. You should receive:

- (1) the *2007 Option Period Guide*; and
- (2) a personalized *2007 Option Enrollment Form*.

The *2007 Option Enrollment Form* lists

your current benefits. You will use this form to make new elections so do not throw it away!

There's no need to wait for your *2007 Option Period Guide* to arrive in the mail! It is available online at www.sib.state.ok.us. Soon, on the same website, you will be able to view a short CD which provides an overview of the 2007 changes.

You and your family will want to attend one of the October *Employee Information Sessions* and learn about the different health care plans. Benefits vendors, including the State Insurance Board and Community Care, will be on campus to present 2007 benefit information to employees.

We are all concerned about the changes. Information regarding comparative plans is on the State Plan website at www.sib.state.ok.us.

The *Flexible Compensation Benefits Committee* will put out a health care *Request for Proposal* next year to determine if more viable options exist.

**Mark Your Calendar!
Health/Dental/Vision
Option Enrollment
Information/Assistance Sessions**

Employee Information Sessions

Benefits vendors, including the State Insurance Board and Community Care, will be on campus to present 2007 benefit information to employees on the following dates:

Tuesday, October 10, 415 Student Union

9:00am-10:00am 1:00pm to 2:00pm

10:30am to 11:30am 2:30pm to 3:30pm

Wednesday, October 11, 106B Whitehurst

9:00am to 10:00am 1:00pm to 2:00pm

10:30am to 11:30am 2:30pm to 3:30pm

Thursday, October 12, 415 Student Union

9:00am to 10:00am 1:00pm to 2:00pm

10:30am to 11:30am 2:00pm to 3:00pm

Enrollment Assistance Sessions

106B Whitehurst

A representative from the State Insurance Board will be available to provide last minute assistance to employees with completing 2007 Option Enrollment Forms on the following dates:

Monday, October 23, 9:00am to 4:00pm

Tuesday, October 24, 1:00pm to 4:00pm

Wednesday, October 25, 9:00am to 4:00pm

**TUESDAY, OCTOBER 31, 2006
BY 5:00PM**

**Make sure your completed
Option Enrollment Form
is in Human Resources
106 Whitehurst
if you want to make changes
to your health, dental
and/or vision coverage in 2007**

**Premium Conversion for Employees
Who Decline Health Care Coverage**

Employees who have other health care group coverage may qualify for a premium conversion option in which one-half of the premium normally paid by OSU is converted into pay for the employee.

The list of qualified plans follows the guidelines established by the State Insurance Board. The list includes:

- Group coverage through prior employer
- Group coverage through spouse's employer
- Religious convictions
- Military coverage
- Indian Health
- Medicare or Medicaid (Sooner Care)
- Social Security Assistance
- Veteran's Administration
- Wheat Farmers Association

OSU Graduate Student Insurance and Socialized Medicine from another country do not qualify as other group insurance by the State Insurance Board.

If you decline health care coverage and qualify for a premium conversion during 2007, you may complete a *Request for Premium Conversion* form during the 2007 Option Period. The premium conversion for this situation is not automatic; this form is required to document your qualification for the premium conversion. The form is at www.okstate.edu/osu_per/benefits/benefits.html.

If you currently have a premium conversion for 2006, it will remain in effect at the new 2007 rates unless you notify Employee Services during the Option Enrollment period.

**Finally! No Need to Re-Enroll
in the Vision Plan**

Employees wishing to continue with a vision plan for 2007 are no longer required to re-enroll during Option Period. All members currently enrolled in vision and not electing a change will continue in that same vision plan.

If you do not wish to have vision for 2007, or if you wish to be enrolled in another vision plan, you must indicate that change on your Option Enrollment Form.

The Vision Service Plan (VSP) premium will drop to \$8.96 and frames will be covered up to \$120.

If you are in the Superior Vision Plan, please note that Cockrell Eyecare Center is dropping this plan.

Dependent Health Insurance

Dependent children are now eligible until the end of the month in which they turn 23 years of age. These dependent children, under the age of 23, previously terminated or not enrolled due to lack of full-time status may be enrolled or re-enrolled during this Option Period if they are financially dependent on you.

If your dependent children, ages 22 to 25, were covered as of June 30, 2006, they will be allowed to continue coverage up to age 25 if they are dependent on you for support and maintains full-time student status.

**TIAA-CREF Seminar
Planning for Retirement and Other Goals
September 19, 2006, 10:00-11:00am, 106B
Whitehurst**

Introducing you to TIAA-CREF, this seminar reviews the product features and benefit options that are available with TIAA-CREF products that are used to fund both basic and supplemental retirement plans.

**No Change to
HealthChoice Dental Premium;
Increases in Other Dental Plans**

The HealthChoice Dental premium remains the same. However, four of the other dental plans incurred increases. The increases range from 3% to almost 16%.

Check the *2007 Option Period Guide* for more information.

Option Enrollment Checklist

- Watch home mail for *Option Enrollment* packet which contains
a) the *2007 Option Period Guide*, and
b) your personalized *2007 Option Enrollment Form*.
Do not throw away this packet! You will use the *2007 Option Enrollment Form* to make your new benefit elections.
- Read the *2007 Option Period Guide* carefully, paying particular attention to the various healthcare plans and premium costs.
- Attend an *Employee Information Session*. Your current health care plan may not be the right plan for you and your family in 2007, so you will want to attend an *Employee Information Session* to learn about the different health care plans and rates.
- Complete the *2007 Option Enrollment Form* if making any coverage or plan changes.
- Submit the *2007 Option Enrollment Form* to Human Resources, 106 Whitehurst, no later than 5pm, Tuesday, October 31, 2006.
or
- Do nothing if you do not wish to change your current coverage.