

Date: September 16, 2013

To: South Puget Sound Community College Employees

From: Samantha Soto – Manager of Employee Benefits and Compensation 

Re: Affordable Care Act Notice of Health Insurance Marketplace Coverage Options

Dear South Puget Sound Community College Employee,

Please review the enclosed Notification of Benefit Exchange carefully. For those of you that are currently **not** eligible for PEBB Benefits through the college, beginning in October of 2013 you can enroll in a Marketplace plan for your health insurance needs. The Marketplace simplifies your search for health coverage by gathering options available in your area in one place. You can capture plans based on price, benefits, quality, and other features important to you before you make a choice.

Visit www.healthcare.gov (with a live chat option) or also get help by phone, or in person. Call 1-800-318-2596, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. (TTY: 1-855-889-4325)

For Washington State residents, Washington Healthplanfinder can help you evaluate Marketplace coverage options and possible premium savings online, by phone, or in person:

Washington Healthplanfinder
521 Capitol Way South
Olympia, WA 98501
360-688-7700
www.wahealthplanfinder.org

If you have additional questions, please give me a call at 360-596-5433.

The Affordable Care Act (ACA) Notice of Health Insurance Marketplace Coverage Options and Your Public Employees Benefits Board (PEBB) Benefits

General Information

Beginning in 2014, most individuals will be required to have health insurance coverage. There will be a new way to buy health insurance through the new health insurance Marketplace, also known as the Health Insurance Exchange. Washington Healthplanfinder is the Marketplace serving Washington residents. This notice provides basic information about the Marketplace as well as PEBB benefits offered by your employer and is intended to assist you in evaluating options for you and your family.

1. What is the Health Insurance Marketplace?

Under the ACA, every state must have a health insurance Marketplace to help people buy health insurance. The Marketplace offers assistance to help you find and compare medical health insurance options offered by private companies. The Marketplace will also help you find out if you qualify for premium tax credits or other financial assistance.

2. When does open enrollment begin?

Open enrollment for the Marketplace begins October 1, 2013 for coverage starting as early as January 1, 2014.

3. Can I save money on my health insurance premiums in the Marketplace?

You may qualify to save money and lower your monthly premium, but only if you are not eligible for PEBB medical plan enrollment as an employee. The amount of premium savings in the Marketplace depends on your household income.

4. Does being eligible for an employer contribution for PEBB medical coverage affect eligibility for premium savings through the Healthplanfinder?

Yes.

- **Employees eligible for employer contribution:**

All **eligible** state employees receive an employer contribution for PEBB medical plan enrollment and are not allowed to waive PEBB medical coverage to enroll in coverage through the Marketplace. All or a portion of this contribution may be excluded from income for Federal and State income tax purposes. These employees should remain enrolled in their PEBB medical plan.

State employees who are eligible to receive an employer contribution cannot use the employer contribution to purchase coverage through the Marketplace, and will not be eligible for a premium tax credit if they purchase coverage through the Marketplace.

However, if the cost of a PEBB health plan to cover you (and not any other members of your family) is more than 9.5% of your household income for the year, or does not meet the “minimum value” standard set by the ACA, you may be eligible for a tax credit or other financial assistance.

An employer-sponsored health plan meets the “minimum value standard” if the plan’s share of the total allowed benefit costs covered by the plan is no less than 60 percent of such costs.

- **Employees not eligible for employer contribution:**

Employees who are not eligible for the employer contribution for PEBB medical plan enrollment should consider applying for health benefits in the new Marketplace as they may qualify for a premium tax credit or other financial assistance. Your payments for coverage through the Marketplace are made on an after-tax basis.

5. How do I get additional information about the Marketplace?

The Marketplace simplifies your search for health coverage by gathering the options available in your area in one place. You can compare plans based on price, benefits, quality, and other features important to you before you make a choice.

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6. How do I contact the Washington Healthplanfinder?

For Washington State residents, Washington Healthplanfinder can help you evaluate Marketplace coverage options and possible premium savings online, by phone, or in person:

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Olympia, WA 98501
360-688-7700
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7. How do I get more information about PEBB benefits?

For more information about PEBB health plans offered by your employer, please check the Certificate of Coverage for your plan, or contact your benefits office.

You can also find complete information about PEBB benefits at the PEBB website:
www.hca.wa.gov/pebb

Information about PEBB health coverage offered by your employer

This section contains information about any health coverage offered by your employer. If you decide to complete an application for coverage in the Marketplace, you will be asked to provide this information. This information is numbered to correspond to the Marketplace application.

3. Employer name South Puget Sound Community College		4. Employer Identification Number (EIN) 91-1409321
5. Employer address 2011 Mottman Rd. SW		6. Employer phone number 360-596-5433
7. City Olympia	8. State WA	9. ZIP code 98512
10. Who can we contact about employee health coverage at this job? Samantha Soto – Manager of Benefits and Compensation		
11. Phone number (if different from above)		12. Email address ssoto@spscc.edu

Here is some basic information about health coverage offered by this employer:

- **As your employer, we offer a health plan to:**

- ☐ All employees.
- ☒ **Some employees.**

Eligible employees are described in Washington Administrative Code 182-12-114:

(1)(a) An employee is eligible if he or she works an average of at least eighty hours per month and works for at least eight hours in each month for more than six consecutive months.

(i) Upon employment: An employee is eligible from the date of employment if the employing agency anticipates the employee will work according to the criteria in (a) of this subsection.

(2)(a) Seasonal employees are eligible if he or she works an average of at least eighty hours per month and works for at least eight hours in each month of the season. A season is any recurring, cyclical period of work at a specific time of year that lasts three to eleven months.

(b) Determining eligibility.

(i) Upon employment: A seasonal employee is eligible from the date of employment if the employing agency anticipates that he or she will work according to the criteria in (a) of this subsection.

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(ii) Upon revision of anticipated work pattern. If an employing agency revises an employee's anticipated work hours such that the employee meets the eligibility criteria in (a) of this subsection, the employee becomes eligible when the revision is made.

(iii) Based on work pattern. An employee who is determined to be ineligible for benefits, but later works an average of at least eighty hours per month and works for at least eight hours in each month and works for more than six consecutive months, becomes eligible the first of the month following a six-month averaging period.

(c) Stacking of hours. As long as the work is within one state agency, employees may "stack" or combine hours worked in more than one position or job to establish eligibility and maintain the employer contribution toward insurance coverage. Employees must notify their employing agency if they believe they are eligible through stacking. Stacking includes work situations in which:

(i) The employee works two or more positions or jobs at the same time (concurrent stacking);

(ii) The employee moves from one position or job to another (consecutive stacking); or

(iii) The employee combines hours from a seasonal position or job to hours from a nonseasonal position or job. An employee who establishes eligibility by stacking hours from a seasonal position or job with hours from a nonseasonal position or job shall maintain the employer contribution toward insurance coverage under WAC 182-12-131(1).

(3)(a) Faculty "Half-time" means one-half of the full-time academic workload as determined by each institution, except that half-time for community and technical college faculty employees is governed by RCW 28B.50.489.

Note: A change to the definition of full time, for community and technical college faculty, based on a collective bargaining agreement may affect an employee's eligibility for PEBB benefits. If eligibility is lost, COBRA coverage is available as described in WAC 182-12-146.

(i) Upon employment: Faculty who the employing agency anticipates will work half-time or more for the entire instructional year, or equivalent nine-month period, are eligible from the date of employment.

(ii) For faculty hired on quarter/semester to quarter/semester basis: Faculty who the employing agency anticipates will not work for the entire instructional year, or equivalent nine-month period, are eligible at the beginning of the second consecutive quarter or semester of employment in which he or she is anticipated to work, or has actually worked, half-time or more. Spring and fall are considered consecutive quarters/semesters when first establishing eligibility for faculty that work less than half-time during the summer quarter/semester.

(iii) Upon revision of anticipated work pattern: Faculty who receive additional workload after the beginning of the anticipated work period (quarter, semester, or instructional year), such that their

workload meets the eligibility criteria of (a)(i) or (ii) of this subsection become eligible when the revision is made.

(b) Stacking. Faculty may establish eligibility and maintain the employer contribution toward insurance coverage by working as faculty for more than one institution of higher education. Faculty workloads may only be stacked with other faculty workloads to establish eligibility under this section or maintain eligibility under WAC 182-12-131(3). When a faculty works for more than one institution of higher education, the faculty must notify his or her employing agencies that he or she works at more than one institution and may be eligible through stacking

(4)(a) Elected and full-time appointed officials of the legislative and executive branches of state government are eligible for PEBB benefits on the date his or her term begins. All other elected and full-time appointed officials of the legislative and executive branches of state government are eligible on the date their terms begin or the date they take the oath of office, whichever occurs first.

(5)(a) Justices and judges are eligible for PEBB benefits on the date they take the oath of office.

- **With respect to dependents:**

☒ **We do offer coverage.**

☐ We do not offer coverage.

Eligible dependents are described in Washington Administrative Code 182-12-260:

(1) Lawful spouse.

(2) Domestic partner. (a) Effective January 1, 2010, a state registered domestic partner, as defined in RCW 26.60.020(1). (b) A domestic partner who was qualified under PEBB eligibility criteria as a domestic partner before January 1, 2010, and was continuously enrolled under the subscriber in a PEBB health plan or life insurance.

(3) Children. Children are eligible up to age twenty-six except as described in subsection (i) of this section. Children are defined as the subscriber's:

(a) Children as defined in RCW 26.26.101 establishment of parent-child relationship;

(b) Biological children;

(c) Stepchildren. The stepchild's relationship to a subscriber (and eligibility as a PEBB dependent) ends, for purposes of this rule, on the same date the subscriber's legal relationship with the spouse or domestic partner ends through divorce, annulment, dissolution, termination, or death;

(d) Legally adopted children;

(e) Children for whom the subscriber has assumed a legal obligation for total or partial support in anticipation of adoption of the child;

(f) Children of the subscriber's state registered domestic partner;

(g) Children specified in a court order or divorce decree;

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(h) Extended dependents in the legal custody or legal guardianship of the subscriber, the subscriber's spouse, or subscriber's state registered domestic partner. The legal responsibility is demonstrated by a valid court order and the child's official residence with the custodian or guardian. "Children" does not include foster children for whom support payments are made to the subscriber through the state department of social and health services foster care program; and

(i) Children of any age with a disability. Effective January 1, 2011, children of any age with a disability, mental illness, or intellectual or other developmental disability, who are incapable of self-support, provided such condition occurs before age twenty-six. Periodic certification is required.

(4) Parents.

(a) Parents covered under PEBB medical before July 1, 1990, may continue enrollment on a self-pay basis as long as:

(i) The parent maintains continuous enrollment in PEBB medical;

(ii) The parent qualifies under the Internal Revenue Code as a dependent of the subscriber;

(iii) The subscriber continues enrollment in PEBB insurance coverage; and

(iv) The parent is not covered by any other group medical plan.

(b) Parents eligible under this subsection may be enrolled with a different health plan than that selected by the subscriber. Parents may not add additional dependents to their insurance coverage.

☒ **If checked, this coverage meets the minimum value standard, and the cost of this coverage to you is intended to be affordable, based on employee wages.**

Even if your employer intends your coverage to be affordable, you may still be eligible for a premium discount through the Marketplace. The Marketplace will use your household income, along with other factors, to determine whether you may be eligible for a premium discount. If, for example, your wages vary from week to week (perhaps you are an hourly employee or you work on a commission basis), if you are newly employed mid-year, or if you have other income losses, you may still qualify for a premium discount.