

The Fund Office Report

JANUARY 2009

STEAMFITTERS & METAL TRADES

UNDER AGE 65 MEDICARE COVERAGE MUST BE DISCLOSED TO FUND OFFICE

The federal Medicare health care program has implemented new regulations for all health plans requiring the submission of information regarding participants and dependents who are Medicare-eligible. This pertains to both the Steamfitters and Metal Trades Welfare Funds.

When a member or dependent spouse becomes 65, the Fund Office knows you are Medicare-eligible and we record that information in our files. It also gets reported to the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) under federal secondary payer reporting requirements. This program had been a voluntary program until recently when it became mandatory.

Thus, as of January 1, 2009 the respective Welfare Funds are required to report all Medicare-eligible members and dependents to CMS. If you or your dependent's Medicare eligibility is based on becoming age 65 you do not have to do anything since we "capture" your eligibility from your date of birth. In addition, if you are receiving a pension from either Pension Fund as a result of having a Social Security Administration Disability Award you do not have to do anything since we have also "captured" that information. Therefore, if you or a dependent of any age under 65 are eligible for Medicare please contact the Fund Office Help Desk at Ext. 244.

There is absolutely no change in your coverage. This is an important matter and we appreciate your cooperation and assistance.

METAL TRADES



HEALTH BENEFITS BOOKLET TO BE MAILED IN LATE JANUARY

The newly designed and written benefits booklet, often times referred to as the Summary Plan Description (SPD), has been completed. It is presently at the printers being worked on, it will then be bound and, finally, mailed to all participants.

For the first time, the SPD includes the Empire BlueCross BlueShield PPO booklet describing, in detail, your hospital and medical benefits. You will notice that the Empire section is separated from the rest of the booklet by the use of blue pages. That will permit better use of the entire booklet.

Look for the new benefits booklet in your mailbox soon!!

STEAMFITTERS

DISABILITY STATUS PROGRAM HELPS WITH YOUR HEALTH COVERAGE



The Welfare Fund has an eligibility option entitled the Disability Status Program (DSP) which can help covered participants if they are unable to work due to a medical condition. The DSP can protect you from losing coverage if your illness or injury prevents you from working. As a prerequisite to the DSP application process, you must be covered in the Welfare Fund at the time of your injury or illness.

Under the rules of the Welfare Fund, you must report any injury on or off the job which will effect your ability to work to the Fund Office as soon as possible and your completed application must be received within thirty (30) days. You will be required to undergo an independent medical examination as part of the process prior to Trustee approval. Call the Fund Office Help Desk at Ext. 244 with any questions.

STEAMFITTERS



EDUCATIONAL FUND ADDS NEW TRUSTEE DURING PAST YEAR

An additional Employee Trustee was added to the Educational Fund in 2008 when Union President Jack Torpey appointed Richard Roberts, the Local 638 Business Agent-At- Large, to that position.

STEAMFITTERS

IMPORTANT REPRINT FROM OCTOBER 2008 NEWSLETTER

SECURITY BENEFIT FUND AND SUPPLEMENTAL RETIREMENT PLAN TO EASE RULES FOR FORECLOSURE & EVICTION DISTRIBUTIONS; BENEFIT TO BE LIMITED TO "ONCE A YEAR"

Effective January 1, 2009, the rules for processing the prevention of eviction or foreclosure withdrawals will change for both the Security Benefit Fund (SBF) and the Supplemental Retirement Plan (SRP).

If you apply for a "prevention of eviction from or foreclosure on your principal residence" you will only be allowed to be paid once per calendar year from the SBF or SRP plans or a combination of the two plans. You will be required to document that you are at least 3 months behind in your rent or mortgage payments. A bank statement or notice of default mortgage letter is required documentation for foreclosure. A notice of petition of non-payment of rent or landlord's attorney letter is required for documenting potential eviction.

Any questions regarding the benefits/distributions for foreclosure or eviction can be directed to the Help Desk at extension 244.