

The Fund Office Report

Important News About Your Employee Benefit Programs in the Construction Trades Branch of Steamfitters' Local 638

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Volume 9, Issue 1

January 2020



2019 Tax Forms

The following tax forms, W-2, 1099-R, and 1099-M will be mailed by January 31, 2020 as required by law. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the Fund Office at (212) 465-8888, extension 234.

'Sydney' - Empire's New Mobile App!

On September 1, 2019, Empire BlueCross BlueShield launched their new mobile app, 'Sydney'. Available on the App Store, Sydney provides a quick and easy way to manage your benefits right at your fingertips. This app is designed to act like a personal health guide by providing you with the appropriate resources, programs and doctors, based on your specific needs. In addition, it works to help you stay healthy and save money, in an effort to improve your overall well-being. Here are some more of the unique features that Sydney has to offer:



- Health Dashboard
- Find care & check costs
- Manage benefits
- Chat via Chatbot
- Check all benefits
- Review claims

ACTIVE & NON-MEDICARE RETIREES

2020 Out-of-Pocket Maximums

The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act requires that health plans must accumulate member and dependent out-of-pocket (OOP) expenses each year. If your OOP expenses exceed the individual or family limit listed below, your future co-payments for the benefit type you exceed will be waived for the balance of that calendar year. Please note that only co-payments for our hospital, medical and prescription drug coverage are considered OOP expenses for the purpose of our OOP maximums.

The annual OOP maximums for the Welfare Fund starting January 1, 2020 are as follows:

- Empire BlueCross (hospital and medical) Individual: \$4,700 Family: \$9,400
- Express Scripts (prescription drugs) Individual: \$3,450 Family: \$6,900

ACTIVE & NON-MEDICARE RETIREES



EXPRESS SCRIPTS®

2020 National Formulary Update

The Express Scripts National Formulary has a few minor additions to its list of excluded drugs or supplies effective January 1, 2020. The very few number of participants or dependents that were effected were notified in November and a choice of replacement products were provided to them and their physicians.

For the 2020 National Preferred Formulary Exclusions please go to https://www.express-scripts.com/art/open_enrollment/DrugListExclusionsAndAlternatives.pdf.

2020 Custom Clinical Exclusions

As of January 1, 2020 the brand name drugs listed below will no longer be covered. Each of these six (6) drugs have therapeutic and/or "over-the-counter" (OTC) alternatives. Your physician or healthcare provider can guide you regarding these exclusions.

<u>Drug Excluded:</u>	<u>Therapeutic Alternative:</u>	<u>OTC:</u>
Arestin	minocycline 2% gel	-
Solodyn	minocycline ER	✓
Duexis	ibuprofen & famotidine	✓
Vimovo	naproxen & esomeprazole	✓
Glumetza	metformin ER	-
Rayos	prednisone	-

Security Benefit Fund: Housing Benefit

The Housing Benefit can be used for certain costs associated with the purchase of a residence, for the initial costs associated with a rental and for costs to prevent foreclosure or eviction. Your residence has to be your primary residence and must be located within 150 miles of the Fund Office, which is considered to be a reasonable commuting distance.

Effective January 1, 2020 a participant cannot utilize this benefit for the purchase of a primary residence or initial costs associated with a rental on more than two occasions during a twelve-month benefit period. Also, the prevention of foreclosure or eviction benefit cannot be utilized more than twice per calendar year.

The Fund cannot provide post-retirement housing benefits. Therefore, retired participants are excluded from this benefit. However, retirees who return to work may apply for costs to prevent foreclosure or eviction in accordance with the rules listed above.

Costs or fees related for the purchase of a primary residence that are eligible under this benefit include, but are not limited to, the following: loan originations, loan discounts, appraisals, credit reports, lender's inspections, mortgage insurance applications, tax services, flood checks, document preparations, title searches, title examinations, title insurance binders, attorneys, title insurance, governmental recordings, state taxes and surveys. The initial cost related to a rental may include the first and last month's rent, security deposit, and broker's fees or commissions.

The Security Benefit Fund will not process a claim for initial costs or closing cost as a reimbursement if these costs have already been paid. Therefore, supporting documentation must be submitted prior to the move-in or closing date. If the application and documentation is submitted after the move in or closing date, the application will be denied. Documentation supporting this benefit *may* include a signed contract of sale, mortgage application, good faith estimate, legal documents pertaining to the construction of a new home, copy of rental lease, foreclosure or eviction notices or *notices of impending foreclosure or eviction* and/or any other documents so requested. All documents must be in the member or spouse's name only.

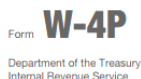
Expansion of Hospice Benefits Certification Period and Addition of Applied Behavioral Analysis Treatment for Autism



As of January 1, 2020, the Hospice Benefits certification period will be expanded to twelve (12) months. In addition, you may access hospice care while participating in a clinical trial or continuing disease modifying therapy that is treating the underlying terminal illness. The in-network hospice care benefit is 210 days.

Applied Behavioral Analysis Treatment for Autism, an outpatient program will commence on January 1, 2020. Although there are no benefit limits, the program is subject to precertification, clinical review and utilization management.

Contact Empire BlueCross at 1-800-553-9603 with any questions regarding either the expanded hospice care or the new treatment for autism.



Pension Tax Withholding

Upon retirement, you were given the option to have federal income tax withheld from your benefit payments. Withholding is one way for you to pay a portion of your income tax. Whether you are required to pay federal income tax on your benefit payments depends on your personal situation. Please be aware, as a consequence of not having enough tax or no tax withheld from your benefits, you may be required to pay estimated taxes during the year or a tax penalty at the end of the year. Your decision on withholding is an important one and you may wish to discuss it with a qualified tax advisor.

You may change your tax election at any time. The change to your tax elections would be placed into effect on the first of the month following receipt of your completed W-4P form.

***Important - New York State income tax can now be withheld from your monthly pension benefit.**

The IRS has created a page on IRS.gov with information regarding Form W-4P and its instructions, at www.irs.gov/w4-p.

For New York State Income Tax Withholding, you may download the form and its instructions, at https://www.tax.ny.gov/pdf/current_forms/it/it2104p_fill_in.pdf.

You may also contact the Fund Office to obtain these forms, at (212) 465-8888, choose menu option 3 for the Pension Department.

Please return your completed form W4-P and/or IT-2104P with your original signature to the Pension department at the Fund Office.