

The Fund Office Report

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

The Steamfitters' Industry Fund Office, 27-08 40th Avenue, 2nd Floor, Long Island City, NY 11101-3725

Telephone: (212) 465-8888 E-mail: FundOffice@steamny.com Website: www.steamfitters.com

Volume 5, Issue 4

October 1, 2017

Inside this issue:

Vacation Plan Payout Checks

Pharmacy Vaccination Program

Hearing Aids

Disability Status Program

Post-Retirement Lump Sum Death Benefit

Retired Participants Receiving a Disability Pension Benefit

Return to Work Pensioners

Steamfitting Industry Assistance Program

Vacation Plan Payout Checks



The Semiannual Vacation Plan Payout checks will be processed on October 11th. If you signed up for *direct deposit* the money should be in your account on October 12th. For those members who will be receiving their check by mail, you should receive them by October 20th, at the latest.

Please remember, you may enroll to have your benefits paid by the Fund Office through *direct deposit*, otherwise known as Electronic Fund Transfer (EFT). To enroll in direct deposit, you can find the EFT Authorization Form online at <http://www.steamfitters.com/construction-forms.asp> or call the Fund Office at (212) 465-8888 option 9.

For those members who have direct deposit and have changed or closed the account on file with the Fund Office, please contact the Fund Office at the above number immediately.



EXPRESS SCRIPTS®

Pharmacy Vaccination Program

Active & Non-Medicare Retired Participants

Now it is easier than ever to stay healthy. The Pharmacy Vaccination Program started **October 1st**. Many diseases are preventable through the use of vaccinations. To help you and your family members stay healthy, you can now receive vaccines conveniently administered at your local retail pharmacy at **\$ 0 copay** through the Welfare Fund's prescription drug benefit with Express Scripts. Vaccines administered at your retail pharmacy typically do not require an appointment and are the same effective medications as your physician's office. These vaccines include: Flu (influenza), Childhood vaccines (MMR, etc.), Hepatitis, Human Papillomavirus (HPV), Meningitis, Pneumonia, Shingles/zoster, Tetanus/Diphtheria/Pertussis, and Travel vaccines (rabies, typhoid, etc.).

Before You Visit the Pharmacy...Make sure the pharmacy you use is part of your Express Scripts participating pharmacy network. If you're not sure, use the *Locate a Pharmacy* feature (at express-scripts.com under *Prescriptions*) to find out. Be sure to call the pharmacy to verify their current vaccination schedule, vaccine availability, and any age restrictions or prescription requirements.

When You Get to the Pharmacy...Be sure to present your prescription member ID card at the time of service. Be sure to **get your vaccine from the pharmacist at the pharmacy, not from the clinic** as some of the pharmacies may have an on-site clinic that offers vaccines.

Call the Welfare Fund at (212) 465-8888 option 4 if you have any questions regarding the new program.

Hearing Aid



Effective January 1, 2018 the Trustees have increased the reimbursement for you and your eligible dependents, exclusively for the purchase of a hearing aid, to \$2,000. This new amount is per person, once each calendar year.

The purchase date of the hearing aid is the applicable date for reimbursement, not the date you file the form. You must be covered in the Welfare Fund on the purchase date. This benefit cannot be used for the cost of repairs or for batteries.

Any unpaid balance for you or your qualifying dependents hearing aid purchase may be submitted to the Health Reimbursement Account provided you have a sufficient balance. Please call the Fund Office at (212) 465-8888 option 8 if you have any questions regarding this matter.

Disability Status Program Active Participants

The Disability Status Program (DSP) is designed to help covered active participants maintain eligibility for up to 3 years maximum 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, have at least 10 years of service in the Pension Fund (unless you're an apprentice) including having earned one year of credit within the 3 years prior to your disability event and have been in coverage for at least 10 of the 40 calendar quarters immediately preceding the date on which your DSP application is received by the Fund Office.

Under the rules of the Welfare Fund, you must report any injury on or off the job which will affect your ability to work to the Fund Office as soon as possible. Your completed DSP application must be received within thirty (30) days of the accident or illness. You will be required to undergo an independent medical examination as part of the process prior to Trustee approval. Call the Welfare Fund (Option 4 on the Main Menu) with any questions regarding the DSP application.

Post-Retirement Lump Sum Death Benefit

Effective January 1, 2018 the Trustees have increased the Post-Retirement Lump Sum Death Benefit from \$10,000 to \$13,000. This increased amount applies to each Participant who dies on or after January 1, 2018 and who has retired on a Regular, Early or Disability Pension, including those who elected a single sum form of payment. Examples of post-retirement lump sum death benefit payment(s):

Example 1. George retired on a Regular Pension on August 1, 2010 and passed away in December 2017. George's beneficiary will receive a Lump Sum Death Benefit of \$10,000.

Example 2. David also retired on a Regular Pension on August 1, 2010, however David passed away in February 2018. David's beneficiary will receive a Lump Sum Death Benefit of \$13,000.

Call the Pension Fund at (212)465-8888, menu option 3 if you have any questions regarding this benefit.

Retired Participants Receiving a Disability Pension Benefit

Shortly, you will be receiving "Your New Benefit Amount" letter from the Social Security Administration (SSA). You will be required to submit a copy of this letter to provide proof of your continued receipt of Social Security disability benefits when the Pension Fund conducts its annual audit. Please send the letter you receive from SSA to the Fund Office or make sure to keep it until you receive our Annual Audit letter requesting the same. If you have any questions on this subject please call the Fund Office at (212) 465-8888, menu option 3 for the Pension Fund.

Return to Work Pensioners

If you have a minimum of 750 hours earned in 2017 you are eligible for an additional year of Pension credit. An additional Pension credit for 2017 becomes payable effective February 1, 2018 at the earliest. For an application, contact the Fund Office at (212) 465-8888, menu option 3 for the Pension department. Your application must be submitted at least 30 days prior to your benefit effective date. As an example, if your effective date is February 1, 2018, a valid application must be received no later than January 1, 2018. **Please be aware, benefits are not paid automatically, you must apply.**

Return To

WORK

Steamfitting Industry Assistance Program (SIAP)



The Assistance Program helps members and their families dealing with alcoholism, drug abuse, misuse of prescription drugs and with emotional problems. Contact our Director, Roger Ross, at (212) 563-0342. Please be assured all calls are kept **STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL**.