

The Fund Office Report

The Steamfitters' Industry Local 638 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

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2023 Tax Forms

All tax forms (i.e. W-2, 1099-R and 1099-M) will be mailed by January 31, 2024 as required by law. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the Fund Office at (212) 465-8888, option 9.

Out-of-Pocket Maximums for 2024

An Out-of-Pocket maximum is a cap, or limit, on the amount of money you have to pay for covered health care services in a plan year. If you meet that limit, your health plan will pay 100% of all covered health care costs for the rest of the plan year. Some health insurance plans call this an out-of-pocket limit.

For the calendar year 2024, the maximum out-of-pocket expenses for any participant will be \$9,450.00 for an individual and \$18,900.00 for a family. If you have any questions regarding the maximum amount, please contact the Welfare Department at (212) 465-8888, option 4.

Co-Pay Increases

Beginning January 1, 2024, the co-pay amount for visiting your doctor will increase. Due to the ever-increasing costs of health care, the Trustees have approved the following plan design changes. These changes are necessary to continue to provide you and your families, the highest quality of healthcare coverage. The co-pays are as follows:

- **Office Visits** will now be \$30. This includes your primary care doctor, as well as specialists, chiropractors, cardio rehabilitation, physical, speech and vision therapy as well as mental health/alcohol and substance abuse treatment.
- **Urgent Care** visits will now be \$50. Urgent care facilities cost your Welfare Fund more than three times as much as a primary care office visit.
- **Emergency Room** co-payments for Active participants will be \$200 and \$120 for Retired Medicare eligible participants/co-payments are waived if admitted to the hospital.
- **MetLife Dental Out-of-Network** will increase to \$200/\$500 for individual and families respectively.

2023 Retirement Seminar



The Retirement Seminar was held at the LaGuardia Airport Marriott on Saturday, November 18, 2023. Fund Office representatives gave presentations regarding your benefit funds in retirement. In addition, there were speakers on Social Security, Estate Planning, Asbestosis and the Steamfitters' Industry Assistance Program. Over 300 members and spouses attended this event and the day was a great success. The Seminar is scheduled to be held again in the Fall of 2025.

Disability Pension Benefits

If you applied for a Social Security Administration Award Certificate, also known as a “**Notice of Award**,” you may meet the eligibility requirements for a Disability Pension. You must have at least five (5) years of service credits, and not yet be age 60. If you are eligible, your Disability Pension will be calculated as though you are age 60. The effective date of your pension will be the date of your entitlement to disability benefits from the Social Security Administration (SSA) indicated on your Notice of Award. If you apply for your pension benefit from the Steamfitters’ Industry Pension Plan within **90 days** of the receipt of your SSA Award Certificate, your pension benefits will be paid retroactively to the date you became entitled to Social Security disability benefits, as indicated on the certificate. **If your application is not made within 90 days of the receipt of your certificate, Disability Pension payments cannot begin more than 1 year prior to your application date.** If you have applied, or plan to apply for Social Security Disability Insurance Benefits, please contact the Pension Department at the Fund Office, (212) 465-8888, option 3.

Empire BlueCross BlueShield Name Change



Beginning January 1, 2024, Empire BlueCross BlueShield will change its name to Anthem BlueCross BlueShield. You will maintain access to the same network of hospitals and doctors. If you use the web to access Empire, the URL you currently use will automatically redirect you to the new site. Please make sure to present your new ID card to your physician at your next visit.

New York State Paid Family Leave



New York State Paid Family Leave (NY PFL) Rate and Benefit Updates for 2024. The employee contributions to pay for the Paid Family Leave (PFL) benefit coverage will continue through payroll deductions at a rate based on your salary. The following chart represents the updated employee contribution rate and benefit provisions for the upcoming 2024 calendar year, which will be effective January 1, 2024. For more information, please contact your Employer directly or feel free to contact the Fund Office at (212) 465-8888 option 4 on the main menu.

| NY PFL: | 2024 | 2023 |
|--------------------------------------|------------|------------|
| Maximum Employee Annual Contribution | \$333.25 | \$399.43 |
| Maximum Length of Paid Leave | 12 weeks | 12 weeks |
| Maximum Weekly Benefit | \$1,151.16 | \$1,131.08 |

Social Security Administration

Retirement, Survivors & Disability Insurance – Notice of Award

Have you, your spouse or any eligible dependents been awarded Disability Benefits from the Social Security Administration?

Being approved for Social Security Disability Insurance Benefits means that your entitlement to health coverage through Medicare would begin earlier than age 65. There are Federal Medicare guideline rules that need to be followed once someone is eligible for Medicare. The Welfare Fund can help you determine when to enroll in Medicare Part A and Part B and what plan you would need to be enrolled in due to your Disability. Not informing us of your Medicare eligibility when you are eligible to enroll, may cost the Welfare Fund unnecessary costs, may affect your enrollment into the correct plan and could cause you to have to reimburse the Welfare Fund for any medical, hospital and prescription claims that you may have incurred during the time period. If you or your dependents are receiving social security disability benefits, please contact the Welfare Fund at (212) 465-8888, menu option 4 for help and clarification.

