

The Fund Office Report

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

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2017 Tax Forms

The 1099-R and 1095-B will be mailed by January 31, 2018 as required by law. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the Fund Office at (212) 465-8888, extension 234.

New York State Paid Family Leave



EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1, 2018, YOU CAN TAKE PAID TIME OFF TO:

- Bond with a newborn, adopted, or foster child.
- Care for a family member (*spouse, domestic partner, child, parent, parent-in-law, grandparent, or grandchild*) with a serious health condition.
- Assist loved ones when a family member (*spouse, domestic partner, child or parent*) is deployed abroad on active military duty.

ADDITIONAL PROTECTIONS:

You have the right to return to the same or comparable job upon return from Paid Family Leave. The Welfare Fund will credit you hours towards your eligibility for each hour you receive a check. Employers cannot discriminate against employees for taking Paid Family Leave.

ELIGIBILITY:

Employees with a regular work schedule of 20 or more hours per week are eligible after 26 consecutive weeks of employment preceding the first full day of leave.

Employees with a regular work schedule of less than 20 hours per week are eligible after 175 days worked preceding the first full day of leave.

You have the option to file a waiver of family leave benefits when your employment will not last 26 consecutive weeks. However, if you work longer than 26 consecutive weeks, your waiver will be revoked and your employer will deduct all retroactive amounts due.

BENEFITS:

Benefits will be phased in over four years.

In 2018, you are eligible for up to eight (8) weeks of paid leave at 50% of the average weekly wage or \$652.96 per week. New York State sets the amount each year.

EMPLOYEE CONTRIBUTIONS:

You will be expected to pay for the Paid Family Leave (PFL) benefit coverage through payroll deductions at a rate based on your salary.

For 2018, you will pay 0.126% of your weekly wages up to \$67,907.84 for a maximum annual employee contribution of \$85.56 per year or \$1.65 per week.

HOW TO FILE A PFL CLAIM:

1. You must notify your employer 30 days prior to a leave, when practical.
2. You must complete a PFL claim form available from your employer.
3. You need to obtain supporting documentation for a leave (i.e. birth certificate, military deployment certification, etc.) and submit with claim form.
4. Employer's insurance carrier will process and pay or deny the claim within 18 days of receipt of completed claim.

If you have any questions, please contact your Employer directly or feel free to contact the Fund Office at (212) 465-8888 option 4 on the main menu.

2018 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 limits 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, 2018 are as follows:

- Empire BlueCross (hospital and medical) Individual: \$4,300 Family: \$8,600
- Express Scripts (prescription drugs) Individual: \$3,050 Family: \$6,100

2018 National Formulary Update

The Express Scripts National Formulary has a few minor additions to its list of excluded drugs or supplies effective January 1, 2018. 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 2018 National Preferred Formulary Exclusions please go to https://www.express-scripts.com/art/pdf/Preferred_Drug_List_Exclusions2018.pdf

Advanced Opioid Management Program Commences

The Express Scripts opioid solution is the most aggressive, broadest approach in the industry. It touches the physician's office, patient's home and pharmacy to help shield members and their families from this devastating crisis in America. This program becomes effective on January 1, 2018. This Program includes:

- Automated message at point of care via an electronic health record on potential misuse and abuse, along with morphine equivalent dose (MED) communication
- Enhanced prior authorization stops long-acting opioid prescription without a previous long-acting opioid in member's claim history
- Educational letter after first fill outlines the potential risks associated with opioid use
- Proactive outreach from specialized Neuroscience Therapeutic Resource Center® (TRC) pharmacists triggered when potential abuse or misuse is identified
- Deactivation drug disposal bags provide patients with a safe way to dispose of unused opioids – thereby preventing future opioid misuse
- Pharmacy interventions for members accumulating greater than 200mg MED
- Concurrent drug utilization review programs help ensure that opioid prescriptions are appropriate, medically necessary and unlikely to result in adverse medical consequences
- First-time users prescribed short-acting opioids are restricted to an initial 7-day supply
- "Auto-lock management" which will trigger an intervention that directs patients to a single provider and keeps members locked into one pharmacy

Pharmacy Vaccination Program

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.

If you have any questions regarding the 2018 Out-of-Pocket Maximums, 2018 Formulary Update, Advanced Opioid Management Program, or the Pharmacy Vaccination Program please contact the Fund Office at (212) 465-8888 option 4 on the main menu.