



Keeping You Wired to Benefits News and Information

# 4th District IBEW Health Fund: News Wire

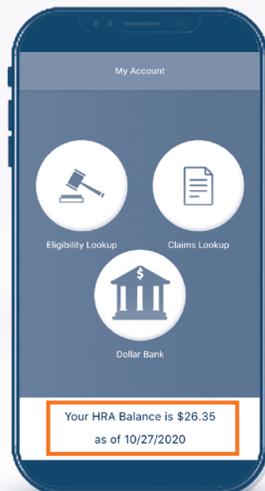
We hope your year is off to a good start. In this issue, we provide an update on the state of the Fund, which explains the financial outlook and changes that are on the way. As you review this information, it's important to keep in mind that the Fund is self-insured for all benefits except the Member Assistance Program and life insurance/AD&D benefits. This means that employer contributions and self-payments (and any interest earned) are used to pay health care claims and related expenses. At this time, the Fund is financially stable; however, the Board of Trustees is monitoring a few key performance indicators and proceeding with caution. On a more personal note, we want you to get the most out of your benefits this year. The quick reminders on how the medical plans work provide an overview of what's covered and not covered by the Plan. To keep you and your family healthy this year, be sure to get the recommended vaccines—such as the flu shot and COVID-19 vaccine (once it is available). Both are covered 100% in-network by the Plan.

## Easy Access to Your HRA Balance

As your HRA balance grows, you can use your account to pay for eligible health care expenses not covered by the Plan. Any unused HRA balance is rolled over from year to year, so it is possible to use these accumulated funds to pay for larger expenses you may have in the future. The funds can also be saved into retirement and used to pay the premiums for retiree health benefits.

Now it is easy to track your available HRA balance through the Fund's app and the secure section of the website, as shown below.

To download the app, search "4th District Health Fund" in the App Store (Apple) or on Google Play (Android).



# Fund Business Update

The employer and union Trustees monitor key indicators to ensure the financial strength of the Fund. The formula is simple and, most likely, familiar: income – expenses = money the Fund can save, invest, or spend (also known as reserves).

The Trustees also consider how long current funding will last in the event that income sources, such as employer contributions and self-payments, are reduced or stop. Since March 2020, expenses have been higher than income, and, as a result, Fund reserves were used to help cover the shortage. Reserves need to be built up again to help ensure future financial security.

It's a situation the Trustees have been closely monitoring. The benefit changes outlined below are part of the overall plan to help improve the financial strength of the Fund.

## Current State of the Fund

As we look to the start of the fiscal year 2021, the Fund is proceeding with caution for several reasons:

- For the fiscal year ending September 30, 2020, the Fund had a net loss of \$5 million.
- Due to COVID-19 work cancellations and delays, the average number of hours decreased. At the same time, the number of active members increased.
- To cover increased expenses, we've had to tap into the Fund's reserve.

## Taking Action: Benefit Changes

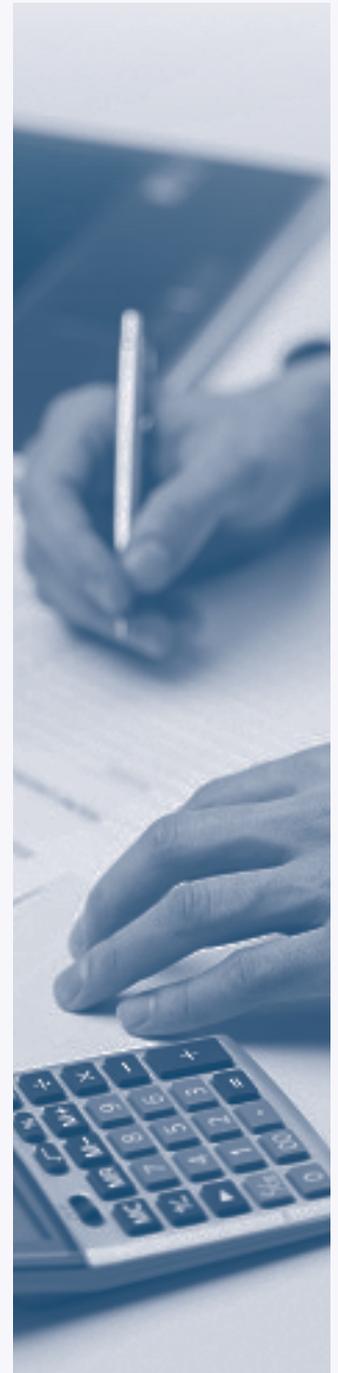
To help strengthen the Fund's financial position, the following plan changes are being made this year.

- **January 1, 2021:** Flexible Choice contribution rate will increase by \$0.50 per hour.
- **March 1, 2021:**
  - » Medical plan deductibles and out-of-pocket maximums will increase for the Building Trades plan.
  - » Building Trades prescription drug minimum copays will increase:
    - Preferred brand: \$20 at retail for 30-day supply; \$60 at retail for 90-day supply (Note: Mail order remains \$40).
    - Non-preferred brand: \$40 at retail for 30-day supply; \$120 at retail for 60-day supply; \$80 mail order.
- **June 1, 2021 (for September eligibility):**
  - » Building Trades contribution rate will increase by \$0.50 per hour.
  - » Non-bargaining contribution rate will increase \$70 per month.

## Planning for the Future

We are also considering actions that could strengthen our situation for the longer term. We will continue to keep you informed about the state of the Fund and any benefit changes.

If you have any questions, contact your Business Manager, or send an email to [yourbenefits@4thdistricthealthfund.com](mailto:yourbenefits@4thdistricthealthfund.com). Business Managers will be attending a meeting in March 2021 to learn more and ask questions.



# A Quick Review: Covered Services

To get the most out of your benefits, you need to know how they work and what the Plan covers.

- 1 The deductible.** Each medical plan has an individual and family deductible that must be met within a calendar year before the Plan will pay benefits. This means you pay 100% for most expenses before you meet the deductible. If a service is not covered by the Plan, it does not count toward the deductible, and you are responsible for 100% of the expense.
- 2 Your coinsurance.** Once you meet the deductible, you and the Plan share in the cost of care. The portion you pay is called coinsurance. In-network and out-of-network services have different coinsurance amounts. If a service is not covered by the Plan, you are responsible for 100% of the expense.
- 3 The out-of-pocket maximum.** This is the most you will pay out of pocket in a calendar year for eligible health care expenses. Any amount you pay toward eligible in-network and/or out-of-network care accumulates toward your out-of-pocket maximums. There are separate in- and out-of-network maximums. Once you reach the maximum, eligible expenses are covered 100% by the Plan.

## Preventive care is covered 100% before the deductible.

The Plan pays 100% of eligible in-network preventive care services, up to the reasonable and customary charge, regardless of the deductible. Note: The Plan does not pay benefits for out-of-network preventive care services.

## Services Covered by the Plan\*

### What's Covered

- Doctor visits, surgery, hospital care
- Diagnostic X-rays and laboratory services
- Casts, splints, crutches, braces
- Hospice service
- Services related to mastectomy
- Preventive care, including immunization vaccines like the flu and COVID-19
- Certain clinical trials
- Plan-sponsored telehealth program and in-network telephone consultations

### What's Not Covered

- Treatment, care, or services that are not approved by a physician
- Treatment or services that the Plan deems not to be medically necessary
- Cosmetic surgery
- Experimental or investigational treatments
- Hearing aids for adults
- Educational services and devices
- Physical therapy that will not result in an improvement in your condition
- Out-of-network telephone and/or remote doctor visits

\* For a complete list of eligible services and any limitations or restrictions, refer to the Summary Plan Description for your medical plan. Download a copy from the website ([4thdistricthealthfund.com](https://www.4thdistricthealthfund.com)), or call the Fund Office at 304-525-0331 or 888-466-9094.



## Start the year off right.

The Fund offers a **Member Assistance Program (MAP)** as part of your benefits. Entirely confidential and provided at no cost to you, the MAP is designed to help you and your family contend with issues ranging from the simple (e.g., finding the right daycare) to the emotional (e.g., depression). If you need a fresh start to the year, don't wait. Call 877-627-4239 to speak with a counselor. MAP counselors are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Or visit [guidanceresources.com](https://www.guidanceresources.com), and enter in the Fund ID (MAP\_4\_IBEW) for access to all the online resources.

## In the News: COVID-19 Vaccine

At press time, the vaccine was being distributed in phases with the most vulnerable groups, like front-line health care workers and long-term-care residents, receiving the early doses. The CDC is working with the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices to determine what groups get the COVID-19 vaccine first. As it is made available more broadly, the vaccine will be covered as a preventive benefit by the Plan. This means **you'll pay \$0 for the COVID-19 vaccine**. Please visit the CDC website at [cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov) for the most up-to-date information on the COVID-19 vaccine.

