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cpi lights

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Jon A. Cyganiak, CLU
President

These are still uncertain times. Safer at home will be ending soon and we will become an active society again. But social distancing from the COVID pandemic will have lasting effects on the way we move forward. Face masks for social interaction will hopefully cease. But we will continue to be cognizant of our public proximity to those we don't know.

The scope of healthcare will undoubtedly change as well. We have learned that it is easy to communicate virtually. Telehealth is a necessity today, and it is here to stay. Health clinics are set up to treat patients this way. It may not be right in every situation, but for those low risk visits many people may want to start checking in with their doctors this way.

How we interact with business associates and clients will change. Working from home may become more the norm for some. Email, telephone and video calls may become an even more important form of communication. We have discovered life can go on with a modicum of social distancing.

Slowly we will get back to finding our new normal. Society may not be as close as it once was, but part of being a human is to be connected. We look forward to being able to work with you again, in person.

Thanks for continuing to read CPILights!

As always, if you would like to submit an idea or comment in writing you can reach me at Jcyganiaksr@cyganiakplanning.com

Regards,

Jon A. Cyganiak, CLU
President



We anticipate that life will get back to some semblance of normal shortly. As such CPI will operate under our annual Summer Hours schedule. Beginning Monday, May 18th and running through Friday, September 11th our business hours will be:

Monday – Thursday 8:00am – 4:30pm

Friday 7:30am – 1:00pm

In addition, our offices will be closed on Friday July 3rd in observance of the Fourth of July holiday.

If you or your employees need to reach us outside these revised business hours you may leave a detailed message in our voicemail system. We will get back to you as soon as possible.

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LEGISLATIVE UPDATES



FEDERAL

The IRS and DOL released a joint notice April 28th that extends the period of time that a participant has to request a special enrollment under a health plan, elect and pay for COBRA, submit claims for coverage and dispute claims denied. The guidance is retro-active to March 1, 2020 and applies until 60 days after the COVID-19 National Emergency is declared over by the Federal Government.

In general terms, the guidance provides:

- Individuals up to 60 days after the National Emergency is over to elect COBRA
- Individuals up to 60 days after the National Emergency is over to notify the COBRA administrator of qualifying events
- For a lengthened time to make COBRA premium payments
- For a lengthened time individuals may request special enrollment for a HIPAA special enrollment event

CMS is granting equitable relief for those that are **Medicare eligible** during the COVID-19 crisis in the form of additional time to use an Initial Enrollment Period (IEP), General Enrollment Period (GEP), or a Special Enrollment Period (SEP)--such as the SEP for when a beneficiary's enrollment in employer coverage based on current employment ends--in order to file an application for Part B or premium-Part A or refuse Part B, or enroll in an MA or PDP.

Beneficiaries are eligible for this equitable relief if:

- They had an enrollment period during the period from March 17, 2020, through June 17, 2020, that was an IEP, GEP, SEP; and

- They did not apply for Part B (or premium-Part A) or refuse Part B during that IEP, GEP, or SEP.

A SEP exists for individuals affected by a major disaster who were unable to and did not make an election during another valid election period. This includes both enrollment and disenrollment elections. Individuals will be considered "affected" and eligible for this SEP if they:

- Reside, or resided at the start of the incident period, in an area for which FEMA has declared an emergency or a major disaster and has designated affected counties as eligible to apply for individual or public level assistance; and
- Had another valid election period at the time of the incident period; and
- Did not make an election during that other valid election period.

In addition, the SEP is available to those individuals who don't live in the affected areas but rely on help making healthcare decisions from friends or family members who live in the affected areas.

Eligible beneficiaries who wish to take advantage of the equitable relief must file their enrollment request by June 17, 2020. Equitable relief will last from March 17, 2020 through June 17, 2020. The nationwide COVID-19 SEP start date is March 1, 2020 and ends June 30, 2020.

PCORI FEES REINSTATED

The Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI) fee was established as part of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) to fund research by a nonprofit institute into the effectiveness, efficiency, and quality of health care. The goal is for the results of this research to lower costs in delivering health care and lower premiums for health care coverage. This tax was first applicable in 2013 and the final tax filings were scheduled for 2020. Under the ACA provision, PCORI fees were first collected in 2013 and were originally scheduled to be collected for plan years ending before October 1, 2019.

The budget act recently enacted this year reinstates the PCORI provision for 10 more years, continuing the fee requirements through plan years ending before October 1, 2029. Appropriations for research are extended through the government's 2029 fiscal year.

PCORI fees are paid by insurance carriers and employer sponsors of self-funded plans (which include HRAs).

Below identifies who is responsible for filing the Form 720 and paying the fee:

MEDICAL PLANS:

Fully-Insured – Insurer Responsibility based on Employee and dependent count
Self-Funded – Employer Responsibility based on Employee and dependent count

HRAs:

Limited HRA (no medical included) – No tax due
Integrated with fully-insured medical – Employer pays based on covered employees
Integrated with self-funded medical – Employer pays. Must count each employee and dependent, but only once between the medical and HRA plans.

FSAs:

Excepted FSAs – No tax due
Non-Excepted FSA – Employer pays based on employees only



MEDICARE ENROLLMENT IN A COVID ERA



Jon I. Cyganiak
Agent/Vice President
CYGANIAK PLANNING INC

Turning 65 is a momentous birthday for many reasons. For some it may mean retirement. For most it means enrolling in Medicare coverage. A mere 3 months ago this seemed like a simple task. You could go visit your local Social Security office or make a telephone call. If you felt tech-savvy you could even [enroll online](#).



But in our COVID-era of Medicare enrollment the rules are changed. Social Security offices are closed and the hold time for a phone interview can be in excess of an hour. Enrolling online seems to be the best bet these days. According to Social Security, this can take less than 10 minutes with no forms to sign and usually no documentation to submit. Online enrollment is available only during designated hours, beginning at 5:00 AM six days a week (8:00 AM on Sunday) through at least 10:00 PM every day. Social Security will process your application and contact you if they need more information.

Online enrollment sounds like a great way to enroll; however, there are some shortcomings.

- o You must enroll through a [my SSA account](#). If you don't have one, you will need to [establish one](#).
- o Not everyone can apply online. Online enrollment is limited to those who are at least 64 years and nine months old and are not enrolled in Medicare or receiving Social Security benefits. That means, if you signed up for Social Security before age 65 or you're over 65 and enrolled in Part A, you cannot use the online system.

When setting up your *my* Social Security account SSA will need to verify your identity. They use information in their records to verify you are you. If there are any discrepancies the system will lock out the user for 24 hours. This may seem straight forward for most people but if you have had any life changes that Social Security is not aware of it can create headaches. For this reason, it is important to update Social Security about any changes, especially changes in name or address.

If you can't pass identity verification you will need to call Social Security's Help desk. Remember that the phone lines may be flooded. Try calling off peak time for your best shot at speaking to an agent. They will need original documents verifying:

- o Your proof of birth, ie: birth certificate
- o Proof of US citizenship or legal residency, ie: passport
- o Driver's license

The best solution, if you have the time, is to plan ahead. Go to the Medicare website, set up your *my* Social Security account and actually log in to activate the account. Pandemic or not, it is worth your peace of mind to be prepared where your Medicare benefits are concerned.

Source: <https://www.forbes.com/sites/dianeomdahl/2020/04/01/how-can-i-enroll-in-medicare-when-all-the-social-security-offices-are-closed-because-of-the-coronavirus/#67df35b56451>

In the SPOTLIGHT

A WHO'S WHO IN SUCCESSFUL BUSINESS

Cyganiak Planning, Inc. would like to recognize the physical growth, as well as the accomplishments of our clients. If you are expanding your human resources or your facility, please let us know. If you are participating in some community outreach or volunteer effort, or have recently been recognized with an award please contact your agent (262-783-6161) and we will share your achievements with our readers.

Congratulation to **Sunset Playhouse** on celebrating its Sparkling 60th Season. The Community Theater located in Elm Grove, WI offers 36 productions each season including: musicals, comedies, dramas, concerts, cabarets and childrens' programming. Visit SunsetPlayhouse.com for more information.

Recently, long-time Sunset Playhouse volunteer **Scott Kopsichke** produced an original show he wrote titled PRODUCE THIS! The show, part Forbidden Broadway mixed with THE PRODUCERS was a stroll down the Sunset Playhouse memory lane. Scott generously donated all of the proceeds from this successful musical to Sunset Playhouse.

MEDICARE WEBSITES

Enroll for Medicare:

www.ssa.gov/pubs/EN-05-10530.pdf

Creating my SSA Account:

<https://faq.ssa.gov/en-US/Topic/article/KA-01687>

my SSA Account:

www.ssa.gov/benefits/medicare/

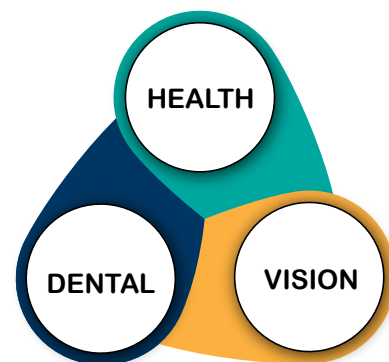
INTEGRATING EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

Employers understand the importance of offering health insurance coverage to their employees. Many even make dental and vision coverage available. But many people don't realize the importance of taking advantage of these ancillary benefits. Integration of medical, dental and vision coverage can help both the employer and employees to lowering medical costs and living healthier lives.

Dental insurance can do more than just provide improved oral health. The infection from periodontal disease left untreated can spread into the bloodstream and compromise the health of those with diabetes, coronary heart disease and pregnant mothers. Dentists also are the primary detectors of oral cancer.

The eyes are the windows to the soul, and as it turns out they can also lead to diagnosing over 100 different health issues. Optometrists and ophthalmologists are able to provide early detection through routine eye exams for common conditions such as diabetes and shingles. They also can diagnose serious neurological conditions such as stroke or brain tumors.

By maintaining optimal oral and vision health these complications can be caught early or even prevented thereby improving employee health and lowering medical costs for all concerned. Healthy employees also reduce absenteeism which means increased productivity.



Integrating medical, dental and vision coverage not only provides well rounded benefits, it can have a financial impact that benefits everyone.

SOURCE: https://www.benefitnews.com/opinion/dental-vision-and-the-big-picture-of-integrated-benefits?position=editorial_1&campaignname=EBN_Daily_Insurance%20Newscast-03162020&utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=EBN_Daily_Insurance+Newscast%2B%27-%27%2B03162020&btee=IOcW%2BsGVFMocp68CVdUti0fEmGCWVg7LdaZHSdUaiNsCsAvS2nnJb50gEHc0NGj3&bt_ts=1584396056822

NEW PRODUCTS FOR PRE-TAX DOLLARS



Steve Flewellen
Agent

CYGANIAC PLANNING INC

As part of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act), which was signed into law March 27, and became effective immediately, there are added guidelines on how you can use your health savings account (HSA), health reimbursement account (HRAs), or flexible spending account (FSA). The purpose of this addition is to help ease the financial burden you and your family may be experiencing due to COVID-19.

You can now use these accounts to purchase over-the-counter (OTC) medicines that had previously required a prescription. You can also use them to purchase menstrual products. This will help you save on health care costs because the funds in these accounts are pre-tax.

For now, you may need to pay for these items out of your pocket and pay yourself back if you have an HSA, or file claims for reimbursement for an HRA or FSA. Be sure to keep your receipts. All eligible purchases you make in 2020 will qualify.

You'll soon be able to use your HSA, HRA or FSA debit card for these purchases. Retailers are updating their systems to accept the cards for the newly approved items. Some stores may be ready in the next month, others may need several weeks for the update.

Note: For over-the-counter drug and products to qualify the item's use must be to treat, heal, or cure a medical condition. This guide is intended to provide examples of over-the-counter drug and products that are usable for your HSA, Flex & HRA funds and is not all inclusive. Items will not qualify if purchased in bulk or used for resale. Consult your tax advisor for maximum benefit. It is understood Cyganiak Planning, Inc. is not engaged in the practice of law or giving tax advice.

The following list includes examples of expenses that qualify for reimbursement for HSA, FSA & HRA.

- | | |
|--|----------------------------------|
| Acne treatments | Ear wax removal products |
| Allergy medications | Expectorants |
| Antacids | Eye drops |
| Antibiotic ointments | Fever reducing medications |
| Antihistamines | First aid creams |
| Anti-itch creams | First aid kits |
| Arthritis gloves | Hearing aid batteries |
| Aspirin | Heating Pads |
| Bactine | Hemorrhoid treatments |
| Bandages and gauze pads | Incontinence supplies |
| Birth control items | Insect bite creams and ointments |
| Calamine lotion | Insulin |
| Carpal tunnel wrist supports | Laxatives |
| Cold medicines | Liniments (i.e. vaporizing rub) |
| Cold/hot packs | Menstrual products |
| (for a medical condition) | (pads & tampons) |
| Cold sore relievers | Motion sickness medications |
| Contact lenses, saline solutions | Nasal strips or sprays |
| and enzyme cleaners | Pain relievers |
| Cough suppressants | Rubbing alcohol |
| Crutches | Sinus medications |
| Decongestants | Smoking cessation medications |
| Denture adhesives | Sunburn creams and ointments |
| Diarrhea medicine | Thermometers for medical use |
| Diabetic supplies | Throat lozenges |
| Diagnostic Items (examples include: | Toothache and teething pain |
| blood pressure monitoring devices, | relievers |
| blood sugar test kits and test strips, | Vaporizer |
| pregnancy tests, and ovulation | Walkers |
| monitors) | Wart removal medications |
| Diaper rash ointments and creams | Yeast infection medication |

SAFER-AT-HOME RESOURCES



Eric Pierson
Sales Associate
CYGANIAK PLANNING INC

Our Safer-At-Home order due to COVID-19 has been difficult for many reasons. With COVID-19 forcing families to stay at home, getting physical and mental care is more challenging than ever.

Most people have support resources, or Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs) built into their health insurance that they can take advantage of. Humana's EAP provides short-term counseling over the telephone for things like emotional issues, weight control, and coping with a serious illness. United Healthcare's EAP provides 24/7 access to consultants that help members connect with counselors, clinicians, and other needed services. Anthem has a 24/7 nurse line available for their members to call.

Another great at-home resource is virtual healthcare. This allows people to video conference with healthcare providers from the comfort of their own home. Insurance carriers are teaming up with virtual care providers to provide inexpensive options, sometimes at no cost at all. Facilities like Aurora Healthcare and Children's Wisconsin are expanding access to virtual care. Children's Wisconsin even has online urgent care, and they temporarily reduced the cost to \$20 due to COVID-19. Refer to their website for a list of conditions they can treat online.

To find out what options are available through your health insurance, login to your account on your insurance carrier's website or call the number on the back of your ID card to speak with a representative.

MILLENIAL FINANCIAL GOALS

More than 71 million US citizens are said to be millennials. Those born between 1981 and 1996. They are more diverse than the older generations and have a growing influence in society, the workplace and in politics. Thirty-five percent of the current workforce are millennials, surpassing the baby boomer generation.

A new study from Truist, formerly SunTrust, found that 86% of millennials had developed a 5-year goal for their finances. However, 69% said they did not have an emergency fund, and 68% did not have any non-retirement savings. Their top three financial goals:

- Debt repayment – 57%
- Travel – 48%
- Increase retirement savings 45%

These rated higher than purchasing a home, which supports the fact that 18.4 million millennials rent as opposed to owning their homes.

Eighty percent of millennials in the study said they planned to retire, of those 75% said they would use personal or retirement savings, 60% on Social Security and 25% on an inheritance.

Source: <https://www.thinkadvisor.com/2020/02/24/these-are-millennials-top-3-financial-goals-survey/>



COVID-19

Mental Health Reminder

Many of us are still staying "safer at home" and may do so for a little while yet. It is important to take care of ourselves during this time of social distancing. You may not realize it, but doing the mundane everyday routines help keep us feeling normal.

Here are some suggestions to stop your days from running together and add something new to your days.

Get Dressed – even if it's just into comfort clothes this will help you feel more productive.

Do your hair/makeup – Even if you're not going anywhere this can help you feel normal in a chaotic time.

Eat New Healthy Recipes – if you can, eat a variety of food and try different recipes. This will give your day variety and keep your body feeling healthy.

Get some Fresh Air – Fresh air will help you not feel so cooped up or "stuck" in your home.

Be Creative – Try doing new activities or bring back old ones. Getting creative is a great way to keep your spirits up and your mind relaxed.

Unplug – Everyone everywhere is talking about the virus. Turn off your devices and get some well-deserved time away.

Stay Connected – Even though we can't go visiting, make sure you stay connected. A good way is video chatting or even just a phone call. It will help you and your family/friends feel less isolated.

Reach Out – Mental Health is important, but it is especially important during times like these. Reach out if you need to and remember to check in with your family and friends. We are all in this together.

THE Q & A CORNER



Dana Burgett
Sales Associate
CYGANIAK PLANNING INC

The Cyganiak Planning Q & A Corner takes questions that our agents and sales/service associates were asked and provides detailed guidance to help you understand and resolve similar scenarios at your workplace, should they ever arise.

QUESTION: I have an employer in the process of laying employees off and they are looking

for guidance as to what they need to do about their PTO and ancillary benefits. Some employees may have been furloughed previously and may have been using PTO to cover a reduction in hours. Are the PTO payout rules different for furloughed, terminated and laid off employees or is it the same across the board? They will be closing their business temporarily. Some employees are part of a union.

ANSWER: A furlough (reduced hours or temporary unpaid leave) generally means that the employee remains employed. Alternatively, a layoff separates the employment relationship.

With regard to PTO/vacation payout upon termination, employers are not required by Wisconsin law to grant vacations to their workers, whether with pay or without. Such matters are determined entirely by written or unwritten agreements between the employer and the employee.

The challenge is that a furlough without a definitive return-to-work date may be perceived as a separation of employment, thus requiring vacation/PTO payout.

Here are a few options to consider with regard to vacation/PTO payout for a furlough, when you will not be officially separating employment:

- 1. Continue employment but reduce hours.** In this situation, you'll furlough by reducing hours scheduled and worked. But you'll continue the employment relationship and employees will continue to work in a reduced capacity. During the period of reduced hours, the employee may apply for partial unemployment.
- 2. Risk adverse approach:** payout vacation/PTO upon furloughing an employee, especially if a definitive return-to-work date isn't made clear to employees.
- 3. Risk tolerant approach:** be very clear with employees they are furloughed, but employment is not separated, and note that they are expected to return to work as soon as the company is able to return them and place them on the schedule. Unused vacation/PTO remains available in the employee's bank for use upon their return to work. During the full-leave furlough, PTO/vacation is available for use at their discretion, but employees can also apply for unemployment. You may also wish to notify employees that earnings received via PTO/vacation during the furlough may impact their unemployment benefits -- for definitive guidance in this regard, the employee should

contact the unemployment division. **If you select this option out of caution, you may wish to seek guidance from legal counsel, as it does involve a bit of risk.**



Given that the state doesn't define furlough, it's possible that without a definitive return date, it's viewed the same as separation and vacation/PTO should be paid out.

The reality of this situation is that this furlough may span a bit of time as we collectively tackle COVID-19. As such you may want to re-evaluate the furlough after a couple of weeks to determine whether a true termination (layoff) and PTO/vacation payout is warranted if you're not realistically feeling like you can return employees to work within a reasonable time. Be clear with employees about this as well, perhaps noting: "After 30 days we will re-evaluate the company's position based on business needs and public health recommendations and communicate any changes that may need to be made."

The employer's maintenance of their ancillary benefits offered (such as PTO) are left to the employer and the employer's policies. The maintenance of life and disability insurance, in addition to health insurance would generally be determined by the plan documents. With that said, as discussed, many of the carriers are not enforcing rules for eligibility during this pandemic, so the employer should be able to work with these carriers in this regard.

For the employer who needs to lay employees off for a period of time due to the reduction in business, and/or the shutdown of the company, the employer should be advising those employees to apply for the state unemployment benefits. The states are then working with the federal government to incorporate the additional unemployment benefit available for employees receiving these state benefits.

As discussed, these circumstances are unprecedented, so there is no guidance as to how long this situation may last or how long employers will be able to keep employees furloughed. With that said, there are some benefits for employers under the new CARES Act in order to help get small businesses back on track. For your employers who are inquiring about the benefits available under the FFCRA, we suggest providing general information to them. The benefit would be for those employees who are still working, but who have qualifying reason for the EFMLA (due to school closure) and/or the emergency paid sick leave (EPSL). The Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA).

Disclaimer: Guidance provided above is opinion gathered from Cyganiak Planning Inc.'s Human Resources Advocacy Firm based on their research of specified topics and cannot be considered as legal opinion or legal fact. Please consult with your legal counsel for any specific and final guidance in any situation pertaining to your own company.