



Health Benefits Retired Coverage Under Chapter 330

Information for:
Police and Firemen's Retirement System (PFRS)
Public Employees' Retirement System Law Enforcement Officers (PERS LEO)
Consolidated Police and Firemen's Pension Fund (CPFPPF)

Some employers will pay for health benefits coverage for their retired employees. For those who do not, P.L. 1997, c. 330 (Chapter 330), provides eligibility for enrollment in the State Health Benefits Program (SHBP) to certain retired local police officers and firefighters with part of the cost paid by the State.

To qualify for Chapter 330 coverage, you must have retired with 25 or more years of pension service credit, or on a Disability Retirement, from an employer who does not provide any payment towards retiree health coverage or reimbursement of Medicare Part B premiums. You need not be covered by the SHBP while employed to qualify for enrollment. You may enroll yourself, your spouse/partner,* and your children under the age of 26.

ELIGIBILITY

Eligible participants must be retired from the Police and Firemen's Retirement System (PFRS), Public Employees' Retirement System Law Enforcement Officers (PERS LEO), or the Consolidated Police and Firemen's Pension Fund (CPFPPF). A qualified Chapter 330 participant is one who:

- Is eligible for health benefits coverage with the employer immediately preceding retirement;
- Retires with 25 or more years of pension service credit or on a Disability Retirement;
- Is not receiving any post-retirement medical

benefit from his or her employer, according to the contract in effect on July 1, 1998; and

- Has no other employer group coverage as an employee as a result of other employment while retired.

The New Jersey Division of Pensions & Benefits (NJDPB) has surveyed local employers on their health benefit policies for retirees and, based on that information, determined eligibility for retirees regarding enrollment after they apply for retirement:

- If the NJDPB is able to determine that you meet the Chapter 330 eligibility requirements, you will be sent an offering letter which advises you to complete a *Health Benefit Enrollment and/or Change Form*.
- If the NJDPB is unable to definitively determine your eligibility, you will receive a notification with a certification for you and your employer to complete, sign, and return. Once the NJDPB receives the completed certification indicating that you are not eligible for health benefits or reimbursement of such, you will receive an offering letter.

If you do not enroll in Chapter 330 coverage at the time of retirement, you will have a second chance when you enroll in the full Medicare program Part A (Hospital) and Part B (Medical). This occurs when you reach age 65, or earlier if you are receiving So-

cial Security Disability payments. If you already qualify for Medicare at the time of retirement, your only chance to enroll in Chapter 330 coverage will be at retirement.

This law was not intended to be an incentive for an employer to do less for its retirees. The NJDPB will refer to the contracts and ordinances in effect on July 1, 1998, to determine retiree eligibility.

AVAILABLE PLANS AND COSTS

Eligible retirees may enroll in any of the available medical plans offered by the SHBP. The State will pay an amount equal to 80 percent of the cost of the least expensive plan offered by the SHBP for the level of coverage selected (Single, Member and Spouse/Partner, Family, or Parent and Child). The retiree pays the remaining cost of the chosen plan.

The cost to the retiree varies by coverage level and is subject to change every year as plan rates are renewed.

Your employer cannot reimburse you for your Chapter 330 costs. To do so would disqualify you for coverage under this law.

*For more information, see the *Civil Unions and Domestic Partnerships Fact Sheet*.

MEDICARE COVERAGE AT AGE 65

Retired members of the SHBP or their dependents (including members on a Disability Retirement) who are eligible for Medicare must enroll in both Part A and Part B. Proof of Medicare enrollment is required; acceptable proof is a photocopy of the Medicare identification card reflecting both Part A and Part B effective dates, or a letter of confirmation from Social Security stating the effective dates. If you and/or your spouse/partner are age 65 at retirement and have not enrolled in both Part A and Part B of Medicare, you should contact Social Security to apply for full Medicare coverage before your retirement date.

The cost of Chapter 330 coverage generally decreases when you or your spouse/partner enroll in the full Medicare program.

DEFERRING CHAPTER 330 BENEFITS IF COVERED BY ANOTHER HEALTH PLAN

If you are eligible to enroll in Chapter 330 coverage but are currently covered under other health insurance, you may be eligible to enroll under Chapter 330 at a later date under the following circumstances:

- If you have health benefits for a specific period of time through the employer from which you retired, you may enroll for Chapter 330 coverage within 60 days of the date the employer-provided coverage ends.
- If you have health benefits as a dependent of a spouse/partner whose health insurance is through an employer-provided group plan, you may enroll in Chapter 330 coverage within 60 days of the loss of the dependent coverage. The effective date of Chapter 330 coverage would be the date the other employer-provided coverage ends.
- If you have health benefits from other employment while retired and those benefits end, you may enroll for Chapter 330 coverage within 60 days of the loss of the other coverage.

It is the retiree's responsibility to send written notification to the Health Benefits Bureau within 60 days of the qualifying event that may entitle the retiree to coverage under Chapter 330.

SURVIVING DEPENDENTS

In the event the retiree should predecease his or her spouse/partner, the surviving spouse/partner may continue coverage provided that he or she was covered by the SHBP as a dependent at the time of the retiree's death. The surviving spouse/partner is responsible for paying for the full cost of the coverage.

If there is no surviving spouse/partner, children who were covered under the SHBP at the time of death would be able to continue their health benefits under the provisions of the federal Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1985 (COBRA) law at their own expense for up to three years.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT CHAPTER 330

If you would like more information about Chapter 330, or if you believe that you may be eligible for Chapter 330 coverage but have not been contacted, please write to the Health Benefits Bureau of the NJDPB. Provide your name, your retirement or last four digits of your Social Security number, and the following three pieces of information:

1. The name of your former employer;
2. Whether you are receiving any payment from that employer for your health benefits or Medicare reimbursement; and
3. Whether you have other health benefits coverage from any current employment.

Address your letter to the the New Jersey Division of Pensions & Benefits, Health Benefits Bureau, P.O. Box 299, Trenton, NJ 08625-0299. Or you can email the NJDPB at: pensions.nj@treas.nj.gov

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