

BENEFITS SPECIALIST (GTCMHIC)

Tompkins County

Department: Town of Ithaca

Classification: Competitive

Labor Grade: B

Approved: 11/2020

Revised: 11/2024

By: HB, Deputy Commissioner of Human Resources

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS:

1. Graduation from a regionally accredited or New York State registered two-year college AND one (1) year of full time paid (or the equivalent part-time) experience in employee fringe benefits, or relatable work; OR
2. Graduation from a high school or possession of a high school equivalency diploma AND three (3) years of full-time paid (or the equivalent part-time) experience in employee fringe benefits or relatable work; OR
3. Any combination of training and experience equal to or greater than that specified in (a), (b) and (c) above.

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF THE CLASS:

This position involves responsibility for performing various health insurance and wellness activities for the Consortium as directed. An employee in this position is designed to assist the Benefits Manager and Senior Benefits Specialist in the responsibility of analyzing, planning, developing, publicizing, problem solving and administering health insurance and wellness programs for the members of the Consortium. The work requires maintaining a relationship with the member municipalities, medical and prescription benefits providers, and finance staff. Incumbent will assist member management and their employees on best practices for obtaining maximum utilization and benefit from programs with the least cost to the taxpayer and consumer. The employee will work under general direction of the Benefits Manager with prescribed rules and regulations. Supervision of subordinate staff is not a function of this position. The incumbent will perform all related duties as required.

TYPICAL WORK ACTIVITIES:

- Provides excellent customer service while serving as a liaison for members as they navigate the complexities of the various benefit programs administered by the Consortium;
- May perform data entry to the third-party vendor website to maintain subscriber information as related to the various health insurance plans for member municipalities;
- Performs data entry to add participants and data maintenance to remove participants or deactivate accounts for member municipalities during new member orientation, open enrollment and whenever necessary as directed;
- May assist with committees, especially Joint Committee on Plan Structure and Design
- May assist with the appeal process of the health insurance plans;
- May assist with the utilization review process with TPA's and provides guidance on plan modifications;
- May assist with the claims audit process with TPA's and all follow up with Audit Committee;
- Answers benefit questions for member management, employees, dependents, survivors, retirees, hospitals, doctors, lawyers or various providers;
- May support new member municipality marketing by coordinating new member marketing meetings and the creation of supporting material, as directed;
- May assist with claim filing or research when questions arise on payments, changes, benefits program provisions, etc.;
- May assist with providing information on Summary Plan Descriptions and COBRA when necessary;
- Assists with the development of the Newsletter and or may act as Newsletter Editor and assist with social media;
- Completes various periodic reports and forms as requested;
- Assist with Wellness programs in consultation with others and assists with communication of such programs;
- Maintains reference materials and updates, relative to benefits areas;
- Assists providers with informational sessions, enrollment meetings as requested;

- Performs follow-up with employees, medical providers and carriers, including filing supplemental forms to assure that employees receive timely and correct benefits and reimbursement for out-of-pocket expense;
- May assist with studies and analyzes a variety of reports and makes recommendations to the appropriate management staff;
- Researches and summarizes reports for the Benefits Manager;
- Participates in meetings concerning insurance plans which have an impact on consortium finances;
- Assists with the assembly of all documents in connection with Consortium meetings;
- Assists with compliance with records retention program;
- Works with other consortium staff and consultants in development and implementation of programs requiring collaboration and cooperation;
- Follows and ensures compliance with safety rules and general work regulations and policies;
- May be responsible for local or regional travel;
- Perform other duties as required.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, ABILITIES AND PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS:

- General knowledge of policies, procedures, negotiated provisions and legal requirements in all benefit areas;
- General knowledge of laws, rules and regulations pertaining to employee benefit programs;
- General knowledge of personnel procedures to allow correct interpretation and application of benefit areas of negotiated union contracts;
- Working knowledge of office technology, procedures and equipment;
- Working knowledge of Microsoft office products at an intermediate level;
- Working knowledge of English and statistical techniques;
- Good knowledge of principles, practices and techniques of personnel administration;
- Ability to communicate effectively and accurately, both orally and in writing;
- Ability to understand, and interpret complex written material, including Federal and State laws, contract language, collective bargaining agreements, etc.;
- Ability to prepare, maintain and follow up on independent correspondence, necessary forms, reports and records as required to enable correct and timely administration of benefit areas;
- Ability to relate well with a variety of municipal representatives, employees, staff, management, providers, consultants, etc.;
- Ability to operate a personal computer as required, either with or without reasonable accommodations;
- The employee's physical and mental condition shall be commensurate with the demands of the position, either with or without reasonable accommodations.

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