

# JOINT LABOR MANAGEMENT BENEFITS COMMITTEE ADJUNCT FACULTY

Los Angeles Community College District - Newsletter

**SPRING 2019** 

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## Five Things You Need to Know

- Maintain your benefits coverage. The 2019 District contribution towards medical benefits, regardless of plan chosen or number of family members enrolled, is \$384 per month (or \$461 per tenthly pay period).
- Injured on the job? Learn more about the Workers' Compensation claims filing process and the options available to you.
- The Employee Assistance Program (EAP): Much More than Mental Health. LACCD provides you with a generous resource through the EAP. Learn more about your employer-provided access to mental health services, financial planning assistance, and much more.
- Wellness—Stay on track. Check out a few simple ways to stay on track for your new year's resolution and keep your wallet healthy.
- No one is too young to save for retirement. The average personal savings rate in the U.S. is 5.5% while most experts recommend saving at least 10% to 15% of your income, not including contributions from your employer. Find out how the LACCD vesting schedule works and understand how you can start saving for your future, today.



Health Benefits Call Center Phone: 888-428-2980 Email:

healthbenfits@email.laccd.edu

# Maintain Your Benefit Coverage

Enrolling in District benefits requires having worked a 20% Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) load for three out of the previous eight semesters in any combination of colleges within the District. FTE load is calculated based on the discipline you teach. Once this threshold has been attained and you have a 33% FTE load in your fourth semester, you may contact the District's Health Benefits Unit at (888)428-2980 to enroll in LACCD's medical, dental, and vision benefit programs. The District will contribute \$384 per month toward any medical plan you choose. If you are working a 50% or higher FTE load, half of your Employee-only dental premium and the full single rate premium for vision coverage are also offered to you.

Eligibility to remain in LACCD's pre-tax benefit programs requires adjunct faculty to maintain a 33% (FTE) load. However, under the recently negotiated AFT1521 contract, if you lose eligibility for the District health plans in spring 2019, you may remain in your enrolled plan(s) for the remainder of the 2019 benefit year by making post-tax payments for your enrollments. If you gain eligibility in the spring, the District will continue to allow you to buy into the medical, dental and vision plans while providing a District contribution of \$384 per month for medical, through the end of the plan year (i.e. December 2019). In the event that you have an insufficient salary warrant to cover the employee portion of the premium costs, you must pay the District the remaining premium amount, including a 2% administration fee by check, at the beginning of each month or in one lump sum. Failure by the faculty member to pay any of the monthly premiums will result in a loss of eligibility and coverage.

Once the benefit year is over, you can opt to continue District group health benefits under COBRA (which requires the employee to pay the full amount of the premium plus a 2% administrative fee). You have only 60 days to elect COBRA coverage so it is imperative that you contact the District if you become ineligible, but don't receive a letter from CalPERS (the District's medical benefits administrator). You would then have to send the full COBRA payment for medical, dental, and vision to the District prior to the start of each month of coverage. COBRA coverage may last up to 18 months.



Los Angeles Community College District Jennifer, an adjunct faculty member, has been enrolled in the Los Angeles Community College District's health benefits program since she became eligible, with her fourth semester of teaching part-time. She's happy with her plan and pays extra to include her husband and children in the program. In March, Jennifer went to the doctor for her child's appointment and paid the office visit copay. A month later, she was surprised to get a bill for the entire visit and labs. The cost of the examination was far more than she had ever paid at the negotiated insurance rate. When Jen looked into the matter, it seems that she had lost her coverage with the District because her assignments for that Spring semester had fallen below the threshold for eligible enrollment. She had not read a letter sent from CalPERS, letting her know that her benefits were ending, and now she had no health insurance. In this example, Jen should have read the letter from CalPERS informing her of her benefit loss. The letter would have included information on how to enroll in COBRA coverage within 60 days of her loss of coverage to continue the District benefits into the Spring semester.

# Maintain Your Benefit Coverage

### So what can you do to ensure your benefits remain stable and uninterrupted?

- ⇒ Make sure your department chair is aware that you receive health benefits through the District and that benefits are dependent on you retaining a 33% FTE load
- ⇒ Check your list of assignments on the District website at <a href="www.laccd.edu">www.laccd.edu</a> (not just the schedule of classes) under Faculty/Staff "View Your Roster." Make sure that the online system has correctly recorded the assignments allotted to you, and if not, let your department chair know
- ⇒ If you have not been assigned the requisite 33% load, you may want to inquire if there are late start courses or dual enrollment high school classes available for you to teach—anywhere in the District. If you manage to snag a last minute course make sure that your department chair immediately puts the assignment into the scheduling system for upload to the SAP system so there is no disruption in benefits
- ⇒ If you get a last minute substitute position, again, make sure that you are noted as the teacher on record in the District system so that this assignment helps you reach the 33% threshold for benefits
- ⇒ Finally, if you do lose benefits, make sure to respond to the HBU notice sent via US mail within the required 60 days and let HBU know that you are interested in continuing with COBRA coverage, so there is no lapse in coverage

Cycling in and out of the District's health benefit coverage can be challenging for adjunct faculty. However, some of the suggestions above may help you maintain your benefits and smooth out potential problems that may be encountered within the program.

Adjunct faculty who had coverage in Fall 2018 will continue to have paid coverage during the months of January and February since their tenthly salary payments in Fall cover those months of coverage. Those who enrolled for 2019 benefits for the first time during the Fall of 2018 Open Enrollment period, do not have to do anything. Their coverage (along with those already enrolled) will begin in March 2019.

Adjunct faculty who gain eligibility (did not participate in the District's health benefits program during the preceding Fall Semester, newly eligible or re-eligible) will be notified by the District if their Spring assignment qualifies them for health benefits for the Spring semester. Health benefits coverage for the Spring semester will run from March through August. Between January 1 and January 31, adjuncts have to submit a paper application for participation in health benefits for Spring (March—August).

Coverage Period	Premium Deductions	Receives Fall Assignment that is ≥ 0.33	Receives Fall Assignment <0.33
March to August	Five payments (February— June) will be applied toward six months of coverage (March—August)	Automatically continues into the next cycle: September— February	Coverage automatically continues into September—December cycle with District contribution (Employee is responsible for 2% administrative fee on employee portion. Employee may make payment to the District directly if their paycheck does not cover the employee's remaining contribution.)

# Injured at Work? Know your Options



What is Workers' Compensation? Under

California law, employers provide restorative benefits to employees injured at work. The main qualifying question to consider when determining whether an employee's injury is workers' compensation eligible is "Did the injury/illness arise out of the employment and within the course and scope of the employment?"

What should you do? The first point of contact for all employee injuries is Company Nurse (855-602-5264). Company Nurse provides the initial intake and assessment and will provide appropriate information and direction (including referral to a medical facility if necessary). Be sure to make note of the date and time you called, with whom you spoke, and what was discussed.

In order to file a claim, three forms are completed —the Supervisor's Report of Injury or Illness form, the Employee's Claim for Workers' Compensation Benefits form, and the Employer's Report of Occupational Injury or Illness form. The forms can be obtained at the Sheriff's office at your Campus.

The Claims Process. If a claim is not witnessed, is reported late, requires medical treatment before filing, stems from a short work history, does not provide specific incident information or the claimant suffers from cardio/pulmonary/stress injuries or illnesses, has a history of disciplinary actions, or is a part-time employee, the claim will likely require additional documentation. Claims requiring additional documentation are allowed a 90-day delay period of investigation to gather and verify facts, obtain any prior medical records, schedule a medical exam, obtain statements, and investigate any prior claims.

### Pre-Designation of a Preferred Physician. If

you would prefer to designate a specific physician to be your eligible workers' compensations claims doctor should you need to file a claim, be sure to do so prior to any potential claim for injury. You can find the designation form by going to laccd.edu and selecting Departments > Business Services > Risk Management > Workers Compensation > Forms and selecting the form at the bottom of the page titled "Statement of Employee's Pre-Designated Physician and Employee Consent Form."

Additional Questions? Communication during the workers' compensation claims process is key. If you have any further questions about the process, please reach out to the Risk Management team at Lee.RG@email.laccd.edu.



### **EAP—So Much More than Just Mental Health**

The Standard Services, and More! While you may not need it now, it's always useful to be aware of the generous resources available to you through the Employee Assistance Program (EAP). While many believe EAPs are just for mental health services, they actually provide you with much, much more.

**Mental Health Support.** Your EAP provides up to 6 counseling sessions providing short term counseling and problem resolution per EAP issues such as personal/family, substance abuse, grief, emotional concerns, and other issues that impact you on a daily basis.



Wellness Support. Access one-on-one telephonic wellness coaching for weight management, smoking cessation, fitness and exercise, stress management, overall lifestyle improvement and support for chronic conditions such as asthma, diabetes, and cardiovascular disease.

In additional to telephonic support for wellness, the EAP provides a number of online health and wellness resources. These include a comprehensive health assessment which generates a personalized wellbeing report and action plan, plus online self help programs for smoking cessation, stress management, weight management, and more.

Work and Life Services. Your EAP provides access to childcare and eldercare assistance. In other words, MHN will help you find out what kind of help you need caring for children or elders in your life. Then they will provide you with names and numbers of providers in your area with confirmed openings.

Financial & Legal Services. A much neglected resource accessible through your EAP is the financial and legal support. Your EAP will connect you directly with an advisor to discuss budgeting, credit and financial questions, and retirement planning. The legal services give you access to a lawyer over the phone or face-to-face to discuss civil, consumer, and criminal law, personal and family law (including adoption, divorce, and custody issues), real estate, and estate planning.

**Identity Theft Recovery Services.** Speak with a certified consumer credit counselor who can learn more about your situation and help you create a plan. If there is potential of ID theft, MHN will connect you directly with an identity recovery specialist!

**Daily Living Services.** On a lighter note, your EAP can also help you with errands from planning an event to planning a vacation. They will track down businesses and consultants to help you in any way they can!

### TIPS TO KEEP IN MIND

- The EAP is available to all members of your household.
- Don't Forget! EAP services are completely confidential.
   Your privacy is protected under state and federal laws.
- You also have access to free interpretation services in over 170 languages.
- Learn more on the LACCD website: LACCD > Departments > Human Resources > Total Wellness Program

## **Additional Benefits**

**Medical.** Many of the CalPERS medical providers offer more than just medical plans. There are many other resources that you can utilize at any time. Below are a few examples:

Planning to have a baby? You can receive one-on-one assistance through different pregnancy programs offered by the medical providers. All of them offer a service specific to expecting mothers and their partners. These programs provide access to nurse coaches, educational materials on prenatal or postpartum health, and healthy pregnancy habits.

Struggling with Diabetes or Weight Loss? Aside from providing coverage to visit your doctor for check-ups, CalPERS medical providers offer many resources for specific weight loss or diabetes needs. These resources vary from educational materials and webinars on how to better manage your weight to face-to-face sessions with a counselor who can help you every step of the way.

Want to quit smoking? If you are worried about the cost of trying to quit (patches or signing up for a quit program), then worry no more. Most of the CalPERS medical plans offer smoking cessation programs you can utilize just for being a member. These programs include access to health coaches through online or mobile support, personalized cessation plans, and recommendations for over-the-counter and prescription drugs. Many of the prescriptions that are prescribed for quitting are covered under your medical plan.

\*Important Note: The specialist copay on both the PERS Choice PPO and PERS Care PPO has increased to \$35.

Be sure to visit the CalPERS website at <a href="https://www.calpers.ca.gov/page/active-members/health-benefits">https://www.calpers.ca.gov/page/active-members/health-benefits</a> to review your medical plan and their specific offerings.

Dental. The dental plans offered through LACCD have many additional resources of which you may not be aware. Through the Delta Dental plan, you can have dental coverage while traveling and receive all updates electronically (Please note you are only reimbursed up to \$1,000 for covered expenses in any given calendar year). Travel Coverage. If you have a dental emergency while you are traveling, your Delta Dental coverage includes emergency care coverage. Be sure to ask the dental office for a detailed receipt or billing statement for reimbursement

and submit your dental claim. For more specific questions about emergency coverage, contact their customer service at deltadentalins.com or at 800-422-4234.

Access your information electronically. Go paperless by viewing your documents online. Not only will this be more convenient for you, but it also saves paper and is faster. To change your settings follow the steps below:

- 1. Visit deltadentalins.com
- 2. Log into your account or Register today
- 3. Go to the paperless section
- 4. Select Online and click save

**Vision.** LACCD offers vision coverage through Vision Service Plan (VSP), the nation's largest eye care plan. You can choose between VSP preferred providers and out-of-network providers. Remember, when you use VSP preferred providers, you can choose from thousands of optometrists and receive a higher level of benefits. Also, when you go to a VSP provider, you have the added convenience of a lower payment at the time of service and no claim forms to complete.

You can find a VSP provider by going to <a href="www.vsp.com">www.vsp.com</a> or by calling 800-877-7195.

### **Enhanced VSP Benefits in 2019**

- This year, you will have no copay for in-network eye exams
- Instead of a \$150 frame allowance, you now have
   \$200 to spend on a fun, new set of frames
- If you wear contact lenses instead of glasses, you will have a \$200 allowance to get your favorite kind
- Save \$20 on your contact lens fitting from \$60 in 2018 to \$40 in 2019
- Polycarbonate and UV lenses are now fully covered

For more information on special offers, please visit www.vsp.com/specialoffers

**Financial Wellness Program through Cigna.** My Secure Advantage (MSA) Money Coaching, Identity Theft Protection and Will Preparation services available. Call 888.724.2262, Monday-Friday from 6:00am to 8:00pm PST to speak with an MSA Representative.

# Stay Active in 2019

### 150 Active Minutes Each

Week. It happens to everyone. The holidays end

and with the rise of the New Year, it can feel overwhelming to get back to being active. Current health guidelines recommend that adults get 150 active minutes each week—it's as simple as that! That time can be spread out over the week, although it is also recommended that you get at least 10 minutes in at a time.

### Why 150 minutes?

- Weight maintenance or loss
- Reduce risk of heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes, and metabolic syndrome
- Reduce risk for certain cancers, including colon and breast cancer
- · Boost mood and self-esteem
- Maintain and improve bone, joint, and muscle health

Being active 150 minutes per week is not a cure-all, and you may require more or less depending on your diet, individual physical characteristics, and lifestyle. But it is a great step toward a healthier, happier life. For help determining the best plan for you, we recommend you consult your physician.



Leap Those Hurdles. There is always a reason not to exercise. You don't have time, you're too tired, the weather isn't right—we all make our own excuses, often without realizing it. That's why a little mental and practical preparation is essential if you want to achieve your goals!

- "I don't know what to do or where to start." No problem! You can start by consulting your physician to address any health concerns or areas of risk specific to you. Then, simply Google "gyms near me." Most local gyms provide an opportunity to work with a personal trainer if you need assistance with creating your workout, proper form, or meal planning.
- "I don't have the time." Make some! Track what you do each day of a typical week. Then, slot in regular exercise during a few consistently open morning, afternoons, or evenings.
- 3. "It's boring." Don't force yourself to do exercise you don't enjoy. Instead, stay motivated by pursuing active hobbies and focus on exercises you enjoy. Find a friend with whom to workout, even it it's once or twice a week. You can keep each other accountable and you will have more fun. Consider varying your routine. If you're bored with what you're doing, conduct some research or consult your physician. You are bound to find another program you can enjoy.
- 4. "I spend my free time with friends, family, or kids." That is great! It is the perfect opportunity to get you and your friends and family active at the same time. Get your heart rate up as you spend time with your group by playing outdoor games, going for walks, and even sharing chores such as yardwork or gardening. This helps supplement your activity minutes you would normally be putting in at the gym!

Contact your EAP Now at...

(800) 327-0449 OR

mhn.advantageengagement.com

Login code: laccd

# Volunteerism at LACCD

The Health Benefits of Giving Back. If you're looking for more ways to enhance your health this year, consider exploring volunteer or philanthropic opportunities. It's been proven by a number of studies, including one by Harvard Medical School, that the act of giving back can help reduce risk of both physical and mental health ailments. Volunteerism is strongly correlated to lower risk for hypertension, according to a study published by the American Psychological Association. The Mayo Clinic also includes decreased risk of depression, increased sense of purpose and skill learning, increased physical and mental stimulation, reduced stress levels, extended lifespan, and expanded social network as additional health benefits associated with volunteerism. One study in the journal of Health Psychology found that only those who volunteered with regularity lived longer, but only if they had genuine, altruistic intentions.

Don't know where to start? Luckily for you, LACCD is providing the perfect way for you to give back to your community, while getting active. Come participate in the 2019 LA Marathon and represent your campus!



# No one is too young to save!

A 65 year old couple retiring today will spend, on average, a total of \$280,000 out of pocket on healthcare, according to Fidelity Investments. As of the third quarter in 2018, the average 401(k) savings balance is only \$81,200. This means that if they retired today, most individuals would not be able to afford their retirement expenses.



It is never too late to start. If you do not currently contribute towards a retirement plan, it may be time to consider starting. If you can manage it, most financial advisors recommend you save 10%-15% of your income for retirement, starting in your 20s. If you are not sure 10%-15% is realistic now, a good rule to live by is the 4% rule. This suggests that your money might last about 30 years if you withdraw just 4% in the first year and adjust for inflation in subsequent years. There are, of course, some flaws to the rule, but it is helpful as a rough guide.

You can contribute money either on a pre or post tax basis. If you were to contribute money on a **pre-tax** basis, that means the money would be taxed when you take it out during retirement. On the other hand, if you put away **post-tax** money (meaning you pay taxes up front) then the money will not be taxed when you take it out for retirement.

What retirement plans are available? LACCD offers retirement plan options through both a 403(b) and 457 plan.

**Deferred Savings Plans:** Allow for taxable income to be put away for future use. In other words, the taxes that are applicable for an employee's income can be paid at a future date, instead of the period in which they are incurred.

**403(b):** A retirement plan established for the benefit of employees of public schools and certain tax-exempt organizations, such as LACCD. These plans accept payroll-deducted contributions for participant directed investing and are intended to help employees meet long-term objectives for retirement. The main difference between a 403(b) and a 401(K) are lower administrative costs.

**457:** A type of nonqualified, tax advantaged deferred-compensation retirement plan that is available for governmental and certain non-governmental employers in the United States. The employer provides the plan and the employee defers compensation into it on a pre-tax or after-tax (Roth) basis.

For more information on the LACCD retirement plan offerings and to see a list of vendors available through the District, be sure to visit <a href="https://www.403bcompare.com">www.403bcompare.com</a>

Please visit LACCD's retirement page for more information: <a href="https://www.laccd.edu/Departments/">https://www.laccd.edu/Departments/</a> RetirementServices

### TIPS TO KEEP IN MIND

- When seeking information on these plans, be sure to do so directly through LACCD HR. You might occasionally receive offers to discuss your plans with third parties but these can have hidden fees so it is safer to go directly through your employer.
- The 401(k), 403b, and most 457 plans contribution limit for 2019 is a maximum of \$19,000

# Other Important Highlights

Staying Prepared. It's important to be prepared for even the worst-case scenario. LACCD's American Federation of Teachers (AFT) offers complimentary fingerprinting kits for LACCD employees who have children or grandchildren under the age of 18. Contact AFT to get your kit now!



Student Debt Myths Debunked—The True State of Student Debt in the U.S. According to Forbes, there are three common myths associated with the student debt crisis—how long it takes a student to repay their loans, how long it takes the average student borrower to default, and the relation between default rates and the amount a student borrows.

- How long does it really take a student to repay their loans? According to a study conducted by education researcher Erin Dunlop Velez, only 50% of students paid off their student loans 20 years after beginning college (as opposed to the assumed 10 year payoff timeframe that is typically referenced).
- 2. How long does it take for the average student borrower to default on their loans? The average time between students beginning repayment and their first default was found to be 4.9 years. Among students who began college in 2004, 25% defaulted in just 12 years after beginning college, demonstrating the potential for a much higher default rate than originally believed to be true.

3. What is the true relation between default rates and the amount a student borrows? It seems safe to assume that the more a student borrows, the higher their change of default is. However, Velez's research has shown the opposite. Velez's data demonstrates that those who complete a bachelor's degree are more likely to borrow more but are also less likely to default on their loans than those do who not complete their education. These findings indicate the importance of examining not only the borrowed amount but the rates of degree completion in relation to student loan debt.



# Important Contact Information for your Benefits

### **Medical Plans**

### **CalPERS Health Benefit Program**

Contact information: (888) 225-7377 Monday—Friday, 8:00 am—5:00 pm

TTY (for speech and hearing impaired): (916) 795-3240

www.calpers.ca.gov

### **Vision Plan**

### VSP

Contact information: (800) 877-7195

P.O. Box 997100

Sacramento, CA 95899-7105

www.vsp.com

### **Dental Plans**

### **Delta Dental**

Contact information: (800) 765-6003

P.O. Box 997330

Sacramento, CA 95899

### www.deltadentalins.com

### MetLife/SafeGuard

Contact information: (800) 880-1800

P.O. Box 3594

Laguna Hills, CA 92654

www.safeguard.net (plan code: SGC1028)

### **Employee Assistance Program (EAP)**

### Managed Health Network (MHN)

Contact information: (800) 327-0449

mhn.advantageengagement.com

Login code: laccd

### Other Benefits & COBRA Information

### **LACCD Health Benefits Unit**

Contact information: (888) 428-2980 Monday—Friday, 9:00 am—4:00 pm

770 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90017

http://www.laccd.edu/Departments/HumanResources/healthbenefits/Pages/default.aspx

### **Optum Rx**

Basic Members: 1-855-505-8110

Medicare Part D Members: 1-855-505-8106

Members needing TTY service: please dial 711

<a href="https://chp.optumrx.com/rxsol/chp/ContentCalPERS/calpers\_index.html">https://chp.optumrx.com/rxsol/chp/ContentCalPERS/calpers\_index.html</a>

OptumRx administers the prescription drug benefits for those enrolled in PERS Select, PERS Choice, and PERSCare PPO plans, as well as those in Anthem Blue Cross, HealthNet, Sharp, and UnitedHealthcare HMO plans.

### **Pet Insurance**

### **PetAssure**

Contact information: (800) 891-2565 Email: customercare@petbenefits.com

Website: <a href="https://www.petassure.com/land/laccd">https://www.petassure.com/land/laccd</a>
Member Login: <a href="https://account.petbenefits.com/">https://account.petbenefits.com/</a>

### **District Contacts**

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AFT College Staff Guild, Local 1521A

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Teamsters Local 911

Mercedes Gaitan

AFT College Staff Guild, Local 1521A

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Katrelia Walker, District HR

# **Notes**

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