



MEA NEWSLETTER

March 2009

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HSS Open Enrollment Update and Changes in Plan Options:

Open Enrollment for Health Service System (HSS) members takes place **April 1-30, 2009**. Any changes made to benefit elections during Open Enrollment will be effective July 1, 2009.

During Open Enrollment MEA members can:

- Elect a different HSS medical or dental plan.
- Add or drop eligible dependents from HSS medical or dental coverage.
- Enroll in a 2009-2010 Healthcare and/or Dependent Care Flexible Spending Account.

All MEA represented managers must make an appointment with EBS. Contact EBS at 800-229-7683 to schedule your April 2009 Open Enrollment appointment to allocate your flexible credits.

Be aware that if you do not allocate your flexible credits during April Open Enrollment your credits will be automatically distributed. See your 2009-2010 Management Cafeteria Plan Benefits Guide for details. EBS appointments will be available at **City Hall** on Monday, April 6, 2009, Friday, April 17, 2009 and Thursday, April 23, 2009 and at **SFO** on Tuesday, April 14, 2009 in addition to those at **HSS** April 1 through April 30. Call EBS early to secure an appointment at your preferred location.

To help HSS members and the City avoid a substantial increase in costs **PacifiCare and Secure Horizons will no longer be HSS medical plan options. HSS members who are currently enrolled in PacifiCare or Secure Horizons must choose another health plan during April 2009 Open Enrollment.** PacifiCare and Secure Horizons participants who do not submit an application to elect a new medical plan will be automatically enrolled in the City Plan as of July 1, 2009.

2009-2010 Open Enrollment packets, which will include a list of each member's current benefit elections and covered dependents, will be mailed in late March 2009 to the home address currently on file with your employer. Watch for this important Open Enrollment envelope and read the Management Cafeteria Plan Benefits Guide for details about 2009-2010 health benefits and rate changes. Benefit guides will also be available online at myhss.org in late March. **Completed Open Enrollment applications for medical and dental plan election changes must be received by HSS no later than April 30, 2009 at 5pm. Open Enrollment applications can be delivered to HSS in person, sent through the mail or transmitted by fax.** If you are enrolling new dependents you must provide documentation proving that your dependents meet eligibility requirements for the coming year. A valid Social Security number must also be provided for all enrolled individuals.

In addition to the mandatory appointments for MEA members to allocate their flexible credits, a voluntary HSS Open Enrollment Open House will take place at 1145 Market Street, from 8am to 4:30pm, Monday through Friday, April 1-30, 2009. Medical and dental vendors will be on-site at HSS from April 13 through April 30. Members can receive in-person assistance with medical and dental enrollment at the Open House on a first come first serve basis, although such assistance is not required for enrollment. Call HSS Member Services at 415-554-1750 if you need additional information.

Board Action Taken to Replenish MEA PAC – No Impact on Dues

In 2004 the MEA membership approved the development of a Political Action Committee (PAC). A PAC is the legal mechanism that allows unions, other employee organizations, and other types of non-profit organizations to contribute to political campaigns. Contributions can be made to individual candidates, and some ballot propositions at both the City and State levels. The Board of Directors was designated to act as the PAC and has done so since that time, allocating PAC funds to various candidates and initiatives, including Prop A the MTA Measure and Prop B the Pension/Retiree Health Care Charter Amendment, both passed last year.

At its meeting of March 4, 2009 the MEA Board of Directors determined there was a need to replenish the MEA Political Action Committee which was last funded in 2005. At the meeting it was moved, seconded and carried to redirect \$3.00 per member per pay period for the twelve (12) pay periods between April and September of 2009 into the PAC. This action will ensure that MEA continues to have the resources available to participate fully in the electoral process that is central to the ongoing discourse about the scope and role of public services and the value and dignity of public employees.

MEA's historical financial vigilance continues and this PAC contribution, like those in the past, will not require an increase in dues to facilitate.

PUC and MEA Execute Alternative Work Schedule (AWS) Agreement

On February 24, MEA signed off on a "Pilot Alternative Work Schedule" Agreement with the Public Utilities Commission (PUC). The program, slated to continue for at least one year, seeks to make cost-neutral, alternative work schedules available to MEA represented managers at the PUC based upon the "needs of the job, work group and PUC" and "past and present levels of performance." This type of AWS agreement is already in place with many of the other unions at the PUC and there was interest in making it available to MEA managers as well. For specific information please contact Mike De Bellis in PUC Employee Relations to learn more about the program as well as the process for signing up.

MEA Committees Tackle Tough Issues

As the discussions around the 09-10 Budget intensify, MEA members continue to grapple with the tough questions and issues.

On February 26 MEA President Eileen Hirst convened a sub-committee to discuss MEA's response to the City's ongoing concession requests. Although no conclusions were reached there appeared to be consensus around the following key principle: Instead of balancing the budget solely with layoffs and employee concessions, the plan to close the budget gap must be multi-faceted and rely upon **new revenue, structural reform as laid out in the MEA White Paper and a rigorous examination of what programs the City can afford to sustain in times of economic hardship.**

On March 12 MEA Board Member Matt Smyth convened a sub-committee to focus on Service Offerings and Delivery Changes within the City particularly those identified by MEA members in the survey portion of the White Paper development.

The third sub-committee on Structural Reform through Expenditure Controls and Revenue Enhancement has yet to meet. Recommendations from all three Committees will be integrated into the ongoing dialogue going on between labor, elected leaders, the business community, non-profit agencies and other stakeholders throughout the City.

MEA Board:

Eileen Hirst, President
David German, VP
Cheryl Austin, Secretary

Mary Fitzpatrick, Treasurer
Rafael Centeno
Mark Culkins
Jean Mariani

Sharyn Saslafsky
Matt Smyth
Neal Taniguchi
Bob Thomas

Staff:

Rebecca Rhine
Raquel Silva

MEA Mission Statement: To enhance the quality of life for all San Franciscans and visitors by promoting sound government practices, supporting professional excellence for our City's managers, and maintaining the highest ethical standards in the delivery of service to the public.

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