

DATE: September 1, 2016
FROM: County of San Benito
TO: All Employees and Retirees
RE: 2017 Group Health Insurance Options for County Employees and Retirees

San Benito County makes available group health insurance to its employees and retirees in accordance with our Memorandums of Understanding (MOU's) with Employee Associations and in keeping with the prevailing practices of public employers throughout California. The County seeks to provide high quality coverage at the best possible price with a contribution by the County to cost of coverage aligned with the County's ability to meet all of its financial obligations.

Since 1993, the County has contracted and purchased group health insurance through a Joint Powers Authority (JPA), CalPERS. At the meeting of the Board of Supervisors on August 9, 2016 it was decided to purchase and provide group health insurance through a different JPA, the EIAHealth Program sponsored by the California State Association of Counties Excess insurance Authority (CSAC EIA). This decision was made following much discussion over nearly 18 months with the employees and employee associations and their representatives, retirees, staff, Board members and independent consultants.

In making the change, the County will continue to provide benefits comparable to those offered today at lower cost with lower annual rates of change than the CalPERS system. This change also gives the County the flexibility to make available additional lower cost coverage options that are not offered by the CalPERS system.

The next step in the process will be for plan designs and rates be released to employees and retirees. The County will begin disseminating frequent communications to employees and retirees about: plans, rates, enrollment, eligibility, and plan administration. The County will post items to our website, along with electronic (Email) and paper (US Mail) versions of important information. The County will also be hosting in person Open Enrollment meetings at various locations throughout the County. More details will be forthcoming about dates, times, and place.

We want to make sure that employees and retirees know what to expect and have the opportunity to ask questions about how the change from CalPERS to EIAHealth may impact them.

Please remember that by making this change, the County will continue to provide benefits comparable to those offered today at lower cost with lower annual rates of change than the CalPERS system. The County will also now have the flexibility to make available additional lower cost coverage options that are not offered by the CalPERS system.

Please feel free to submit your questions electronically to: HumanResources@cosb.us