

City CONNECTION

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A Weekly Publication for City of Phoenix Employees

Remember the 31-Day Rule when adding/dropping dependents

During the annual Open Enrollment period in June, you can add or drop dependent coverage for any reason. However, there are other times when you need to add or drop coverage for a family member.

The city deducts medical and dental premiums on a pre-tax basis, which is financially advantageous to employees. The same Internal Revenue Service rules that allow pre-tax deductions also require that employees add or drop eligible dependents within 31 days of a "qualified life event." This is known as the 31-Day Rule.

Qualified life events include marriage, divorce, legal separation, eligibility for or termination of a qualified domestic partnership, birth, adoption and loss of other group coverage. Adult children becoming eligible for group coverage through their own or a spouse's employer is another qualified life event.

Employees can use eCHRIS Self Service to add or drop a dependent online. Assistance and information is available from the Benefits Office at 602-262-4777 or benefits.questions@phoenix.gov. Feel free to contact the Benefits Office with questions early.

Forgetting can be expensive. The city self-insures employee and retiree medical coverage. This means the city pays claim costs, not CIGNA or BlueCross/BlueShield. When an ineligible dependent uses the city's coverage, those costs must be returned to the city.

If you forget to drop an ineligible dependent within 31 days of the qualifying event date and that dependent uses city coverage, the claim costs become your financial responsibility. This statement is included in new hire information and in Open Enrollment meetings and materials. The Benefits Office will notify you of the total claims paid by the city for the ineligible dependent and will arrange repayment via payroll deduction.

If you forget within the 30-day period to *add* a dependent – a new spouse or a newborn, for example – you must wait until the next Open Enrollment to add them to your coverage. This can mean out-of-pocket expenses you didn't plan for if the dependent needs medical or dental services in the meantime.

Who is not eligible for coverage? An ex-spouse or legally separated spouse, non-qualified domestic partner, grandchild, parent, a child in active military service and a "common law" spouse who isn't a qualified domestic partner are some examples. Remember, there is an application process required for domestic partner coverage. Adding a domestic partner to your coverage without going through this process will result in you being financially responsible for their claims.

If you have questions or need more information, please contact the Benefits Office at 602-262-4777 or email benefits.questions@phoenix.gov.

Lunch-and-learn session explores mobile device security

Do you know what information your mobile device apps are collecting about you? Find out by attending a free lunch-and-learn information session about smart-phone and mobile-device security and privacy from noon to 1 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 25, at City Hall's assembly rooms.

The city's Information Security and Privacy Office (ISPO) is hosting the event in recognition of Data Privacy Day. Topics to be covered during the session include the types of information collected about consumers through their mobile device apps, tips on how to keep your mobile devices secure and what to do when you get a letter stating your personal information was breached.

No registration is required for the session, and the first 75 attendees will receive a free 2012 Cyber Security Calendar.

Data Privacy Day, recognized in the U.S. since 2009, is an annual international observation to raise awareness and generate discussion about information privacy in an increasingly online world. More information is available at www.staysafeonline.org/dpd.

For questions about the lunch-and-learn session or more information about ISPO, which is under Information Technology Services, email ISPO@phoenix.gov.

African-American health is this month's 'Brown Bag' topic

"Taking Charge of Your Health" is the topic of the next Faces of Diversity Brown Bag series at noon Friday, Jan. 20, at City Council Chambers.

Dr. Monica Ennis, assistant principal of instruction, Phoenix Union High School District, will discuss the current health issues that affect the African-American community, including diabetes, high blood pressure, stroke and heart attacks. Ennis will provide information on preventing and living with these diseases.

The event is co-sponsored by the Phoenix Human Relations Commission and the Equal Opportunity Department. Bring your lunch and enjoy a cultural experience. For more information, call 602-495-0358 or 602-534-1557/TTY or visit phoenix.gov/eod.

NEWS BRIEFS

Join members of the Phoenix Human Relations Commission and Valley residents for a Regional Unity Walk at 10:30 a.m. Saturday, Feb. 4, to celebrate solidarity and diversity. Walkers will assemble and receive their T-shirts at 10 a.m. at Tempe Lake Marina and the Tempe Center for the Arts in Tempe. The free walk will begin at 10:30 a.m. and finish at the Tempe Art Park, 700 W. Rio Salado Parkway, for a festival featuring keynote speaker Alonzo Jones, entertainment, kids' activities, free hot dogs and drinks. For more information, call 602-495-0358.

The city participates in OfficeMax's Reusable Shipping Tote program to help reduce packaging waste. Instead of shipping with corrugated paper boxes that are only used once, supplies are delivered in durable, reusable plastic totes designed for multiple shipments. OfficeMax tracks deliveries and picks up the empty containers when your next order is delivered. There is no additional cost to participate in the environmentally friendly program. For more information, call 602-484-5764.

PEOPLE

Congratulations to the following new 2080 Club members: **Mark Heitowit**, Housing; **Denis O'Shaughnessy** and **John Larson**, Parks and Recreation; **Frank Dancil Jr.**, Planning and Development; **David Miners**, **Salvador Barron**, **Terrence A. Gellenbeck** and **Walter Kinsler Jr.**, Public Works; **Bryan Coley**, **Trent Crump**, **John Hawkins**, **Scott Johnson**, **Phyllis Jones**, **Michael Lanning Jr.**, **Harold McCall** and **Mark Rios**, Police; **Michael Loffa** and **Gary Kasem**, Water Services.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Friday, March 9 - National Forum for Black Public Administrators' annual professional development seminar featuring Dr. Julianne Malveaux, author and president of Bennett College for Women. 8:15 a.m. to 5 p.m. Glendale Civic Center. For registration information, contact Martin Whitfield with Aviation at 602-683-2623 or email martin.whitfield@phoenix.gov. Information is also available at arizonanfbpa.org.

City Connection is published every week for city employees by the Public Information Office, 12th Floor, Phoenix City Hall, 200 W. Washington St., Phoenix, AZ 85003. For more information about the publication or to submit story ideas, email cconnect@phoenix.gov or call 602-262-6213/TTY 602-495-2432.