



New York State Correctional Officers & Police Benevolent Association, Inc.

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TO: NYSCOPBA Chief Sector Stewards

FROM: Sharon Smith, Health Benefits Specialist

DATE: February 15, 2005

RE: Health Insurance Updates

This memo is to update you on a couple of upcoming health insurance issues, as follows:

1. The State's contract with Express Scripts (the carrier providing the Empire Plan's prescription drug benefit) expires December 31, 2005. Therefore, the State has begun the RFP (Request for Proposals) process for 2006 and beyond. NYSCOPBA, through the Joint Committee on Health Benefits, will be part of that process.

One issue we want to bring to your attention is that the OneCard Program (which covers prescription drugs for members on Workers' Compensation Leave) has been omitted from the RFP. The State indicates this program was a pilot program and it will not be offered under the new contract. There is some talk that the Workers' Comp Board may develop a program wherein they provide a prescription card to those on workers' comp. We will keep you apprised of any developments in this regard.

2. In the spring of this year, members will receive a new NYS Government Employee Benefit (insurance) card. To protect confidentiality, the card will include an alternate identification number instead of the member's social security number. Once the cards are received, all correspondence from Empire Plan carriers (including Explanations of Benefits) will use the alternate number. The Employee Benefits Division (EBD) and the Empire Plan carriers will maintain both the social security number and alternate number on their enrollment files for assistance in servicing members who may not have their alternate number available when they are inquiring about enrollment, claim or benefit issues.

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Be advised that the new cards for our members, as well as all employees represented by a bargaining unit without a settled contract, will have the current "New York Government Employee" design. Cards for groups who have settled contracts and benefit modifications will feature a new design. I just wanted to make you aware of this in case members wonder why their cards may be different from others.

Should you have any questions regarding either of these issues, feel free to contact me.

cc: NYSCOPBA Joint Committee on Health Benefits
NYSCOPBA Executive Board and Business Agents