



## New York State Correctional Officers & Police Benevolent Association

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TO: NYSCOPBA Members

FROM: Sharon Smith, Health Benefits Specialist

DATE: May 15, 2020

RE: Empire Plan and Flex Spending Account Updates

We received the below updates to the Empire Plan and the Flex Spending Account today:

First – effective tomorrow, Empire Plan members who use LiveHealth Online, the telemedicine program, will no longer need to enter the coupon code. Instead, when scheduling a visit, you need to enter your name and ID number **exactly** as it appears on your insurance card so you do not incur a charge for the visit.

Second - some Empire Plan members have been getting calls from persons unaffiliated with the Empire Plan offering medications, vitamins and supplements at no or reduced cost. Please be aware this is a scam and the callers are not authorized to collect information from or make offers to Empire Plan members. Below is the note Civil Service just posted to NYSHIP Online:

### **“Prescription Drug Phone Scam Targeting Empire Plan Members**

The Department of Civil Service is aware that third party companies, unaffiliated with the Empire Plan, are targeting enrollees with offers to obtain medications for no cost or reduced cost. Do not provide your personal information to these companies; they are not authorized by the Empire Plan. If you are able to provide details regarding such a call as the phone number and the medications they say they will cover, please report the information to the Plan by calling the toll-free number at 1-877-7-NYSHIP (1-877-769-7447) and selecting option 4 to reach the Prescription Drug Program. If you have any questions about your Empire Plan prescription drug coverage, please visit [www.cs.ny.gov/empireplanrxprogram](http://www.cs.ny.gov/empireplanrxprogram) or call the Empire Plan toll-free number.”

Finally, the Federal Government recently enacted changes to flexible spending accounts that allows employers to permit certain changes, including prospective changes to election amounts, among other things, that may or may not apply to the State’s plan structure. The State is in the process of gathering additional information and guidance from WageWorks on what options may apply (many enrollees have indicated issues with spending their HCSA balance due to

restrictions on office visits and elective surgeries). Follow-up information will be forthcoming in this regard. Below is the link to the new guidance:

<https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-drop/n-20-29.pdf>

Feel free to contact me with any questions you may have on any of the above.

SS

cc: NYSCOPBA Executive Board  
NYSCOPBA Jt. Committee on Health Benefits