

WSR 24-21-107

EMERGENCY RULES

HEALTH CARE AUTHORITY

(School Employees Benefits Board)

[Admin #2024-03.01—Filed October 18, 2024, 1:11 p.m. effective October 18, 2024, 1:11 p.m.]

Effective Date of Rule: Immediately upon filing.

Purpose: The health care authority (agency) is refiling two new sections, WAC 182-30-5000 School employees benefits board employer groups, and 182-30-5010 School board members participation in school employees benefits board health plans, as authorized in SSB 5275, chapter 13, Laws of 2023, 68th legislature, 2023 regular session.

Citation of Rules Affected by this Order: New WAC 182-30-5000 and 182-30-5010.

Statutory Authority for Adoption: SSB 5275, chapter 13, Laws of 2023, 68th legislature, 2023 regular session.

Other Authority: RCW 41.05.021, 41.05.160.

Under RCW 34.05.350 the agency for good cause finds that immediate adoption, amendment, or repeal of a rule is necessary for the preservation of the public health, safety, or general welfare, and that observing the time requirements of notice and opportunity to comment upon adoption of a permanent rule would be contrary to the public interest.

Reasons for this Finding: This emergency rule making is necessary by establishing rules for the school employees benefits board employer groups and the school board members to implement SSB 5275, chapter 13, Laws of 2023, while the agency conducts the permanent rule-making process.

This filing continues the emergency rules under WSR 24-14-007, filed on June 21, 2024, to cover the gap between the expiration of the emergency rules and the effective date of the permanent rules. The agency adopted permanent rules under WSR 24-15-107 on July 22, 2024, to be effective January 1, 2025.

Number of Sections Adopted in Order to Comply with Federal Statute: New 0, Amended 0, Repealed 0; Federal Rules or Standards: New 0, Amended 0, Repealed 0; or Recently Enacted State Statutes: New 2, Amended 0, Repealed 0.

Number of Sections Adopted at the Request of a Nongovernmental Entity: New 0, Amended 0, Repealed 0.

Number of Sections Adopted on the Agency's own Initiative: New 0, Amended 0, Repealed 0.

Number of Sections Adopted in Order to Clarify, Streamline, or Reform Agency Procedures: New 0, Amended 0, Repealed 0.

Number of Sections Adopted using Negotiated Rule Making: New 0, Amended 0, Repealed 0; Pilot Rule Making: New 0, Amended 0, Repealed 0; or Other Alternative Rule Making: New 2, Amended 0, Repealed 0.

Date Adopted: October 18, 2024.

Wendy Barcus
Rules Coordinator

OTS-4678.1

NEW SECTION**WAC 182-30-5000 School employees benefits board employer groups.**

(1) The following definitions apply to this section:

(a) "School employee" means an employee of an employee organization representing school employees and an employee of a tribal school as defined in RCW 28A.715.010.

(b) "Employer group" has the same meaning as defined in RCW 41.05.011 (9)(b).

(2) This section applies to all employer group applications received through December 31, 2024.

(3) Employer groups may apply to obtain school employees benefits board (SEBB) insurance coverage through a contract with the authority for SEBB insurance coverage to begin January 1, 2024, if they meet the group application process and requirements in a similar way as described in WAC 182-08-235. All documents and information required with the application must be submitted to the SEBB program.

(4) Employer groups that apply for participation in SEBB insurance coverage as described in subsection (3) of this section will have a one-time opportunity to request inclusion of retired employees who are covered under its retiree health plan at the time of application in a similar way as described in WAC 182-08-237. The retirees included will be enrolled in public employees benefits board (PEBB) retiree insurance coverage.

(5) The authority will review the employer group application based on the documents submitted by the employer group and the employer group evaluation criteria in a similar way as described in WAC 182-08-240.

(6) Employer groups must meet the participation requirements, including requirements for terminating participation in SEBB insurance coverage, in a similar way as described in WAC 182-08-245.

(7) Employer groups that enter into a contractual agreement with the authority on or after May 4, 2023, and whose contractual agreement is subsequently terminated, shall make a one-time payment to the authority for each of the employer group's retired or disabled employees who continue their participation in insurance plans and contracts under RCW 41.05.080 (1)(a)(ii).

(a) For each of the employer group's retired or disabled employees who will be continuing their participation, the authority shall determine the one-time payment by:

(i) Calculating the difference in cost between the rate charged to retired or disabled employees as described in RCW 41.05.080(2); and

(ii) The actuarially determined value of the medical benefits for retired and disabled employees who are not eligible for Parts A and B of medicare; and

(iii) Multiplying that difference by the number of months until the retired or disabled employee would become eligible for medicare.

(b) Employer groups shall not be entitled to any refund of the amount paid to the authority as described in this subsection.

(8) Employer groups may appeal a decision of the authority to deny an employer group application in a similar way as described in WAC 182-16-2060. The appeal must be sent to the SEBB appeals unit.

(9) School employees may appeal a decision made by the employer group in a similar way as described in WAC 182-16-2010(2), 182-16-2030(2), and chapter 182-32 WAC.

(10) All rules in chapters 182-30, 182-31, and 182-32 WAC apply to employer groups and enrollees, except for WAC 182-30-100, 182-30-120, 182-30-130, 182-30-140, 182-31-030, and 182-31-060.

NEW SECTION

WAC 182-30-5010 School board members participation in school employees benefits board health plans. (1) In this section, "school board member" means the board of directors of a school district as governed by chapter 28A.343 RCW or the board of directors of an educational service district as governed by chapter 28A.310 RCW.

(2) Effective January 1, 2024, a school board member may enroll in health plans offered by the school employees benefits board (SEBB) by self-paying the premium and applicable premium surcharges set by the health care authority (HCA). A school board member must enroll in SEBB medical, SEBB dental, and SEBB vision.

(3) A school board member may participate in SEBB health plan coverage for the duration of their elected term as a school board member as long as premiums and applicable premium surcharges continue to be paid as described in WAC 182-30-040 and may renew their participation at the start of each subsequent term as a school board member.

(4) A school board member may elect to enroll in SEBB health plan coverage by submitting the required forms and first premium payments to the SEBB program, and they must be received as follows:

(a) Currently elected or appointed school board members have between November 1, 2023, and February 29, 2024, to submit the required forms to the SEBB program.

(i) If the required forms are received on or before December 31, 2023, SEBB health plan coverage will begin January 1, 2024. The first premium payment and applicable premium surcharges must be received no later than 45 days after January 1, 2024.

(ii) If the required forms are received between January 1, 2024, and February 29, 2024, SEBB health plan coverage will begin the first day of the month following the day the SEBB program receives the required forms. The first premium payment and applicable premium surcharges must be received no later than 45 days after the 60-day election period ends.

(b) Newly elected school board members must submit their required forms no later than 60 days from the beginning of their elected or appointed term. The school board member's SEBB health plan coverage will begin the first day of the month following the day the SEBB program receives the required forms. The first premium payment and applicable premium surcharges must be received no later than 45 days after the 60-day election period ends.

(5) A school board member's account may incur the tobacco use premium surcharge or the spousal premium surcharge in addition to their monthly medical premium, and the subscriber must attest as described in WAC 182-30-050 (1) and (2). A premium surcharge will be applied if the school board member does not attest. If the attestation results in a premium surcharge, it will take effect the same date as SEBB medical begins.

(6) If a school board member is reelected for a new term consecutive from their previous term, the school board member will not be required to make new elections.

(7) A school board member may enroll eligible dependents as described in WAC 182-31-140 and must include the dependent's enrollment information on the required form. If the school board member elects to enroll a dependent in SEBB health plan coverage, the dependent will be enrolled in the same SEBB medical, SEBB dental, and SEBB vision plans as the school board member.

(8) If a school board member is terminated due to no longer paying the premium and applicable premium surcharges as described in WAC 182-30-040 (1)(c) or requests to voluntarily terminate their enrollment in SEBB health plan coverage prior to the end of their elected term, they are no longer eligible under this section to participate in SEBB health plan coverage for the remainder of their elected term. Those who request to voluntarily terminate their SEBB health plan coverage must do so in writing. SEBB health plan coverage will end on the last day of the month in which the SEBB program receives the termination request or on the last day of the month specified in the school board member's termination request, whichever is later. If the termination request is received on the first day of the month, SEBB health plan coverage will end on the last day of the previous month.

(9) A school board member may make enrollment changes on the same terms and conditions as a continuation coverage subscriber as described in WAC 182-30-085, 182-30-090, and 182-31-150.

(10) A school board member must update their address with the SEBB program as described in WAC 182-30-075.

(11) A school board member is limited to one enrollment per individual in SEBB health plan coverage, as described in WAC 182-31-070.

(12) A school board member may appeal a decision made by the SEBB program as described in chapter 182-32 WAC.

(13) The requirements in WAC 182-31-160 about National Medical Support Notice apply.

(14) A school board member may receive the SEBB wellness incentive as described in WAC 182-31-190.

(15) A school board member is not eligible for public employees benefits board retiree insurance coverage.

(16) The eligibility criteria for a school board member in this section replaces the eligibility criteria found in WAC 182-08-235, 182-08-245, 182-12-111, and 182-12-146 effective January 1, 2024.