



SPECIAL SERVICES:

PROVIDING HEALTH INSURANCE FOR RETIRED SCHOOL EMPLOYEES

Health Insurance for Retirees

Please note this very important change to the BC/BS coverage:

Employees between the ages of 50 and 64 who have been participants in the EHA plan for at least five (5) years may now choose the \$500 deductible retired plan immediately upon terminating employment (including retirement) with their school district, without having to take COBRA first.

Those who select COBRA on or after September 1, 2004, will not be eligible to obtain BC/BS retiree coverage once their COBRA coverage expires.

NOTE: Those former EHA participants who are currently on COBRA or who become covered by COBRA *before* September 1, 2004 will be allowed to enroll in the Direct Bill retiree plan at the end of their COBRA period if they are not yet 65 years old and meet the requirements stated above.

A. IF YOU CHOOSE COBRA—for the first 18 months following retirement, the employee and eligible dependents can continue the school district's group plan under COBRA. The COBRA Election Form must be completed and returned by the employee within 60 days following retirement to be eligible for continuation of the group health plan. The Election Form and further COBRA information is available from the school district.

The employee does not have to be a member of NSEA, NCSA, or NASB to continue EHA health coverage under COBRA. You and your dependents can continue on the district's health plan for up to eighteen months following retirement. You and your spouse can each enroll in a single plan unless you have dependent children. COBRA coverage will end the day you are entitled to Medicare.

Remember, if you choose COBRA, you are not eligible to enroll in the EHA Direct Bill plan at a later date.

B. IF YOU CHOOSE DIRECT BILL—an employee may choose to continue EHA coverage under the Direct Bill program. The Direct Bill program is a special service of these associations for retired members. The insurance plan is a \$550 deductible PPO plan. This program is available only to members of the NSEA, NCSA, or the NASB.

DIRECT BILL ELIGIBILITY:

- ❑ You *must* become a Special Services Member of NSEA, NCSA, or NASB.
- ❑ The school district from which you retired must be participating in the EHA plan.
- ❑ You must be at least 50 years old, or disabled, or the surviving spouse and/or dependent of a deceased school retiree.
- ❑ At the time of your retirement, you must have been covered by the EHA plan for at least the previous five years. [An exception to this rule is made for school districts that joined the EHA plan during the 2001 open enrollment.]
- ❑ You are eligible only until you reach age 65, unless your dependents need family coverage.

If you meet these eligibility requirements, the school district will notify Blue Cross/Blue Shield. The Direct Bill and member enrollment form will be mailed to you by Blue Cross/Blue Shield.

SPECIAL SERVICES MEMBERSHIP:

You *must* be a Special Services member to continue EHA coverage after COBRA. The NSEA administers the Special Services program for NSEA, NCSA, and the NASB.

The NSEA collects all Special Services dues and enrollment forms and then remits the respective membership dues to NCSA and NASB. Special Services applicants should use the form appropriate for their respective association.

SPECIAL SERVICES DUES:

The Special Services membership is annual—from September 1 to August 31 of each year. You *must* be a member each year to be eligible for retiree coverage until you reach age 65. Your initial year of membership and your final year at age 65 will be prorated on a quarterly basis.

- ❑ If you are a member of NARSA, or are an NSEA-Retired member, or an NASB member when you left the board, the annual dues will be **\$120** each for you and your spouse.
- ❑ If you were an NSEA member at retirement (but not a member of NSEA-Retired), the annual dues will be **\$160** for you and **\$120** for your spouse.
- ❑ If you were not a member of NSEA or NCSA at retirement or a member of the NASB when you left the school board, the annual dues will be **\$240** each for you and your spouse.

AFTER DIRECT BILL/AGE 65—

At age 65, the Direct Bill plan ends and you become eligible for Medicare. Retiree coverage is available for NSEA members through the NSEA-Retired or the NEA.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:

NSEA, NCSA, or NASB SPECIAL SERVICES:

Call NSEA at 1-800-742-0047 or (402) 475-7611. Ask for Special Services Membership.

BLUE CROSS/BLUE SHIELD:

Call 1-800-642-6004

COBRA ENROLLMENT:

Contact your local school district.