

APWU Slashes Employees' Costs For Consumer Driven Health Plan

APWU members who enroll in the Consumer Driven Health Plan will pay much lower premiums for health insurance in 2008, plan administrators announced Sept. 18. Union members will pay just \$7.77 per pay period for self-only coverage, and \$17.48 for self-and-family coverage next year.

The new rates represent a reduction of \$10.63 and \$23.92 respectively, per pay period from 2007 fees.

"This is great news for APWU members," said union President William Burrus. "Our members can give themselves a nice raise simply by switching to – or staying in – the Consumer Driven Health Plan."

Beginning in 2008, the union's 2006-2010 Collective Bargaining Agreement requires the USPS to increase the share of premiums it pays for the APWU Consumer Driven Health Plan to 95 percent, leaving only 5 percent of premium costs to employees.

"This accounts for the substantial savings our members will enjoy," Burrus said. "The reduction in premium costs will take place despite a provision of the Collective Bargaining Agreement that decreases the USPS share of healthcare premiums by 1 percent each year from 2008 to 2011," he noted.

"Union members who switch to the Consumer Driven Plan from costlier health plans will realize even greater savings," Burrus said.

The premiums for the APWU High Option Health Plan also will decline slightly in 2008. Premiums for self-only coverage will be \$24.01 (56 cents less per pay period) and self-and-family coverage will cost \$54.30 per pay period (6 cents less than in 2007).

"In light of the nationwide trend of skyrocketing health insurance costs, these decreases in premium costs are significant," Burrus said.

APWU members can give themselves a raise simply by enrolling in the Consumer Driven Health Plan.

The benefits offered by the Consumer Driven Plan and the High Option Plan remain unchanged. William J. Kaczor Jr., director of the APWU Health Plan, said, "We held the line on premiums this year, and our members will enjoy the benefits."

Postal retirees and other federal workers who enroll in the APWU Consumer Driven Plan or the High Option Plan also will experience a reduction in premiums.

Postal and federal employees and retirees can enroll in a plan or change their enrollment during Open Season, which is Nov. 12 through Dec. 10. For more information about the APWU Health Plan, visit www.apwuhp.com.

Ballots Due Oct. 5

VOTE in the Election of National Officers

Completed ballots for the 2007 Election of APWU National Officers must be received in the designated post office box in Washington, DC, by 2 p.m. on Oct. 5 to be valid.

Members in good standing who have not received their ballots by Sept. 20 should notify their local, or should contact the American Arbitration Association between the hours of 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. (EDT) at 800-529-5218 to request a duplicate. Ballots may also be requested by e-mail to apwu@adr.org.

To receive a duplicate ballot, members must

provide their name and the last four digits of their Social Security number (or their complete Employee Identification Number), along with their local, craft, mailing address, and telephone number.

The APWU National Election Committee will pick up the ballots from the designated post office box at 2 p.m. on Oct. 5. The vote will be tallied at the Madison Hotel, 1177 15th St. NW, Washington, DC.

Unofficial election results will be posted on the union's Web site, www.apwu.org, as soon as they are available, and will be updated frequently.