



# ARBenefits

## Monthly E-Newsletter

# Happy Holidays!

The Employee Benefits Division (EBD) office will be closed:

**Tuesday, December 24, 2019**

**Wednesday, December 25, 2019**

&

**Wednesday, January 1, 2020**

## WELLNESS PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS FOR 2020

Requirements for next year's ARBenefits Wellness Program have been finalized. To earn any incentive put in place by the State and Public School Life and Health Insurance Board for the 2021 plan year, covered active employees and any covered spouse must complete the requirements below by **October 31, 2020**.

### **BIOMETRIC SCREENING:**

Members can complete a biometric screening by participating in a Catapult Health worksite checkup or through their own physician.

Members who utilize their own physician to complete their screening, need to have their physician complete the ARBenefits Primary Care Provider Form.

### **HEALTH ASSESSMENT:**

Members who complete a Catapult Health checkup will also complete the health assessment requirement during that appointment.

Members who complete a checkup through their physician must also complete

the online health assessment through their Health Advantage My Blueprint account at [healthadvantage-hmo.com/myblueprint](http://healthadvantage-hmo.com/myblueprint).

Members can now also access their My Blueprint account by logging in to their ARBenefits Member Portal account at [my.arbenefits.org](http://my.arbenefits.org). After logging in, members can click the Health Advantage link in the Member Links tab to go directly in to their My Blueprint account.

### **TOBACCO CESSATION:**

Members who test positive for nicotine will once again be able to successfully complete the wellness program by participating in a tobacco cessation program.

A schedule of Catapult Health clinics, the ARBenefits Primary Care Provider form, and more information concerning the wellness program is available in the [Health Enhancements](http://Health Enhancements) section at [www.ARBenefits.org](http://www.ARBenefits.org).

## ARBenefits

### **New Directions counselors help you take care of you**

There are probably few things you cherish more than the good times you share with family and friends during the holidays. However, when too much of a good thing begins to take an emotional toll, your ARBenefits health plan can help. New Directions counselors are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, holidays included. Counselors are available to listen and help you explore options for taking care of *you* and getting back to *them*. To learn more, visit **New Directions Behavioral Health** at [NDBH.com](http://NDBH.com) or call **1-877-300-9103**.



## Colonial Life: the State's New Life Insurance Provider

ARBenefits along with the State of Arkansas is proud to partner with Colonial Life to offer group term life insurance.

As of January 1, 2020, Colonial Life will take over as the State's new life insurance provider.

Coverages in force with Securian Financial (Minnesota Life) at the end of year will automatically port over to Colonial Life.

Any changes employees elected during the special Colonial Life

open enrollment period will also be effective as of 1/1/2020.

As of 1/1/2020, the rate for spouse and child supplemental coverage does increase by \$0.02 per \$1,000 in coverage. However, spouse and child supplemental coverage with Colonial Life includes matching Accidental Death & Dismemberment coverage (AD&D) insurance that was not included with Securian Financial.

Also, the cost of child supplemental coverage is bundled. Employees

can have policies on multiple children, and they will pay the same monthly rate if they had coverage for one child.

Employees who retire will still have the ability to continue their life insurance coverage upon retirement with Colonial Life.

More information regarding life insurance coverage with Colonial Life is included in the Forms & Publications sections at [www.ARBenefits.org](http://www.ARBenefits.org).

## (ASE) Deadline to Spend 2019 FSA Funds is Here

December 31, 2019 is the deadline to spend 2019 Flexible Spending Account (FSA) funds.

State employees (ASE), remember that you can roll over up to \$500 from your 2019 FSA if you elected a Health Care or Limited Purpose FSA for 2020.

Any amount over \$500 left in an FSA account after all 2019 claims have been submitted and substantiated will be forfeited back to the Plan.

Need to spend down your account balance? To avoid losing out on any money that you contributed towards your 2019 FSA, there are ways to spend down your balance.

While you can certainly use your FSA funds for any planned medical, dental or vision service you may have between now and the end of the year, you can also use your FSA to purchase products you may need throughout the year.

FSA eligible products include:

- Contact lens solution,
- Blood pressure monitors,
- Diabetic testing supplies,
- Pregnancy tests,
- Thermometers, and
- Much more!

You can go to [www.connectyourcare.com/ARBenefits](http://www.connectyourcare.com/ARBenefits) and click the Flexible Spending Account (FSA) link to access a list of eligible expenses. Keep in mind that some over-the-

counter medications and products may require the submission of a prescription from your doctor, a receipt, or both.

You can also shop online at [www.FSAStore.com](http://www.FSAStore.com). Every product on the site is an FSA eligible expense.

The website includes information on how employees can purchase over-the-counter products that require a prescription in order to be an FSA eligible expense. Products on the site that require a prescription will have an RX notation.

Employees have until the end of March 2020 to substantiate any outstanding claims from 2019 with ConnectYourCare.



# Preventing the Flu Through Vaccination

With families gathering to celebrate the holidays, it is also important to remember that we in the middle of flu season.

While the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommend people be vaccinated by the end of October, it is not too late to protect yourself by getting vaccinated.

Influenza (flu) is a potentially serious disease that can lead to hospitalization and sometimes even death.

Every flu season is different, and influenza infection can affect people differently, but millions of people get flu every year, hundreds of thousands of people are hospitalized and thousands to tens of thousands of people die from flu-related causes every year.

An annual seasonal flu vaccine is the best way to help protect against flu. Vaccination has been shown to have many benefits including reducing the risk of flu illnesses, hospitalizations and even the risk of flu-related death in children.

The CDC recommends everyone six months of age and older get vaccinated annually. This is especially the case if someone falls into a higher risk category for developing flu-related complications.

Those who are in a higher risk category include:

- Adults 65 years of age and older.
- Children younger than five (5), especially those under the age of two (2).
- Women who are pregnant.
- Nursing home residents and the

patients of long-term care facilities.

Talk with your health care provider if you have one of the following conditions. They can help decide whether vaccination is right for you and select the best vaccine type.

- If you have an allergy to eggs or any of the ingredients in the vaccine.
- If you ever had Guillain-Barré Syndrome (GBS).
- If you are not feeling well, talk to your doctor about your symptoms.

**ARBenefits covers the cost of the flu vaccine 100% for covered members.**

More information about the flu vaccine is available at [www.cdc.gov/flu](http://www.cdc.gov/flu).



## Schedule your annual flu shot, get the emotional support you need around the holidays

The winter holiday season may be the most wonderful time of the year, but it can also be stressful. And when stress is high, our immune systems are more vulnerable to the influenza virus. Schedule your annual vaccination with your primary care doctor and scratch the flu off your guest list this holiday season. And when you feel the stress coming on, confidential, free counseling support is a phone call away through your **Employee Assistance Program at 1-877-300-9103.**



## Benefits of the Flu Vaccine

Flu vaccination has important benefits. It can reduce flu illnesses, doctors' visits, and missed work and school due to flu, as well as prevent flu-related hospitalizations. Flu vaccine also has been shown to be life-saving in children. In fact, a 2017 study showed that flu vaccination can significantly reduce a child's risk of dying from flu.

**While the vaccine is not a guarantee you will not get the flu, the vaccine itself cannot give you the flu.** There can be side effects from the flu vaccine that can be mild and short lasting such as: soreness, headache, fever, muscle ache, fatigue, etc.

Some people who get vaccinated may still get sick. However, flu vaccination has been shown in some studies to reduce severity of illness in people who get vaccinated but still get sick.



## Setting Goals for 2020 & Dealing With Holiday Stressors

With the hustle and bustle of the holiday season, it can be hard to prioritize thinking about 2020. But now is the perfect time to do just that! As you set personal intentions for the new year, consider some professional goals too.

One way to start is to ask yourself: do I want to be in-charge or do I want to be a leader? Here are some things strong leaders do:

**Coach:** Clearly define goals and set an example for your team or colleagues. Motivate others to work toward the same goals, while being supportive and honest with them.

**Communicate:** Leaders say what they're going to do, and they follow through. Effective communication also means being an active listener when someone shares a problem or concern.

**Make decisions:** When it comes to problem-solving, look at all the options and listen to the suggestions of others, but don't be afraid to take risks to push new ideas and project goals.

**Be assertive:** Make it clear what's expected of your team. Lean toward active involvement rather than passive behavior.

Use the end of year to reframe and be intentional about developing your skills as a leader. Your free Employee Assistance Program (EAP) benefit can help, giving you to access to coaching, trainings and other resources to boost your professional development. Call or go online to learn more.

To get started, sign up to attend this month's free webinars on Navigating Change Personally & Professionally and Leading Employees through Change by clicking the link below or visiting our homepage.

[Link for Live Webinars](#)

With the stress that comes with the holidays, New Directions is here to help.

Decorations, holiday music everywhere, parties, gift-giving, travel and spending can easily become overwhelming and can lead to a high level of stress.

This season, we want to heighten your awareness about ways you can take back some personal control around the holidays to prevent the tension from setting in.

Reach out to your EAP. The

holiday season is long, and we can suggest tips so that you can maximize enjoyment while avoiding the stressors along the way.



**Connect With New Directions Today!**

 Call the Helpline  
**1-877-300-9103**  
Available 24x7

 Online  
**www.NDBH.com**

- ▶ Visit [www.NDBH.com](http://www.NDBH.com);
- ▶ Select the Log In icon;
- ▶ In the Individuals and Families tab select Employee Assistance Program;
- ▶ Enter company code **ARBenefits**.

ARBenefits complies with applicable Federal civil rights laws and does not discriminate based on race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex. Language assistance services, free of charge, are available to you. Call 1-877-815-1017x1.

Si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Llame al 1-877-815-1017x1.