

THE *Current*

October 24, 2016

[Andrea Estrada](#)

Open Enrollment

Open Enrollment, the period when faculty and staff members have an opportunity to review their health plans and make choices regarding their 2017 benefits, begins Thursday, Oct. 27, and continues through Tuesday, Nov. 22.

Open enrollment packets were mailed to the homes of UCSB employees and should arrive this week.

“There’s a lot of good news this year,” said Dwaine Duckett, UC vice president of human resources. “We’ve worked hard to manage costs, and offer the protection of disability insurance to more faculty and staff than ever before. I encourage everyone to take a careful look at their options this year, to make sure they’re taking full advantage of their UC benefits.”

Medical Plans

Employees will see small increases, or even decreases in their contributions toward medical premiums this year. Over 90 percent of employees will see increases under \$10 per month, and no increases are over \$12 per month. For members of UC Care, monthly contributions will decrease.

Dental and vision plans are still offered at no cost for employees.

For 2017, a number of administrators will be changing for UC’s PPO plans. Anthem Blue Cross replaces Blue Shield as the administrator of medical benefits for UC’s PPO plans. Health Equity will continue as the health savings account custodian.

Anthem Blue Cross replaces Optum as the administrator of behavioral health benefits for UC Care and UC Health Savings Plan. Anthem replaces Blue Shield as the administrator of behavioral health benefits for Core, UC High Option Supplement to Medicare and UC Medicare PPO.

OptumRX replaced Blue Shield as the administrator of prescription drug benefits for UC's PPO plans.

Disability Insurance

During this year's Open Enrollment period, all benefits eligible employees may enroll in Voluntary Disability Insurance, which provides partial wages replacement when an employee is unable to work due to pregnancy, illness or injury. Also, during Open Enrollment, no eligible employee can be denied Voluntary Disability Insurance due to an existing medical condition. Those enrolling later will have to submit statements of health, and may not qualify for coverage.

Legal Plan

The ARAG Legal Plan is open for enrollment. Among the expanded benefits offered are identity theft protection and a new tax-planning package.

Workshops and Presentations

Throughout the Open Enrollment period, a series of presentations and workshops hosted by UCSB's Office of Human Resources will provide information and assistance to employees. Unless otherwise noted, they will take place in the Human Resources Learning Center, SAASB 3101.

Side-by-side comparisons of all UC medical plans will take place from 12:05 to 1:30 p.m. Friday, Oct. 28, and Thursday, Nov. 17.

Comparisons of behavioral health plans and the wellness and condition management programs offered by each insurance carrier will be presented from 12:05 to 1:30 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 3, and Monday, Nov. 14.

A presentation about the health savings plan (PPO with HSA), including the associated tax advantages, will take place from 12:05 to 1:30 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 10.

A Mini-Fair and presentations are slated for Monday, Nov. 7, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. in the UCen Harbor Room. On hand to answer questions will be representatives from Anthem, Health Equity, Health Net, Kaiser, UC Care, Optum Behavioral Health, Optum Rx, Liberty Mutual, Fidelity and the UC Benefits Office.

Plan representatives will present overviews in the UCen State Street Room, beginning with UC Care at 9 a.m. Health Savings Plan will follow at 10:30 a.m., Health Net Blue & Gold at 11:45 a.m. and UC Care at 1 p.m.

Faculty and staff members who have questions about health and welfare benefits or need assistance making changes are invited to drop by one of two Help Desks. The first is from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 26, at the Gaucho Farmers Market between North Hall and Campbell Hall. The Help Desk with Computer Lab will be available from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Friday, Nov. 18, in the Human Resources Learning Center, SAASB 3101.

A number of disability insurance workshops will be held in the UCen Flying A Room, beginning Wednesday, Oct. 26 at noon. Additional general sessions will take place Thursday, Oct. 27, at 9 a.m.; Wednesday, Nov. 9, at 2 p.m.; and Tuesday, Nov. 15, and Friday, Nov. 18, at noon.

Faculty sessions aimed at academic appointees eligible for academic paid medical leave will take place Thursday, Oct. 27, at 10:30 a.m. and Wednesday, Nov. 16, at 2:30 p.m.

Those unable to attend either the general or faculty sessions can find information about disability benefits at <http://ucal.us/disability/2017>.

Additional information about Open Enrollment can be found [here](#).

About UC Santa Barbara

The University of California, Santa Barbara is a leading research institution that also provides a comprehensive liberal arts learning experience. Our academic community of faculty, students, and staff is characterized by a culture of interdisciplinary collaboration that is responsive to the needs of our multicultural and global society. All of this takes place within a living and learning environment like no other, as we draw inspiration from the beauty and resources of our extraordinary location at the edge of the Pacific Ocean.