

Benefits and Me



NOVEMBER 2024

Maximizing Your Open Enrollment



Did you know that nearly 7 in 10 employees spend 30 minutes or fewer reviewing their open enrollment benefits options? Unfortunately, that's far less than most Americans' daily social media time. Open enrollment is crucial for making informed decisions about your health care and benefits. To maximize this period, start by thoroughly reviewing all available plan options and understanding the specifics. This includes examining coverage details, costs and any changes from the previous year. It's also important to consider your current and anticipated health care needs by reflecting on any health changes, upcoming medical procedures and new medications. Furthermore, utilize available resources such as plan comparison tools, informational webinars and consultations with benefits advisors. Dedicate time to research and ask questions so you can ensure that you select the plan that best meets your and your family's needs.

By being proactive and using all available resources, you can make educated decisions and not rush through open enrollment. Talk to HR if you have open enrollment or benefits-related questions.

Midyear Qualifying Events

Navigating your employee benefits can feel overwhelming, especially when life throws changes your way. Fortunately, if you are under a cafeteria plan (also known as a Section 125 plan), your employer may allow you to adjust your benefits outside the annual open enrollment period. Employers don't have to allow all midyear election changes, only those allowed under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act's special enrollment rights. It's important to understand midyear qualifying events and other considerations for midyear changes. The IRS identifies the following "change in status" events that may allow you to make alterations to your benefit elections during the plan year:

- Change in employee's legal marital status
- Change in the number of dependents
- Change in employment status
- Change in dependent status
- Change in place of residence

Contact HR to learn more about midyear qualifying events.

Doula Benefits

A doula is a trained professional who provides physical, emotional and informational support to a pregnant person before, during and shortly after childbirth. Instead of performing clinical tasks, they focus on the nonmedical aspects of childbirth, offering reassurance, comfort and advocacy. Doulas can also use their experience to help parents navigate the medical system. Overall, doulas advocate for pregnant people by encouraging them and helping them fulfill their specific desires for their labor and delivery experience.

Doula care can be expensive for expecting parents and is generally paid out of pocket. As such, employers may offer doula care support by providing:

- Direct coverage
- Reimbursement programs
- Partnerships with doula organizations
- Educational resources

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