

Public Employees Benefits Board
Meeting Minutes

March 13, 2025
Health Care Authority
Sue Crystal Rooms A & B
Olympia, Washington
9:00 a.m. – 12:45 p.m.

The Briefing Book with the complete presentations and an audio recording of the meeting can be found at:
<https://www.hca.wa.gov/about-hca/programs-and-initiatives/public-employees-benefits-board-pebb-program/meetings-and-materials#meeting-materials>

Members Present in Olympia

MaryAnne Lindeblad
John Comerford
Michaela Doelman
Elyette Weinstein
Harry Bossi

Members Present via Zoom

Kurt Spiegel
Sharon Laing
Tom MacRobert

Members Absent

None

PEB Board Counsel

Michael Tunick, AAG (in person)

Call to Order

MaryAnne Lindeblad, Board Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m. Sufficient members were present to allow a quorum. Board members and the public were able to attend either in person or virtually via Zoom.

Meeting Overview

David Iseminger, Director, Employees and Retirees Benefits (ERB) Division, provided an overview of the agenda. David also provided an acknowledgement statement about

ongoing negotiations between Providence and Regence and potential service disruptions.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

Elyette Weinstein moved, and John Comerford seconded a motion to approve the July 11, 2024 meeting minutes. Minutes were approved as amended by unanimous vote.

Tom MacRobert moved, and Elyette Weinstein seconded a motion to approve the August 5, 2024 special meeting minutes. Minutes were approved as written by unanimous vote.

Elyette Weinstein moved, and Tom MacRobert seconded a motion to approve the January 30, 2025 retreat minutes. Minutes were approved as written by unanimous vote.

January Retreat Follow Up

David Iseminger, Director of the Employees and Retirees Benefits (ERB) Division gave a follow up presentation regarding a question brought up at the January retreat. The follow up included similarities and differences between the Uniform Medical Plan (UMP) Plus plans and other UMP plans.

Legislative Update

Cade Walker, Policy, Rules, and Compliance Section Manager in the Employees and Retirees Benefits (ERB) Division brought back the latest information about bills from the current legislative session. The presentation included bill analyses completed by the ERB Division, ERB lead high priority bill status, agency requested legislation, and current legislation.

Budget Reduction Options

David Iseminger, Director of the Employees and Retirees Benefits (ERB) Division and **Tanya Deuel**, ERB Finance Manager in the Finance Services and Health Care Purchasing Administration presented on the agency's ongoing budget reduction scenario work in order to help the Governor's Office and Legislature address the state budget deficit. The presentation included an overview of the revenue forecast, the spending freeze, reduction targets, and budget reduction instructions as well as SEBB Program funding information, HCA's budget reduction option submission topics, and Governor Ferguson's February 27 budget reduction proposal. The presentation also included an appendix that contained the Governor Directive 24-19, OFM direction to agencies on 2025-27 budget reduction proposals, Governor Ferguson's budget priorities for 2025-27, and agency-identified reduction scenarios for fiscal year 2025 and 2025-27 biennium.

Benefits 24/7 Update

Brett Mello, Chief Information Office in the Enterprise Technology Services (ETS) Division and **Jean Bui**, Deputy Director of the Employees and Retirees Benefits (ERB) Division gave an update on the Benefits 24/7 system. The update included an

introduction to the new Chief Information Officer, a recruitment update of key positions, and a 2025 stabilization update.

Open Enrollment Appeals Update

Troy Klicka, Office of Legal Affairs Section Manager in the Division of Legal Services (DLS) brought an overview of the SEBB Program appeals from the plan year 2025 open enrollment. The overview included an appeals overview, the appeals process for the SEBB Program, the process for the employer, and the process for the Office of Legal Affairs, as well as information regarding an initial order, a final order, appeals trends, and a snapshot of appeals.

Medicare Update

Laura Ryan, Retiree Benefits Manager in the Employees and Retirees Benefits (ERB) Division, **Molly Christie**, Fiscal Analyst in the Finance Services and Health Care Purchasing Administration, and **Luke Dearden**, Clinical Pharmacist in the Clinical Quality and Care Transformation (CQCT) Division came together to bring information regarding the PEBB Program's Medicare population. The presentation included information regarding the PEBB Program Medicare plan coordination of benefits (COB) savings bank, types of coordination plans, how the COB savings bank works, financial insights, and potential premium savings. The presentation also had information regarding Medicare Part D transition updates, and Medicare drug price negotiations.

Provider Prior Authorization Process Legislation

Heather Schultz, Associate Medical Director in the Clinical Quality and Care Transformation (CQCT) Division and Jenny Switzer, Senior Account Manager in the Employees and Retirees Benefits (ERB) Division presented on the provider prior authorization process legislation. The presentation included a prior authorization overview and goals, when a prior authorization applies, the benefits of a prior authorization, the oversight of prior authorizations, and information about state and federal legislative activity regarding prior authorizations.

General Public Comment

The following members of the public provided comments:

- **Fred Yancey**
- **Aruna Bhuta**
- **Robin**
- **Kent Questad**

Topics brought forth during public comments included concerns regarding step therapy, questions and concerns about prior authorization, and Providence and Regence network contract negotiation questions.

Their testimonies can be found in the audio recording for the March 13, 2025 PEBB Board meeting at:

<https://www.hca.wa.gov/about-hca/programs-and-initiatives/public-employees-benefits-board-pebb-program/meetings-and-materials#meeting-materials>

Next Meeting

April 10, 2025

Starting time 9:00 a.m.

Preview of April 10, 2025 PEB Board Meeting

David Iseminger, Director, Employees and Retirees Benefits (ERB) Division, provided an overview of potential agenda topics for the April 10, 2025 meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 12:52 p.m.