



Retiree Benefits

What You Need to Know

Applying For Retirement

- **Provide Superintendent, Principal and Director letter of intent to retire.**
- **Download application from the Tennessee Consolidated Retirement System (TCRS) at: <http://treasury.tn.gov/tcrs/>.**
- **Complete your portion of the application and bring or mail to Human Resources to complete their portion. Please note that your insurance benefits are not through the state so do not complete the TCRS continuation of medical insurance application.**
- **For questions regarding your pension, you may call or make an appointment with TCRS at 1-800-770-8277.**

Retiree HCDE Benefits

- **COBRA**
 - **Health Plan**
 - **Dental Reimbursement**
 - **EyeMed Vision Plan**
- **Postretirement Health Plan (if eligible)**
- **Life Conversion (Basic Life and/or Supplemental Life)**

COBRA

- **All terminating employees (including employees terminating employment due to retirement) must be notified of their right to continue coverage through COBRA.**
- **COBRA is a federal law allowing terminating employees to continue certain insurance plans for 18 months.**
- **Our Medical, Dental, and Vision plans can be continued through COBRA.**

PostRetirement Health Plan

- In addition to COBRA, the HCDE offers our eligible retirees the option to continue Health Insurance through our Postretirement Health Plan.
- This plan is identical to our plan for Active employees and COBRA participants, but the premium amounts are less than the COBRA premiums.

COBRA vs. Postretirement Health Plan

- **If you are eligible for the Postretirement Health Plan, you will want to elect the Postretirement Health Plan, but may want to choose COBRA for Dental or Vision.**
- **If you are not eligible for the Postretirement Health Plan, a Medicare supplement may be a better option for you than COBRA for Health Insurance, but you may want to choose COBRA for Dental or Vision.**

To Qualify Under Hamilton County Department of Education's Postretirement Health Plan

- Must be 55 years or older and have the required years of service with Hamilton County Department of Education.
- If under age 55 must have a total of 30 years of service with TCRS (and the required number of years with Hamilton County Department of Education).
- Must be under age 65.
- Must not be entitled to Medicare regardless of age (This includes dependents).

What If I'm Already Age 65 or Older?

- You will still receive an election form notifying you of your rights to continue health, dental, vision, or FSA for a maximum period of 18 months under COBRA.
- Most retirees at age 65 sign up for Medicare and purchase a supplement for Parts A, B and D of Medicare.
- Benefits Administration in Nashville offers a supplement to Part A and Part B of Medicare. Contact them at 1-800-253-9981 to inquire about the Medicare supplement.

Are Dependents Eligible Under the Postretirement Health Plan?

- Yes, as long as you were covering the dependents (**spouse/children**) prior to retirement.
- The dependents must be under age 65 (**for a spouse**) or under age 26 (**for a child**) and not entitled to Medicare.
- Dependents cannot be added after you retire.

How Long May Benefits Be Continued?

- **Postretirement Health Plan** (up to age 65 or Medicare entitlement , whichever occurs first)
- **Dental** (maximum of 18 months under COBRA)
- **EyeMed** (maximum of 18 months under COBRA)

- **Medical Flexible Spending Account**
(may be continued under COBRA; however, there is no benefit in continuing this type of account since the money you pay is not pre-taxed. You may not continue account if you had used all monies in the account at time of retirement)

Life Insurance Conversion

- Group life insurance ends when you retire.
- Any Basic Life and any Supplemental Life insurance you currently have may be converted to an individual policy.
- Conversion must be done within 31 days of when your life insurance ends with HCDE.
- Please contact Lincoln Financial Group at 1-800-423-2765 if you are interested in converting your life insurance. They will need to know the amount of life insurance you currently have and the date it will end (example 8/31 or 6/30).

When Do HCDE Retiree Benefits Begin?

- Most school based employees that finish out the school year will be covered as an Active Employee until August 31st.
- Retiree benefits start September 1st. (You will receive a new ID card from the insurance carrier).
- Some exceptions are Principals, Assistant Principals, Central Office employees, and few others whose active coverage ends June 30th. Their retiree benefits will start July 1st.

How Do I Enroll?

- **Human Resources Department notifies the Benefits Department when an employee is retiring and confirms the years of service the employee accumulated with HCDE.**
- **An election packet is mailed to the employee including:**
 - **Postretirement Health Plan information for eligible employees**
 - **COBRA election notice for Health, Dental, and Eyemed if you are enrolled in these plans**
 - **Life insurance conversion information**
- **Employee/dependents 65 years or older receive only the COBRA notice and COBRA application.**
- **The Consolidated Omnibus Budget & Reconciliation Act (COBRA) notice is Federally mandated and by law it must be mailed to the plan participants.**

Enrollment (continued)

- **Completed, signed and dated application will be required to set up your benefits.**
- **If you don't enroll when first eligible, you will not have an opportunity at a later date.**
- **If you enroll and later decide to drop the plan, you won't be able to re-enroll.**

Retiree Billing Statements

- Retirees are billed quarterly for the benefits.
- Premiums are due the first of the month and you have a 30 day grace period to pay.
- You may divide the quarterly bill into 3 payments and pay monthly as long as you pay by the 15th of each month.
- Non-payment will cause your coverage to lapse and benefits will not be reinstated.
- Please notify the Benefits Department if you have an address change so you will continue to receive your statements on time. Call the Benefits Department at (423) 209-8566.
- The statements will list your six digit employee ID number. Please include the ID number with your payment to ensure the money is credited to the right account.

Retiree Billing Statements (continued)

- Please make checks payable to HCDE and list your six digit employee ID number on the check.**
- Mail to: Hamilton County Dept. of Education
Benefits Department
3074 Hickory Valley Rd.
Chattanooga, TN 37421**
- Phone: (423) 209-8566**
- HCDE is not able to draft the insurance premium from your account but you may arrange to have your bank remit the payment to HCDE directly. Make sure the bank includes your six digit ID number on the check.**

What Dental Options Are Available After My Hamilton County Dental Reimbursement Plan Ends?

- ✓ **Benefits Administration in Nashville offers two dental plan options to retirees (Assurant and Delta Dental). You may call 1-800-253-9981 to inquire about the available plans.**
- ✓ **You may contact the plans directly to find which dentists participate by calling Assurant at 1-800-443-2995 or online at www.assurantemployeebenefits.com/TNRetirees or Delta Dental at 1-800-223-3104 or online at <http://tnretirees.deltadentaltn.com/>.**
- ✓ **You may need to apply within 31 days from the date your COBRA dental reimbursement plan ends with Hamilton County Department of Education.**

How To Continue Washington National, Trustmark, or Liberty National Individual Policies

- The last deduction that will be taken for an individual policy will be from your payout check.
- You may continue your individual policy by paying the premiums directly to Washington National (formerly Consec), Trustmark, or Liberty National.
- Washington National, Trustmark, or Liberty National will mail you a letter once they stop receiving your premiums from HCDE. However, if you are interested in keeping the policy in force, it may be best if you call them directly.

Washington National, Trustmark, and Liberty National (continued)

- The Customer Service number for Washington National (formerly Conseco) is: 1-800-541-2254.
- The Customer Service number for Trustmark is: 1-800-918-8877.
- If you have questions or problems regarding your individual policy please call Mr. Shane McGuffin at 1-800-628-6428 extension 7206.
- If you have questions about a Liberty National policy, call Wanda Sear at 443-2480.



Congratulations