

§286-M. Retired County and Municipal Law Enforcement Officers and Municipal Firefighters Health Insurance Program

1. Program established. The Retired County and Municipal Law Enforcement Officers and Municipal Firefighters Health Insurance Program is established to provide health insurance coverage to retired county and municipal law enforcement officers and retired municipal firefighters.

[PL 2005, c. 636, Pt. A, §3 (NEW).]

2. Definitions. As used in this subchapter, the following terms have the following meanings.

A. "County or municipal law enforcement officer" means a person who by virtue of employment by a county or municipal government in the State is vested by law with the power to make arrests for crimes or serve criminal process, whether that power extends to all crimes or is limited to specific crimes. "County or municipal law enforcement officer" does not include a state or federal law enforcement officer, an attorney prosecuting for a county or municipal government or a reserve officer. [PL 2005, c. 636, Pt. A, §3 (NEW).]

B. "Dependent" means a spouse, an unmarried child under 19 years of age, a child who is a student under 23 years of age and financially dependent upon the enrollee, a child of any age who is disabled and dependent upon the enrollee or a domestic partner. [PL 2021, c. 567, §6 (AMD).]

C. "Division" means the Department of Administrative and Financial Services, Office of Employee Health and Wellness. [PL 2021, c. 312, §6 (AMD).]

D. "Enrollee" means a county or municipal law enforcement officer or municipal firefighter who has enrolled in the program. [PL 2005, c. 636, Pt. A, §3 (NEW).]

E. "Fund" means the Firefighters and Law Enforcement Officers Health Insurance Program Fund established in subsection 7. [PL 2005, c. 636, Pt. A, §3 (NEW).]

F. "Group health plan" or "group health insurance plan" means any employer-sponsored group health insurance plan, whether self-insured or fully insured, that provides coverage to eligible employees, retirees and their dependents. [PL 2005, c. 636, Pt. A, §3 (NEW).]

G. "Majority multiple-employer welfare arrangement" means the multiple-employer welfare arrangement, as defined in Title 24-A, section 6601, subsection 5, in which the majority of state municipal government employees are enrolled as of the effective date of this section. [PL 2005, c. 636, Pt. A, §3 (NEW).]

H. "Municipal firefighter" means a person employed by a municipal fire department with the primary responsibility of aiding in the extinguishment of fires and includes a member of emergency medical services line personnel but does not include a member of a volunteer firefighter association. For the purposes of this paragraph, "emergency medical services line personnel" means persons who are career employees employed full-time by a public sector agency or employer and whose primary responsibility is to provide emergency medical services. [PL 2005, c. 636, Pt. A, §3 (NEW).]

I. "Program" means the Retired County and Municipal Law Enforcement Officers and Municipal Firefighters Health Insurance Program established in this section. [PL 2005, c. 636, Pt. A, §3 (NEW).]

[PL 2021, c. 567, §6 (AMD).]

3. Eligibility for program coverage. A person must make contributions pursuant to subsection 5, paragraph D and subsection 8 in order to be eligible for coverage under the program. In addition, a person must satisfy the eligibility criteria specified in this subsection as follows:

A. The person must:

(1) Be at least 50 years of age;

- (2) Be a retired county or municipal law enforcement officer or a retired municipal firefighter;
- (3) Have, while actively employed as a county or municipal law enforcement officer or municipal firefighter, participated in the person's employer's health insurance plan or other fully-insured health insurance plan; and

(4) Receive or be eligible to receive:

(a) If retired from at least 25 years of service in a position as a county or municipal law enforcement officer or a municipal firefighter, a retirement benefit from the Maine Public Employees Retirement System or a defined contribution retirement plan other than the United States Social Security Act; or

(b) If retired from less than 25 years of service in a position as a county or municipal law enforcement officer or a municipal firefighter, a retirement benefit from the Maine Public Employees Retirement System or a defined contribution retirement plan other than the United States Social Security Act, as long as the benefit provided is at least 50% of average final compensation, with no reduction for early retirement and with or without a cost-of-living adjustment; or [PL 2005, c. 636, Pt. A, §3 (NEW); PL 2007, c. 58, §3 (REV).]

B. The person must be a dependent of a person meeting the criteria of paragraph A. [PL 2005, c. 636, Pt. A, §3 (NEW).]
[PL 2021, c. 19, §1 (AMD).]

4. Program administration. The program is administered by the division. The division shall:

A. Enter into administrative arrangements with fully insured health insurance product vendors to implement the purposes of this section; [PL 2005, c. 636, Pt. A, §3 (NEW).]

B. Remit authorized premium subsidy payments for enrolled eligible persons and enrolled dependents to any fully insured group health insurance plans on a periodic basis, as established by agreements with the providers of those plans. The dollar value of the subsidy payment may vary with the premium cost of the benefit plan in which the enrollee participates; and [PL 2005, c. 636, Pt. A, §3 (NEW).]

C. Adopt rules to implement the purposes of this section, including the determination of the program subsidy for enrollees pursuant to subsection 6. Rules adopted under this subsection are routine technical rules as defined in chapter 375, subchapter 2-A. [PL 2005, c. 636, Pt. A, §3 (NEW).]

[PL 2005, c. 636, Pt. A, §3 (NEW).]

5. Enrollment. A county or municipal law enforcement officer, a municipal firefighter or a person retired from such a position is eligible to enroll in the program. An eligible person who fails to enroll in the program pursuant to this subsection is not otherwise eligible to enroll in the program and is not eligible for the premium subsidy provided pursuant to this section for enrollment in any other health plan. A county or municipality that employs a county or municipal law enforcement officer or municipal firefighter shall notify such an employee of the program in writing no later than 60 days following the effective date of hire of that employee. Such an employee shall choose in writing whether to enroll in the program. A copy of the form on which an employee chooses to enroll in the program or to not enroll in the program must be retained by the county or municipality. Notwithstanding the date of enrollment, insurance coverage is not effective until the date of retirement or July 1, 2007, whichever occurs later. Eligible persons may enroll themselves, their spouses and their dependents in the program during the following time periods:

A. When the effective date of hire of the eligible person is on or before November 1, 2006, the eligible person must enroll in the program before January 1, 2007, subject to the enrollment and eligibility requirements of the applicable group health plan; [PL 2005, c. 636, Pt. A, §3 (NEW).]

B. When the effective date of hire of the eligible person is after November 1, 2006 and before October 1, 2019, the eligible person must enroll in the program no later than 60 days following the effective date of hire, subject to the enrollment and eligibility requirements of the applicable group health plan; [PL 2019, c. 446, §2 (AMD).]

C. Notwithstanding paragraphs A and B, when the eligible person, the eligible person's spouse or the eligible person's dependent experiences an involuntary loss of other health insurance coverage carried as of January 1, 2007 or 60 days following the date of the eligible person's hire, whichever is later, the eligible person may elect to enroll in the program no later than 60 days after the effective date of the loss of that coverage, subject to the enrollment and eligibility requirements of the applicable group health plan. Involuntary loss of coverage does not include a loss of coverage arising as a result of nonpayment of premiums; or [PL 2019, c. 446, §2 (AMD).]

D. When the effective date of hire of the eligible person is on or after October 1, 2019, the eligible person must enroll in the program no later than 5 years following the effective date of hire. If the eligible person enrolls in the program no later than 60 days following the effective date of hire, the eligible person contributes to the fund at the rate specified in subsection 8, paragraph A. If the eligible person enrolls in the program more than 60 days following the effective date of hire, the eligible person shall contribute to the fund 2% of the eligible person's gross wages since the eligible person's effective date of hire to that person's date of enrollment in the program and shall contribute to the fund at the rate specified in subsection 8, paragraph A after the eligible person's date of enrollment. [PL 2021, c. 19, §2 (AMD).]

[PL 2021, c. 19, §2 (AMD).]

6. Premiums; subsidy. Premiums for the program and the premium subsidy are subject to the provisions of this subsection. Premium subsidies are not provided for supplemental health insurance coverage.

A. An enrollee participating in the majority multiple-employer welfare arrangement is responsible for the premium payment associated with the cost of the majority multiple-employer welfare arrangement benefit option in which the enrollee is participating, to the extent such premium obligations exist following the application of any premium subsidy authorized by law. An enrollee who fails to remit the premium payments as established and required by the majority multiple-employer welfare arrangement must be disenrolled from the program. Beginning July 1, 2007, the State shall provide a premium subsidy for enrollees in the form of a direct payment to the majority multiple-employer welfare arrangement for each enrollee. Prior to July 1, 2021, the level of the subsidy must equal 45% of the individual premium cost for the enrollee and varies among enrollees depending upon the terms of the majority multiple-employer welfare arrangement coverage plan in which each enrollee is participating. Beginning July 1, 2021, the level of the subsidy must equal 55% of the individual premium cost for the enrollee and varies among enrollees depending upon the terms of the majority multiple-employer welfare arrangement coverage plan in which each enrollee is participating. Enrollees are responsible for the balance of the applicable individual premium, as well as the total cost of the premium for any applicable dependent coverage, and shall make payments directly to the majority multiple-employer welfare arrangement. [PL 2019, c. 446, §2 (AMD).]

B. Enrollees retiring from counties or municipalities that do not participate in the majority multiple-employer welfare arrangement but who are eligible and elect to participate in that county's or municipality's fully insured health benefits plan are responsible for the premium payment associated with the cost of that plan, to the extent such premium obligations exist following the application of any premium subsidy authorized by law. An enrollee who fails to remit the premium payments as established and required by the fully insured plan must be disenrolled from the program. Beginning July 1, 2007, the State shall provide a premium subsidy for enrollees participating in fully insured health benefits plans pursuant to this subsection. Prior to July 1, 2021,

this subsidy must be made in the form of a direct payment to the enrollee's health benefits plan and must equal 45% of the individual premium cost for the enrollee or a dollar amount equivalent to the highest premium subsidy provided in accordance with paragraph A, whichever is less. Beginning July 1, 2021, this subsidy must be made in the form of a direct payment to the enrollee's health benefits plan and must equal 55% of the individual premium cost for the enrollee or a dollar amount equivalent to the highest premium subsidy provided in accordance with paragraph A, whichever is less. A retiree electing to enroll a spouse or a dependent in the program is responsible for payment of 100% of such coverage in addition to that portion of the retiree's individual premium cost not contributed by the State. [PL 2019, c. 446, §2 (AMD).]

C. Enrollees retiring from counties or municipalities that do not participate in the majority multiple-employer welfare arrangement and do not provide health insurance coverage for retirees may enroll in the group health plan available to state employees and other eligible persons under section 285 and are responsible for the premium payment associated with the cost of that plan, to the extent such premium obligations exist following the application of any premium subsidy authorized by law. An enrollee who fails to remit the premium payments as established and required by the group health plan available to state employees and other eligible persons must be disenrolled from the program. The State shall provide a premium subsidy for enrollees participating in the group health plan available to state employees and other eligible persons pursuant to this paragraph. Prior to July 1, 2021, this subsidy must be made in the form of a direct payment to the group health plan available to state employees and other eligible persons and must equal 45% of the individual premium cost for the enrollee or a dollar amount equivalent to the highest premium subsidy provided in accordance with paragraph A, whichever is less. Beginning July 1, 2021, this subsidy must be made in the form of a direct payment to the group health plan available to state employees and other eligible persons and must equal 55% of the individual premium cost for the enrollee or a dollar amount equivalent to the highest premium subsidy provided in accordance with paragraph A, whichever is less. A retiree electing to enroll a spouse or a dependent in the program is responsible for payment of 100% of such coverage in addition to that portion of the retiree's individual premium cost not contributed by the State. [PL 2019, c. 446, §2 (NEW).]

D. An enrollee may participate in the group health insurance plan in which the enrollee's spouse participates if that plan is offered in this State or in another group health insurance plan that is offered in this State. An enrollee is responsible for the premium payment associated with the cost of the group health insurance plan in which the enrollee is participating. An enrollee who fails to remit the premium payments as established and required by the group health insurance plan in which the enrollee is participating must be disenrolled from the program. The State shall provide a premium subsidy for each enrollee in the form of a direct payment to the enrollee. Prior to July 1, 2021, the level of the premium subsidy must equal 45% of the individual premium cost for the enrollee or a dollar amount equivalent to the highest premium subsidy provided in accordance with paragraph A, whichever is less. Beginning July 1, 2021, the level of the premium subsidy must equal 55% of the individual premium cost for the enrollee or a dollar amount equivalent to the highest premium subsidy provided in accordance with paragraph A, whichever is less. Enrollees are responsible for the balance of the applicable individual premium, as well as the total cost of the premium for any applicable dependent coverage, and shall make payments directly to the group health insurance plan in which the enrollee is participating. [PL 2021, c. 19, §3 (AMD).]

[PL 2021, c. 19, §3 (AMD).]

7. Fund established. The Firefighters and Law Enforcement Officers Health Insurance Program Fund is established as a nonlapsing, dedicated account administered by the division. Money appropriated by law for the purpose of paying premium subsidies must be deposited in the fund. Premium dividends accruing to the State, return of premiums resulting from risk reduction programs, active employee contributions pursuant to subsection 8 and any other receipts must be deposited into

the fund to be used for the purposes of the program. All monies not necessary to fund the normal costs and administrative costs of the program must be transferred to the trust fund established in subsection 7-A at the end of each fiscal year. The fund is a pooled account. Individual law enforcement officers and firefighters do not have a right to money deposited in the fund except to the extent premium subsidies are available to program enrollees.

[PL 2019, c. 280, §1 (AMD).]

7-A. Trust fund. A separate trust fund is established for the purpose of accumulating resources to assist in retiring the unfunded liability of the program. All monies transferred pursuant to subsection 7 at the end of each fiscal year must be deposited in the trust fund. The Treasurer of State shall invest the monies in the trust fund in accordance with section 138.

[PL 2019, c. 280, §2 (NEW).]

8. Employee contributions to the fund. The contributions of enrollees to the fund are governed by this subsection.

A. Beginning January 1, 2007, each enrollee who participates as an active employee in a retirement plan shall contribute 1.5% of that enrollee's gross wages to the fund. [PL 2005, c. 636, Pt. A, §3 (NEW).]

B. The employer of an enrollee required to contribute to the fund shall remit on a monthly basis that enrollee's contribution to the fund. [PL 2005, c. 636, Pt. A, §3 (NEW).]

C. An enrollee who is not receiving wages from a county or municipal employer on account of an absence from work due to an injury compensable under the Maine Workers' Compensation Act of 1992, a disability for which the enrollee is receiving a disability retirement benefit from the Maine Public Employees Retirement System or a leave of absence must contribute to the fund for the period of time of the absence from work based on the enrollee's gross wages immediately before the absence from work in order for the enrollee to be eligible for coverage under the program. [PL 2019, c. 446, §3 (NEW).]

D. An enrollee who retires and is subsequently hired as a county or municipal law enforcement officer or municipal firefighter must contribute to the fund while employed as a county or municipal law enforcement officer or municipal firefighter in order for the enrollee to be eligible for coverage under the program. [PL 2019, c. 446, §3 (NEW).]

E. An enrollee who is not receiving wages from a county or municipal employer because the enrollee is a member of the United States Armed Forces or state military forces on active duty and deployed is not required to contribute to the fund while deployed. [PL 2019, c. 446, §3 (NEW).]
[PL 2019, c. 446, §3 (AMD).]

9. Retirees without 5 years of contributions to fund.

[PL 2019, c. 446, §4 (RP).]

10. Coverage under the program. The benefits, copayments and deductibles under the program are determined by the fully insured health benefits plan in which the retired enrollee participates. Pursuant to the rules of the applicable plan, a retired enrollee is required to participate in the same health insurance plan as the active employees of the unit of government from which the enrolled person has retired. Participation in any qualified health insurance plan is subject to the rules of that plan.

[PL 2005, c. 636, Pt. A, §3 (NEW).]

11. Volunteer and call firefighters and reserve law enforcement officers. A member of a volunteer or call firefighters' association in this State, as well as a person serving as a county or municipal law enforcement officer on a reserve basis, is eligible to participate in the program of health benefits coverage established pursuant to the eligibility criteria and other provisions set forth in Title 24-A, chapter 87 if that person meets the eligibility requirements under that chapter.

[PL 2005, c. 636, Pt. A, §3 (NEW).]

12. Report. The division shall submit a report to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over insurance and financial services matters in the Second Regular Session of the 124th Legislature, and biennially thereafter, on the status of the program, program participation and the financing of the program, including the status of the fund, expenditures from the fund, current and projected premium costs to the program and to program enrollees and a projection of funding needs for the next 5 years. The report must provide options, based on projections of future need, for changing the method of funding any state-paid premium subsidy, if such a subsidy is authorized by law, and employee contributions.

[PL 2005, c. 636, Pt. A, §3 (NEW).]

SECTION HISTORY

PL 2005, c. 636, §A3 (NEW). PL 2007, c. 58, §3 (REV). PL 2019, c. 280, §§1, 2 (AMD). PL 2019, c. 446, §§1-4 (AMD). PL 2021, c. 19, §§1-3 (AMD). PL 2021, c. 312, §6 (AMD). PL 2021, c. 567, §6 (AMD).

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