



American Postal Workers Union, AFL-CIO

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Mark Dimondstein,
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November 20, 2024

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Rob Shriver, Acting Director
Office of Personnel Management
1900 E St NW
Washington, DC 20415

Re: Extending Open Season for Postal Employees to December 16th

Mr. Shriver,

The American Postal Workers Union, AFL-CIO represents thousands of postal employees and annuitants who are participating in the new Postal Employee Health Benefits Program.

As you know, Open Season started Monday, November 11th. As you also know, the Office of Personnel Management has experienced numerous technical issues with its online Open Season resources for postal employees. Some of these issues took a week to be partially corrected, while others are still not fixed. The initial issues included incorrect premium rates for at least one postal plan, incomplete carrier and plan option names in the Plan Comparison tool, and problems with the provider search tool. The most pressing problem currently is with Login.gov and the actual enrollment process which does not link employees' postal and OPM identities and accounts. As a result, employees are unable to enroll in any PSHBP plan electronically. The work-around the Postal Service has devised of faxing forms to the Postal Service's HR department is itself going to add uncertainty and days to the enrollment process which negatively impacts the PSHB carriers being able to complete their work of issuing membership cards and enrolling individuals in their plans before January 1st. It is unclear when or if these problems will be corrected.

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We all understand the importance of this Open Season as the Postal Service Health Benefits Program is launched. These serious problems with the enrollment process are preventing postal employees and annuitants from enrolling in PSHB plans. Giving employees more time to effectuate their enrollments is essential. In comparison, OPM extended Open Season in 2006 because of delays in publishing plan brochures, and again as recent as 2018 in anticipation of a government shut down that did not ultimately occur. Certainly, in an Open Season as consequential as this one and with the technical problems OPM is experiencing, extending Open Season for PSHBP participants is warranted.

We therefore strongly urge OPM to extend Open Season for PSHBP participants by one week from Monday, December 9th to Monday, December 16th.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Mark Dimondstein".

Mark Dimondstein
President

cc: Laurie Bodenheimer, Associate Director, Healthcare and Insurance
Edward DeHarde, Deputy Associate Director, Healthcare and Insurance
Sylvia Pulley, Deputy Associate Director, Healthcare and Insurance