

THE

# PIPEWRENCH

Your Communication Pipeline

## MEMBER ENROLLMENT REMINDER – DECEMBER 31, 2020

Dear Members,

We are in the process of completing our member enrolment for 2020. Every 3 – 5 years, our Administrator, Reliable Administrative Services Inc. conducts a reenrollment to ensure that we have your correct information on file. This includes your correct mailing address, phone number and email, your correct eligible dependents; spouses and children and your up to date beneficiary information. The intent of the exercise is not to remove your dependents from your benefits but to ensure we have your current and eligible dependents, beneficiary (ies), mailing addresses etc. recorded properly on the plan.

### Why is this information important to us?

Under any employer paid benefit plan in Canada the *Income Tax Act* sets out rules governing who is eligible as a dependent. The government is becoming more rigorous in the enforcement of eligibility rules under group benefit plans. As a result, employers must show that they are compliant with all eligibility rules. If eligibility rules are not followed, employees may be required to pay tax for benefit coverage under the plan.

Under CRA, the Local 67 Group Benefit plan is considered a Private Health Services Plan.

Per the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA), the only dependents that a Private Health Services Plan can cover are those that, in the absence of a Private Health Services Plan, would qualify as dependents for the medical tax credit. This would include the taxpayer, their spouse and any member of the household to which the taxpayer is related by blood, marriage or adoption. If a dependent would not qualify for purposes of the medical expense tax credit, they would also not qualify as a dependent under a Private Health Services Plan (Section 20.01, IT339R2).

If you have incorrectly included dependents that do not meet the definition of dependents as defined under section 118.2 (Medical expense credit), the employer is, in effect, providing tax free remuneration to those individuals.

Failure for the UA Local 67 Benefit Plan to comply with the requirements of a Private Health Services Plan renders the plan revocable and could result in the CRA reclassifying the plan as an employee paid benefit plan. Should this occur, every dollar paid out of the plan from the date the requirements were not met become taxable in the recipient's hands as income in the years they received the payments, as described in *IT 502*.

***Again, it is not our intent to remove your eligible Spouse and/or eligible dependent children from the benefit plan, rather we want to reconfirm their status.***

For those members who have not returned their enrolment form and applicable documentation, please return the form and one of the following pieces of documentation if applicable:

- a notarized Affidavit confirming you are in a common law relationship or;
- a copy of the front page of your T1 General reflecting that your common law spouse is being represented as your spouse or;
- A copy of your Marriage certificate.

For children,

- a copy of your most recent Child Tax Credit statement or;
- a copy of the Court Order, or executed Settlement Agreement establishing legal custody or joint custody for children who are adopted, or residing in a home where the parents are separated.

***If you have questions, please contact Reliable Administrative Services Inc. at 905-387-5861 or Toll Free at 1-855-387-5861.***

## WELFARE RELIEF GRANT – CLOSES DECEMBER 31, 2020

As you recall, the Board of Trustees approved seven (7) periods of the Welfare Relief Grant, aligned with the Federal Government's CERB benefit. The Welfare Relief Grant will also align itself to the Government's application closing date of December 2, 2020. Since the Welfare Relief Grant application is dependent on the information you receive from CERB, we are extending the application notice period to December 31, 2020. Please note that after December 31, 2020 applications for the Welfare Relief Grant will no longer be accepted.

Applications can be found on our website [www.reliableadmin.com](http://www.reliableadmin.com) or contact Reliable Administrative Services Inc. at 905-387-5861 or Toll Free at 1-855-387-5861.

## BENEFIT ENHANCEMENTS – EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1, 2021

### MASSAGE THERAPY

Effective January 1, 2021, you will no longer be required to submit a Doctor's referral along with your Massage Therapy claim. Massage Therapy must be performed by a Registered Massage Therapist.

The Benefit for Massage Therapy remains at \$400 of the annual combined paramedical Maximum.

### SHORT TERM DISABILITY

Beginning January 1, 2021, the Short Term Disability Benefit will be increased from \$450 per week to the Employment Insurance Equivalent. Currently, the Employment Insurance benefit is \$573 which is taxable.

Please ensure you advise RASI if you become ill and cannot work or if you have applied or are in receipt of Employment Insurance Sick benefits. STD claims are time sensitive!

### HOSPITAL CASH

This benefit provides a \$50 per day maximum for each day the member or insured family member is in the hospital for discretionary spending. This daily maximum amount, while in the hospital can be used for meeting additional expenses that are not covered by our group benefit plan such as a television in your room, parking, cafeteria costs or babysitting expenses for your family. The choice is yours.

Receipts for these discretionary charges must be accompanied by your hospital stay invoice reflecting the period of time that you or your eligible family member was in the hospital and must be submitted with a completed Green Shield Claim Form. Further information will be provided on or after January 1, 2021.

## ADDITIONAL REMINDERS

### HEALTH CARE SPENDING ACCOUNT

The Health Care Spending Account (HCSA) was increased from \$500 to \$750 per calendar year on January 1, 2020. Members must be in good standing in order for this benefit to be made available.

*Each year GSC will be sending out HCSA statements at the end of November directly to members. This will act as a reminder to you regarding your HCSA balance available. The HCSA balance must be used before January 31<sup>st</sup> of the following year for expenses incurred up to and including December 31<sup>st</sup> of the previous year. **There is NO rollover of HCSA dollars.***

### OUT OF COUNTRY EMERGENCY TRAVEL

We understand that many of our members are trying to plan travel for early 2021. As a reminder, Berkley Canada/The Assistance Company will be assessing claims filed for COVID-19 in the following manner.

**The global infection situation has become a known and foreseeable event for travelers throughout the world. The purpose of Emergency Travel Medical Insurance, as indicated in its insurance Policy, is to deal with unforeseen illness. COVID-19 Virus/Coronavirus has been a "foreseeable" illness for some time and the Government of Canada has officially recommended that travelers avoid all non-essential travel outside of Canada.**

**There are also broad restrictions on individuals exposed to COVID-19 and those who traveled to other countries. If an insured person becomes ill with COVID-19/Coronavirus while travelling and wishes to submit a claim, Berkley/The Assistance Company will review the claim, along with any claims for insurance coverage or benefits directly or indirectly related to COVID-19/Coronavirus, based on the terms and conditions of the policy as well as all the circumstances attendant to the claim**

**General Travel information for Canadians:** <https://travel.gc.ca/travelling/advisories>. If Canada assigns a country the warning

'Avoid all travel' or 'avoid non-essential travel', then Canada does not recommended travel to that country.