

Dear Members,

We hope this letter finds you well. Included you will find the 2023 Medicare reimbursement letter and return envelope, as well as 2024 Fire Pension office updates.

**Information included:**

- 2023 Medicare Part B reimbursement letter & return envelope (rose paper.) Please DO NOT send in the (rose paper) Medicare letter, it is for your reference only. We ONLY need a copy of your 2023 Social Security statement showing what you paid for Medicare part B premiums in 2023. We cannot reimburse you for Medicare part B premiums without documentation from Social Security.

**Updates:**

**Union Contract**

- Local 27 has settled their contract with the City and as soon as we receive the salary schedules from the City, we will calculate the pay increases. The increases were:
  - 2022 4.5%
  - 2023 5%
  - 2024 4%
- Local 2898 is still in negotiations.

**Pension Physician**

- The Pension Board has contracted Dr. Khaled Elghonemy to review health-related questions and to verify the medical necessity of services under the statues which established our pension and medical benefits.
- You will continue with Medicare as your primary medical coverage and Premera Blue Cross as your secondary coverage.
- When selecting a physician make sure that they accept Medicare.

**Prescription Drugs**

- The prescription Drug coverage you have is equal to or better than what Medicare offers. We are required to notify you of this to qualify for the retiree drug subsidy program.

## Premera Blue Cross Medical Coverage

- When you contact Premera Blue Cross if they ask for your address, please use our office address: 2200 6<sup>th</sup> Ave, Suite 820, Seattle, WA 98121. The home address Premera Blue Cross has listed for you is our office address; this assures that any paperwork they send out comes directly to our office and we can take care of it for you.
- When you receive bills at home for medical services from your provider and are concerned if they are being processed properly, please do the following:
  - Contact your provider and verify they have billed Medicare as your primary insurance and billed Premera Blue Cross as your secondary insurance using your ID number on your Premera Blue Cross card (***DO NOT USE YOUR SS#, Premera Blue Cross has your Medicare ID number.***)
- If you have other coverage, the provider should bill the other coverage (including Medicare) as primary and Premera Blue Cross as secondary.
- If you have other coverage, Premera Blue Cross will not be able to process the bill until the bill has first been processed by the other insurance coverage and Premera Blue Cross receives the Explanation of Benefits. If they have billed Premera Blue Cross, contact Premera Blue Cross at the number listed on the back of your Premera Blue Cross card (***1-800-722-1471***) to find out the disposition of the bill.
- If Premera Blue Cross has no record of a bill, please mail the bill to Premera Blue Cross with your **BX ID number** to the address listed on the back of your Premera Blue Cross Card. The address is ***Premera Blue Cross, PO Box 91059, Seattle, WA 98111-9159***. This will expedite the processing of your medical bills. If you have any questions or problems after first speaking to Premera Blue Cross, please call our office.
- If your provider informs you that your bill has ***been denied***, contact Premera Blue Cross to determine if the bill is in process for payment. **We DO NOT deny** payment for approved medical care.

## Medicare/ Additional Insurance

- If you have any other medical coverage, including Medicare, the following process takes place:
  - You see the provider; they bill your primary insurance coverage (this includes Medicare.)
  - Your primary insurance coverage (this includes Medicare) processes the claim and pays their portion and then sends it to your secondary insurance Premera Blue Cross. Premera Blue Cross will then pay the claim.

### **Medical Equipment & Devices**

- When a physician prescribes an item such as a wheelchair, hospital bed, lift, etc., these items need to be approved **prior** to purchase. Our office has various items readily available so please check with us. Medicare also pays for some of these items so make sure the provider bills Medicare as your primary. We also have vendors who provide discounts for such items and will deliver to the greater Seattle area. Failure to receive prior approval may result in the item not being paid for by the Board. The Board has given our office authorization to approve certain items so please contact us so there won't be any delay for needed medical items.

### **Seattle Fire Pension Board Election**

- Seattle Firefighter's active and retired will be electing one Firefighter Representative to the Seattle Firefighter's Pension Board. The position is presently held by Steven Brown who will be running for reelection. Nominations must be in writing with the consent of the nominee and must be filed with the Pension Board Secretary at 2200 6<sup>th</sup> Ave, Suite 820, Seattle, WA 98121-1822 prior to 2/9/2024.
- As a reminder, it is important to have a yearly physical to detect any health problems during the early stages. The Board encourages all members to have an annual physical.
- The Board has appointed Alaina Gill as the Executive Secretary effective 1/1/2024 replacing Steve Brown. She has worked in the office for several years and will be an asset to the office and our members. Steve will continue to be in the office until April 1, 2024.

The Board and our office encourage you to contact us if you have questions, concerns, or suggestions. Frequently, you as the member have new ideas to make the system more responsive and efficient. Please let us know.

We can be reached by phone at **206-625-4355**, by email at **SeattleFirePension@seattle.gov** or looking at our website for updates at **www.seattlefirepension.org**.

Sincerely,

***Your Seattle Fire Pension Staff***