

Retired State employee health insurance language

Sec. ____ 3 V.S.A. § 479 is amended to read:

§ 479. GROUP INSURANCE

(a)(1) As provided under section 631 of this title, a member who is insured by the respective group insurance plans immediately preceding the member's effective date of retirement shall be entitled to continuation of group insurance as follows:

~~(1)~~(A)(i) coverage in the group medical benefit plan provided by the State of Vermont for active State employees; or

~~(B)~~(ii) for a Group F and Group G plan member first included in the membership of the system on or after July 1, 2008, coverage in the group medical benefit plan offered by the State of Vermont for active State employees and pursuant to the following, provided:

~~(i)~~(I) a member who has completed five years and less than 10 years of creditable service at the member's retirement shall pay the full cost of the premium;

~~(ii)~~(II) a member who has completed 10 years and less than 15 years of creditable service at the member's retirement shall pay 60 percent of the cost of the premium;

~~(iii)~~(III) a member who has completed 15 years and less than 20 years of creditable service at his or her retirement shall pay 40 percent of the cost of the premium;

~~(iv)~~(IV) a member who has completed 20 years or more of creditable service at his or her retirement shall pay 20 percent of the cost of the premium; and

~~(2)~~(B) members who have completed 20 years of creditable service at their effective date of retirement shall be entitled to the continuation of life insurance in the amount of \$10,000.00.

(2) Notwithstanding any provision of subdivision (1)(A)(i) or (ii) of this subsection to the contrary, a member may be offered health coverage other than coverage in the group medical benefit plan provided by the State of Vermont for active State employees if the following conditions are met:

(A) the alternative health coverage is substantially equivalent to the coverage offered through the group medical benefit plan provided by the State of Vermont for active State employees; and

(B) the alternative health coverage is mutually agreeable to:

(i) the State;

(ii) the Vermont State Employees' Association;

(iii) the Vermont Troopers' Association; and

(iv) the Vermont Retired State Employees' Association.

(b) As of July 1, 2007, members of the Group C plan who separate from service prior to being eligible for retirement benefits under this chapter, who have at least 20 years of creditable service, and who participated in the group medical benefit plan at the time of separation from service shall have a one-time option at the time retirement benefits commence to participate in the group medical benefit plan provided by the State of Vermont for active State employees or any alternative health coverage provided pursuant to subdivision (a)(2) of this section. Premiums for the plan shall be prorated between the retired member and the Retirement System pursuant to section 631 of this title.

(c) Premiums for coverage of retired members of the Group C plan and their dependents in the group medical benefit plan or any alternative health coverage provided pursuant to subdivision (a)(2) of this section shall be prorated on the same basis as is provided for active employees by the current collective bargaining agreement for the nonmanagement unit. The amounts designated as the State's share of premium for the medical benefit plan and the total premium for group life insurance provided under subdivision (a)(2) of this section shall be paid by the Fund as an operating expense in accordance with subsection 473(d) of this title.

(d) After January 1, 2007, the State Treasurer may offer and administer a dental benefit plan for retired members, beneficiaries, eligible dependents, and eligible retirees of special affiliated groups and the dependents of members of those groups who are eligible for coverage in the State Employee Group Medical Benefit Plan or any alternative health coverage provided pursuant to subdivision (a)(2) of this section. The Plan shall be separate and apart from any dental benefit plan offered to Vermont State employees. The original plan of benefits, and any changes thereto, shall be determined by the State Treasurer with due consideration of recommendations from the Retired Employees' Committee on Insurance established in section 636 of this title.

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(3) Dependent eligibility shall be determined in the manner applied to determinations for coverage in the State Employee Medical Benefit Plan or any alternative health coverage provided pursuant to subdivision (a)(2) of this section.

(4) [Repealed.]

(e) As of January 1, 2007, and thereafter, upon retirement, members entitled to prorated group medical benefit plan premium payments from the Retirement System under the terms of this section shall have a one-time option to reduce the percentage of premium payments from the Retirement System during the member's life, with the provision that the Fund shall continue making an equal percentage of premium payments after the member's death for the life of the dependent beneficiary nominated by the member under section 468 of this title, should such dependent beneficiary survive the member. The Retirement Board, after consultation with its actuary, shall establish reduced premium payment percentages that are as cost neutral to the Fund as possible.

(f) [Repealed.]

(g) A member of the Group F or Group G plan who is first included in the membership of the System on or after July 1, 2008, who separates from service prior to being eligible for retirement benefits under this chapter, who has at least 20 years of creditable service, and who participated in the group medical benefit plan at the time of separation from service shall have a one-time option at the time retirement benefits commence to reinstate the same level of coverage, in the group medical benefit plan provided by the State of Vermont for active State employees or any alternative health coverage provided pursuant to subdivision (a)(2) of this section, that existed at the date of separation from service.

Premiums for the plan shall be prorated between the retired member and the Retirement System pursuant to subsection 479(a) of this title.

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Sec. __. 3 V.S.A. § 925 is amended to read:

§ 925. MEDIATION; FACT FINDING

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(i)(1) In the case of the Vermont State Colleges or the University of Vermont, if the dispute remains unresolved 20 days after transmittal of findings and recommendations to the parties or within a time frame mutually agreed upon by the parties that may be not more than an additional 30 days, each party shall submit as a single package its last best offer on all disputed issues to the Board. Each party's last best offer shall be filed with the Board under seal and shall be unsealed and placed in the public record only when both parties' last best offers are filed with the Board. The Board shall hold one or more hearings. Within 30 days of the certifications, the Board shall select between the last best offers of the parties, considered in their entirety without amendment.

(2) In the case of the State of Vermont or the Department of State's Attorneys and Sheriffs, if the dispute remains unresolved 20 days after transmittal of findings and recommendations to the parties or within a time frame mutually agreed upon by the parties that may be not more than an additional 30 days, each party shall submit as a single package its last best offer on all disputed issues to the Board, or upon the request of either party, to an arbitrator mutually agreed upon by the parties. If the parties cannot agree on an arbitrator, the American Arbitration Association shall appoint a neutral third party to act as arbitrator. Each party's last best offer shall be filed with the Board or the arbitrator under seal and shall be unsealed and placed in the public record only when both parties' last best offers are filed with the Board or the arbitrator. A party's last best offer shall not include a proposal to provide alternative health coverage to retired State employees that has not been agreed to pursuant to the provisions of subdivision 479(a)(2) of this title. The Board or the arbitrator shall hold one or more hearings. Within 30 days of the certifications, the Board

or the arbitrator shall select between the last best offers of the parties, considered in their entirety without amendment.

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Sec. ____ 3 V.S.A. § 1018 is amended to read:

§ 1018. MEDIATION; FACT-FINDING; LAST BEST OFFER

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(i)(1) If the dispute remains unresolved 20 days after transmittal of findings and recommendations or within a period of time mutually agreed upon by the parties that may be not more than an additional 30 days, each party shall submit to the Board or, upon the request of either party, to an arbitrator mutually agreed upon by the parties its last best offer on all disputed issues as a single package. If the parties cannot agree on an arbitrator, the American Arbitration Association shall appoint a neutral third party to act as arbitrator.

(2) Each party's last best offer shall be:

(A) filed with the Board or the arbitrator under seal;

(B) certified to the Board or the arbitrator by the fact finder; and

(C) unsealed and placed in the public record only when both parties' last best offers are filed with the Board or the arbitrator.

(3) A party's last best offer shall not include a proposal to provide alternative health coverage to retired employees that has not been agreed to pursuant to the provisions of subdivision 479(a)(2) of this title.

(4) The Board or the arbitrator shall hold one or more hearings and consider the recommendations of the fact finder.

~~(4)~~(5)(A) Within 30 days of the certifications, the Board or the arbitrator shall select between the last best offers of the parties, considered in their entirety without amendment, and shall determine its cost.

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~~(5)~~(6) The Board or the arbitrator shall not issue an order under this subsection that is in conflict with any law or rule or that relates to an issue that is not bargainable.

~~(6)~~(7) The decision of the Board or the arbitrator shall be final and binding on the parties.