



CITY OF HOUSTON

Administrative Procedure

Subject: **Health Benefits Advisory Committee**

A.P. No:

3-22

Effective Date:

December 18, 2014

1. AUTHORITY

1.1 Article VI, Section 7a, City Charter of the City of Houston.

2. PURPOSE

2.1 To encourage employees and retirees to participate in the review, evaluation, and proposal of recommendations to the health benefits programs for employees, retirees, and their eligible dependents, by providing input on behalf of consumers of health benefits services.

3. OBJECTIVES

- 3.1 To provide a forum for participant input on communication and education about health benefits program issues and local and national trends.
- 3.2 To participate in discussions of the evaluation and analysis of the City's health benefits programs and to advocate changes in plan design that are responsive to City goals and trends in the health benefits market, both locally and nationally.
- 3.3 To contribute to development of proposed changes to the health benefits programs. Such proposed changes should be consistent with the City's fiscal responsibility and its goal to make affordable healthcare available to City employees, retirees, and their eligible dependents.
- 3.4 To monitor activities of any appeals committee to which health benefits members (employees, retirees, and their dependents) appeal issues of coverage.
- 3.5 If another review procedure is not provided in the City's health benefits contract documents approved by City Council, to provide a forum for the review of the performance of the City's health benefits and contract administrators of the health benefits programs.
- 3.6 To inform department employees and retirees of the Committee's work and to provide a mechanism for reporting employees' and retirees' concerns to the Committee. Groups reporting concerns to the Committee are not considered as focus groups making recommendations on which the Committee will act (or is required to act).

Approved:

Quinn D. Parker

Date Approved:

12/18/2014

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4. SCOPE

- 4.1 This policy directive is applicable to employees and retirees as it relates to their participation in the City's health benefits programs and to appointees to the Committee as representatives of all City employees, retirees, and their eligible dependents.

5. RESPONSIBILITIES

- 5.1 The Chair of the Health Benefits Advisory Committee (Committee) is responsible for convening Committee members as often as necessary to carry out the Committee's objectives.
- 5.2 The Human Resources Department, Benefits Division, is responsible for providing staff support to the Committee and its subcommittees, as necessary. This includes resources from the Human Resources Department, the Legal Department, the Finance Department, and other expert resources.
- 5.3 Committee members are responsible for conveying department employees' and retirees' concerns to the Committee as well as informing employees and retirees of the Committee's work and/or resolutions.
- 5.4 Committee members are responsible for attending all scheduled meetings, without missing more than three (3) meetings during their two-year term or three (3) successive meetings during the term. The Chair will consider extenuating circumstances.

6. APPOINTMENT

- 6.1 Representatives from the following departments/organizations will be appointed by the Mayor to the Committee for a two-year term:
- 6.1.1 One Houston Airport System employee;
 - 6.1.2 One General Services Department employee;
 - 6.1.3 One City Council Member;
 - 6.1.4 The City Controller;
 - 6.1.5 One Health and Human Services Department employee;
 - 6.1.6 One Library Department employee;
 - 6.1.7 One Municipal Courts employee;
 - 6.1.8 One Parks and Recreation Department employee;
 - 6.1.9 One Public Works & Engineering Department employee;
 - 6.1.10 One Solid Waste Management Department employee;
 - 6.1.11 One representative from the private sector;
 - 6.1.12 One person who is a retired municipal employee of the Houston Municipal Employees' Pension System and who is covered by City benefit plans;
 - 6.1.13 One person who is a retired firefighter of the Houston Firefighters' Relief and Retirement fund and who is covered by City benefit plans;

- 6.1.14 One person who is a retired police officer of the Houston Police Officers' Pension System and who is covered by City benefit plans;
- 6.1.15 One HPD police officer who is a member of a labor organization that represents the interests of police officers, and shall be recommended by the Police Chief in consultation with the Majority Bargaining Agent, if any, designated under state law;
- 6.1.16 One HFD firefighter who is a member of a labor organization that represents the interests of firefighters, and who shall be recommended by the Fire Chief in consultation with the Exclusive Bargaining Agent, if any, designated under state law; and
- 6.1.17 One civilian City employee who is a member of a labor organization that represents the interests of municipal employees other than police officers and firefighters.

In addition to the named retiree members, there shall be one appointed member, who is a Board member or employee who is also a participant in that pension plan, from each of the following:

- 6.1.18 Houston Municipal Employees' Pension System;
- 6.1.19 Houston Firefighters' Relief and Retirement Fund; and
- 6.1.20 Houston Police Officers' Pension System.

6.2 In addition to the appointed representatives on the Committee, the Director of the Human Resources Department shall be an ex-officio member and shall serve as the Chair. At the meetings convened by the Chair, the Health Benefits Advisory Committee may discuss and provide consultation on policy issues related to the following topics:

- 6.2.1 Benefits and services provided;
- 6.2.2 Contribution levels;
- 6.2.3 Employee educational and communication materials;
- 6.2.4 Coordination and planning issues with the contract administrators of the health benefits programs; and
- 6.2.5 Strategic goals relating to the provision of health benefits for employees and retirees.

6.3 The Chair will appoint an Appeals Subcommittee composed of three members for a term of two years. Additionally, an alternate member shall be appointed to serve whenever one of the regular members is unavailable. One regular member shall be a member of a labor organization. Failure to attend any two successive meetings of the Appeals Subcommittee will result in replacement of the member on that Subcommittee. The Appeals Subcommittee shall meet as needed to consider appeals of any matter for which the City or the Human Resources Director is obliged to provide an appeals process.

6.4 The Chair shall appoint a Vendor Review Subcommittee of three members who will serve for a term of two years. The Vendor Review Subcommittee shall meet at least quarterly with City health benefits vendors and City benefits staff members to review vendor performance and discuss recommendations concerning the vendor's performance and compliance with their contractual obligations and performance objectives.

7. CONFLICT AND REPEAL

- 7.1 This Administrative Procedure shall supersede Executive Order 1-4, Employee Health Benefits Advisory Committee, Amendment #6, signed August 25, 2005, which shall be of no further force or effect.