

Vassar College Benefits Open Enrollment

☒ November 4th through December 4th, 2009 ☒

Welcome to Open Enrollment for Benefits! This is your opportunity to review your current benefits and select new coverage. We strongly encourage you to attend this year's **Benefits Fair, Wednesday, November 4, 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Villard Room**, to meet with representatives for all benefits.

Open Enrollment Basics

☒ **How to Get Information on Your Benefits for 2010:** Find full information on all benefits on the Human Resources website: <http://humanresources.vassar.edu/>. Look for the bright yellow Open Enrollment box for links. For face-to-face assistance, visit the Benefits Fair and talk with the Benefits staff and plan representatives.

☒ **Choosing Your Benefits for 2010, and a word about deadlines:** Please use the enclosed "Blue Sheet" to make your 2010 choices. Return the sheet to Benefits, Box 718, by December 4. New membership cards and, for flex accounts, new balances will be delayed if we receive your form after the 4th. No Open Enrollment changes can be made after the College closes for the winter holidays on December 23rd.

Health Insurance

☒ Your costs per paycheck for the Empire Blue Cross plans for 2010 **are shown on the enclosed sheet**. MVP has not yet been able to provide us with 2010 rates: we will let you know via email as soon as they are available. Both Blue Cross and MVP have made small benefit changes for 2010:

- ◆ On the Blue Cross PPO, preventive care office visits (physicals, OBGYN check-ups) now have a \$0 (zero!) copay.
- ◆ The Blue Cross PPO eyewear benefit has changed slightly: an annual allowance for eyewear, rather than copayments, and a different provider network.
- ◆ Per the Mental Health parity law, Both Blue Cross and MVP have removed annual visit limits for outpatient mental health counseling.
- ◆ MVP has changed their prescription benefit: mail-order RX is now 2.5 months for one copay (previously 3 months for one.) In addition, if you take a name-brand drug for which a generic equivalent is available, you must pay the \$5 generic copay and also the price difference between the generic and name-brand drug.

News On Benefits for 2010

☒ **NEW: Transit and Parking Flex Spending Accounts** If you use public transportation – Metro North or Amtrak, a bus or a subway – to commute to Vassar or to conduct Vassar-related business, you can use these tax-free accounts to pay for tickets and parking. More information is on the reverse of this letter. ☞

☒ **Voluntary Dental Insurance:** You may purchase the coverage through pre-tax payroll deduction. **The cost of the dental plan will DECREASE this year: single coverage will cost \$22.48 per paycheck, and family coverage will cost \$52.69 per paycheck.** If you currently have the dental coverage, it will remain in force unless you discontinue it during Open Enrollment.

Come to the Benefits Fair and look online at <http://humanresources.vassar.edu/> for full information on these and all benefits available to you. As always, contact Benefits at ext. 5850 or benefits@vassar.edu with any questions.

New Transit and Parking Flex Spending Accounts

If you use public transportation to commute to Vassar or to conduct Vassar-related business, you can use these tax-free accounts to pay for tickets and parking.

- ✦ **The Same Flex Card:** If you have a medical or childcare flex account, you can use the same flex credit/debit card for a transit/parking account. If you haven't used flex accounts recently, you will receive a flex card by mail from our vendor, Flexible Corporate Plans, to use for your new accounts.
- ✦ **Why have a Flex Account?** Just as with the medical and child care accounts, transit and parking flex accounts allow you to set aside money from your paycheck *before it is taxed*. You can then use the tax-free funds in your account for eligible expenses.
- ✦ **Eligible Expenses for a Transit or Parking Account:** Use the transit and parking accounts to buy tickets or monthly passes for trains, buses or subways, and parking in a train or bus station lot. Flex covers public transportation only – not taxis, private airport “limo” service, or your own vehicle expenses. The travel must be directly related to your work at Vassar: commuting to the College or conducting College business.
- ✦ **Transit/Parking Flex vs. Medical/Childcare flex: DIFFERENT RULES!**
 - Transit and parking flex “acts” more like an SRA than a flex account:
 - Make a monthly election: choose the amount per month you wish to contribute from your paycheck.
 - You can change your monthly election any time (email Benefits.)
 - Unused funds in your transit or parking account roll over to the next calendar year: no “use it or lose it” unless you leave employment at Vassar with unused funds.
 - Unlike the medical flex account, the transit/parking account is for you only: other family members can NOT use the account for their commuting expenses.

Questions? Speak with the Flex Spending Accounts representative at the Benefits Fair, November 4th, or contact Benefits: ext. 5850 or benefits@vassar.edu.

