

Retired Public Employees of Alaska
Southcentral Chapter Meeting
March 14, 2017

Meeting Notes

Nearly 100 people attended the meeting and over 80 lunches were purchased. The meeting was called to order at about 11:50 by Kris Warren who was acting for Fran Rabago who was out of state.

Kris made a number of announcements including:

Recognizing Past RPEA President Jay Dulany

RPEA Meetings are being held quarterly rather than monthly because we have a lack of volunteers to help plan and support the meetings. Kris thanked the volunteers who do help and encouraged more members to help out.

Asked attendees to fill out their meal satisfaction cards so we can pass the results onto the ASAC staff.

5 fabulous door prizes were given away to the attendees.

Sharon Hoffbeck, RPEA President was introduced who provided a synopsis of where we are at regarding her efforts to work with the Division of Retirement and Benefits (DRB), Aetna and Moda.

DRB has signed a new contract with Moda, and another Letter of Agreement with Aetna. Both will extend to 12/31/18. The State does not have a standard contract with Aetna citing performance problems, and Aetna continues to work under a Letter of Agreement. The State has never had a standard contract with Aetna for the same reason.

The State procurement law requires TPA (Third Party Administrator) contracts to be rebid after 5 years, so an RFP (Request for Proposal) will be out by early fall. What this means is that Aetna and Moda may or may not be the TPAs as of 1/1/19.

DRB is considering changes to the appeal process for denied medical claims. In 2014 the then-Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner removed DRB from the appeal process. RPEA strongly objected to removing DRB as an appeal level for a variety of reasons, but they did not agree and the new appeal process was implemented 1/1/14. After 3 years under the new process, they realize that was a mistake, and are planning to reinstate DRB's role in the appeal process. Under the new plan, Levels I & II would still go to the TPA (Aetna or Moda), Level III will be DRB and Level IV will be OAH (Office of Administrative Hearings).

DRB is also considering changes to the prescription drug program for those enrolled in Medicare, which is yet to be determined. RPEA will be meeting with DRB to discuss the details of their plan and assure that this change does not diminish pharmacy benefits for this group of retirees.

The DVA Declaratory Relief lawsuit RPEA filed against the state is still moving ahead. The judge has already ruled that our Dental, Vision and Audio plan (DVA) as well as the Long Term Care plans (LTC) are all constitutionally protected. While this is great news, DRB's contention is that none of these plans have resulted in diminished coverage. We disagree and that will be addressed in the next phase of the lawsuit. The earliest trial date we could get is in February of 2018. We still need retirees to let us know when their claims are being denied, and of any appeals that have been filed.

Sharon responded to a number of questions from the attendees including:

Preventive/screening services are not covered under the retiree AlaskaCare plan. However, Medicare does cover a number of preventive screening tests such as colonoscopies.

If your doctor asks you to sign a contract to pay him directly out of your own pocket that means he has opted out of Medicare and you will get nothing from Medicare nor Alaskacare.

Next meeting is Tuesday, May 30, 2017