AFGE Local 1263 Newsletter (# 5)

Sunday, 27 October 2024

Open Season is Coming for FEHB and FEDVIP

Union Meeting: Wednesday, 30 October

10:55 to 12:35 (over both lunch-hours)
Building 619 Auditorium (Mid-PoM)

ALL ARE WELCOME !
Refreshments will be served.

In this issue:

Nine days before the Election: Tuesday, 5 November

Follow-up Report: Union's "*Survey into DLI's Suicide Problem*"

Safety First, Health Always

- **Monterey County's Alert system:** free and reliable

- **Open Season:** FEHB/FEDVIP (Medical, Dental, Vision Insurance)

- Are you currently experiencing Federal Employee Insurance problems ?

Monterey County Arts and Cultural Events

Including:

- The Emerging Artists Alliance
- Monterey Half-marathon (10 November)
- Meet new friends in Monterey: https://Meetup.com

<u>Nine days left before the Election (**5 November**)</u>

a.) <u>Returning your completed Ballot:</u>

https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/voter-registration/vote-mail

California Secretary of State
Shirley N. Weber, Ph.D.

🏠   About   Business   Notary & Apostille   Elections

Voting By Mail

Any registered voter may vote using a vote-by-mail ballot instead of going to the polls on Election Day.

After you have voted, insert your ballot in the envelope provided, making sure you complete all required information on the envelope.

You may return your voted ballot by

1. mailing it to your **county elections official**;
   Vote-by-mail ballots that are mailed must be postmarked on or before Election Day and received by your county elections office no later than 7 days after Election Day.
   If you are not sure your vote-by-mail ballot will arrive in time if mailed, bring it to any polling place in the state between 7:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. on Election Day.

2. returning it in person to any polling place within the state or the office of your county elections official;
   Vote-by-mail ballots that are personally delivered must be delivered no later than the close of polls at 8:00 p.m. on Election Day.

3. dropping your ballot off at a drop-off location or into a ballot drop box within the state; or
   Vote-by-mail ballots that are personally delivered to a ballot drop-off location must be delivered no later than the close of polls at 8:00 p.m. on Election Day.

4. authorizing someone to return the ballot on your behalf.
   Anyone may return your ballot for you, as long as they do not get paid on a per ballot basis.

When your vote-by-mail ballot is received by your **county elections official**, your signature on the return envelope will be compared to the signature(s) in your voter registration record. To preserve the secrecy of your ballot, the ballot will then be separated from the return envelope, and then it will be tallied.

All valid vote-by-mail ballots are counted in every election in California, regardless of the outcome or closeness of any race. For additional information on how and when ballots are verified and tabulated, please visit our description of how the **official canvass of the vote** is completed.

For more information on voting by mail, see our "**Vote-by-Mail Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)**" document.

b.) <u>Finding your Polling Place:</u>

https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/polling-place

c.) <u>Same-day (conditional) Voter Registration (if you missed the chance):</u>

https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/voter-registration/same-day-reg

Follow-up Report (2): Union's *"Survey into DLI's Suicide Problem"*

This week's we look at 2 more survey questions, both closed-ended; the first is a single-response question, the second, a multi-response. (Current DLI Teachers only)

In an "average" 40-hour week, I _____ have enough time to complete all (or most) of my required work tasks, such as: teaching, tutoring, lesson prep, academic counseling, finding/creating supplementary teaching materials and completing mandatory training that is due.

Usually	7
Often	5
Sometimes	15
Seldom	20
Never	12
(Blank)	2
TOTAL	**61**

Tabulated responses	In weeks when I don't have enough time to complete all my required work tasks, I solve the problem by ... (Multiple answers permitted)
30	... reducing my lesson prep time.
19	... using "templated" (or cut-and-paste") comments in my students' academic counseling statements.)
23	... using whatever teaching materials are readily available, even if they are obviously outdated.
25	... putting off mandatory training until after the deadline.
41	... using my unpaid lunch hour to complete work-related tasks (e.g., correcting tests)
43	... taking home work with me, evening and/or weekendsx (e.g., finding/creating better, more-relevant teaching materials).

Of the 6 choices, the top 3 responses chosen by 59 teachers were:

- Reducing my lesson prep time (30)
- Using my unpaid lunch hour to complete work-related tasks (41)
- Taking work home with me, evenings and/or on weekends (43)

And when we compare data groups, some noteworthy patterns emerge:

21 Teachers <u>BOTH</u> reduced lesson prep time <u>AND</u> worked during unpaid lunch.

20 Teachers <u>BOTH</u> reduced lesson prep time <u>AND</u> took their work home.

16 Teachers reduced lesson prep <u>AND</u> worked over lunch <u>AND</u> took work home.

5 Teachers reduced Lesson Prep <u>but didn't</u> work over lunch <u>NOR</u> take work home.

4 Teachers <u>**didn't**</u> reduce lesson prep, <u>NOR</u> work over lunch <u>NOR</u> take work home.

Summarizing this data …

<u>**One-third**</u> of these teachers work over unpaid lunch <u>OR</u> in the evening at home.

<u>**One-quarter**</u> of them work <u>BOTH</u> over unpaid lunch <u>AND</u> in the evening at home.

<u>**Less than one-fifteenth**</u> of them <u>NEITHER</u> worked over lunch <u>NOR</u> took work home, and most of those didn't reduce their lesson prep time.

This issue bears further investigation, including teacher input regarding solutions <u>to avoid working unpaid hours – in order to maintain teaching quality</u>.

Additional surveys on this issue to follow -- in the not-too-distant future.

Safety First, Health Always

PARTNERS

The Alert Monterey County notification system is operated by Monterey County in partnership with the following organizations:

- The Cities of:
  - Carmel-By-The-Sea
  - Del Rey Oaks
  - Greenfield
  - Gonzales
  - King City
  - Marina
  - Monterey
  - Pacific Grove
  - Salinas
  - Sand City
  - Seaside
  - Soledad

- Monterey County Emergency Communications
- Monterey County Library System
- Community Foundation for Monterey County
- California State University Monterey Bay
- Community Emergency Response Volunteers
- Recovers.org

Alert Monterey County Administered By:

Monterey County
Office of Emergency Services
1322 Natividad Rd.
Salinas, CA 93906
Website: www.AlertMontereyCounty.org

A!ert
MONTEREY COUNTY

In The Know...

Alert

...Ready To Go

www.AlertMontereyCounty.org

The Monterey County Alert System is reliable and costs you nothing. (And it's easy to cancel at any time.)

A recent example of their alert:

REMINDER: This is PG&E.

*A PG&E planned outage will take place tomorrow for [**your address**], Monday, September 30, 2024 from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM, to improve our electric system in your community.*

For questions, call the Planned Outage Coordinator at:

*(831) 479-3142 and refer to **Reference ID 948635**, or visit pge.com/plannedoutages.*

*Txt **STOP** to cancel ALL reminders for this outage.*

What is Alert Monterey County?

Alert Monterey County is the system used by City and County public safety officials to deliver emergency notifications and information to residents and businesses impacted by, or in danger of being impacted by an emergency or disaster.

How Does Alert Monterey County Work?

Alert Monterey County delivers emergency notifications and information over voice, text and social media applications to all land-line telephones and mobile devices registered with the system. While the system uses land-line phone information provided by the 9-1-1 database, cellular and Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) phones, email/text, and social media notifications rely on an "opt-in" process of "registering" their devices.

What kind of messages will I receive?

Alert Monterey County messages pertain to the health, safety or welfare of the community affected by a potential or actual emergency incident. Public health advisories, evacuation and re-entry notifications, recommended protective measures, and incident situation information are typical. You have the ability to choose what messages you receive at the time of registration. The telephone number you register will only be called when the address/zip code you provide may be impacted by an emergency situation. You **will not** receive advertising or other non-emergency notifications through Alert Monterey County.

Who Manages Alert Monterey County?

The emergency notification system is managed by the Monterey County Office of Emergency Services, in partnership with all City public safety agencies in Monterey County as well as California State University Monterey Bay.

Who has access to My Information?

Only authorized and trained public safety officials from Monterey County and your local City are allowed to use the system.

Is There a Charge for this Service?

There is no charge for registering, or for receiving these messages; however, your cell phone provider's rates for airtime minutes, data and email / text messages will apply.

How do I register?

Register online at www.AlertMontereyCounty.org. If you don't have access to the Internet, visit your local Monterey County Library System branch for help accessing the Alert Monterey County website.

What Information is Required?

Registration with Alert Monterey County requires your:

- Name
- Email Address
- Cell and/or VoIP Phone number(s)
- Physical Address

Anonymous Opt-In. You may sign up anonymously to receive public safety alerts via text message by texting your zip code to 888777.

A!ert
MONTEREY COUNTY

www.AlertMontereyCounty.org

OPEN SEASON: FEHB (Medical) & FEDVIP (Dental/Vision) Insurance

The "**Open Season**" – when Federal employees can **change their medical, dental or optical insurance coverages** is almost here:

11 November to 9 December, 2024

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) from OPM (Office of Personnel Mgmt.)

What are the main differences between the Federal Employees Dental and Vision Insurance Program (FEDVIP) and Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) Program?

FEDVIP is separate and different from the FEHB Program. Each program has its own regulations. Members do not have to enroll in the same carrier plans. If they're eligible, federal employees can enroll:

- in one FEHB plan, another carrier's FEDVIP dental plan, and a third carrier's FEDVIP vision plan
- in a family plan for FEHB, self plus one for FEDVIP dental, and self only for FEDVIP vision

Additional differences:

- FEDVIP coverage continues when an employee retires. There is no five-year prior coverage requirement like there is for the FEHB Program.
- For FEDVIP, dependent coverage ends on the dependent's 22nd birthday; for the FEHB Program, on the dependent's 26th birthday.
- There is no temporary continuation of FEDVIP coverage.
- FEDVIP coverage cannot be converted into an individual policy.

By law, FEDVIP plans are required to facilitate the first payor process with the FEHB Program. FEDVIP carriers will always be secondary to any dental or vision benefits contained in the FEHB Program.

COMING SOON: annual "**Health Fair**" at the

Presidio of Monterey, where employees can get ask -- and get answers to their specific questions -- directly from the insurance companies' own representatives.

Time, Date and Location to be announced

When is FEDVIP coverage effective?

During open season

If an eligible federal civilian or retired uniformed service member enrolls during open season, their FEDVIP coverage will be effective on January 1, the start of the next plan year.

Outside open season

If a federal civilian is newly eligible and enrolls outside of open season, their FEDVIP coverage will be effective the first day of the first pay period following the date we receive their enrollment.

If a retired uniformed service member is newly eligible and enrolls 31 days prior to retirement, their FEDVIP coverage will be effective on their retirement date. If they enroll within 60 days after retirement, their FEDVIP coverage will be effective the first of the month following their enrollment date.

If someone experiences a qualifying life event, their FEDVIP coverage is effective the first day of the first pay period following the date BENEFEDS receives their enrollment.

What family members are eligible for FEDVIP?

The following family members are eligible for FEDVIP.

Federal civilians:
- spouses
- dependent children under age 22 (including recognized natural children, adopted children, stepchildren and foster children, if living with an employee or annuitant in a regular parent-child relationship)
- dependent children age 22 and older who are incapable of self-support due to a mental or physical disability that began before age 22

Uniformed service members:
- spouses
- dependent children under age 21 (including recognized natural children, adopted children, stepchildren and foster children, if living with an employee or annuitant in a regular parent-child relationship)
- dependent children who are incapable of self-support due to a mental or physical disability that began before age 21 (non-students) and age 23 (full-time students)

SEE More at: https://www.benefeds.gov/assets/ABO/frequently-asked-questions.html#:~:text=FEDVIP%20coverage%20continues%20when%20an,temporary%20continuation%20of%20FEDVIP%20coverage.

The OPM Insurance Coverage Guide for New (and Prospective) Federal Employees:

https://www.opm.gov/healthcare-insurance/Guide-Me/New-Prospective-Employees/

Are you experiencing <u>problems</u> with your Federal Employee Health Insurance? (Medical/Dental/Vision?)
_____

Hello Mr. Hickman,

I am having the issue you described. The CPAC made several coding errors in my profile which has made me not eligible for benefits. I communicated with them several times and they finally fixed the coding issue. However, the GRB platform which is used for benefits such as health insurance election is still disabled for me. I contacted the Dean's office, Dean's office transferred me to the local CPAC(HR) office, CPAC and then asked me to contact ABC-C. ABC-C said they cannot help me enroll because of the disabling of the GRB platform.

So, ABC-C created a ticket and relayed it to the IT department.

I joined DLI [*earlier this year, and months later*] -- I still cannot enroll myself – or my dependents -- in the government's FEHB health insurance plan.

I have not voiced this issue to the Union before because I thought it is just an independent issue. But today I found that a colleague who had a similar issue.

Thank you for the consideration

[*Name Withheld*]

_____

From: **AFGE1263** <afge1263@gmail.com>
Date: Fri, Oct 25, 2024 at 6:56 PM
Subject: IMPORTANT: problems with your FEHB medical insurance?
To: AFGE Local 1263 <afge1263@gmail.com>

Colleagues,

I'm contacting you to inquire whether you are experiencing a problem with your Federal employee medical coverage.

Have you been <u>unable to complete your application</u> for FEHB medical insurance coverage -- for yourself and your family?

Have you been "locked-out" of the <u>GBR platform (where</u> federal employees control **all** their employee benefits)?

Have you contacted ABC (Army Benefit Center) and found they were unable to help you?

If so, please contact the Union next week.

Dennis

Monterey County Arts & Culture Events

Local Peninsula Event Calendars (continually updated):

https://www.seemonterey.com/events/

https://whatsupmonterey.com/events

https://calendar.montereycountynow.com/calendars/all-events?proxy_host=calendar.montereycountynow.com&proxy_slug=monterey-county-weekly

For the budding Artists among us (and their supporters):

The Emerging Artists Alliance

https://eaamonterey.wixsite.com/eaam

https://www.facebook.com/emerging.artists.alliance/

https://www.instagram.com/emerging.artists.alliance/

The Monterey Museum of Art: current exhibitions

https://www.montereyart.org/current-exhibitions/

Monterey's Art Galleries

https://www.seemonterey.com/things-to-do/arts-culture/galleries/

Monterey Bay Half-marathon: 10 November

https://www.montereybayhalfmarathon.org/

Meet new friends
in Monterey, CA

Wondering how to make friends in Monterey? Meetup helps you meet new people who share your interests.

https://www.meetup.com/find/us--ca--monterey/meet-new-friends/

Socialize
Social events and activities in Monterey   See all

Trivia Tonight
Hosted by: Trivia Night at London Bridge Pub Meetup Group

📅 TUE, OCT 29 · 8:00 PM PDT

⊘ 2 going   ⛶ Free

LGBTQ+ Social Hour!
Hosted by: Monterey LGBTQ & Friends Meetup

📅 THU, OCT 31 · 6:00 PM PDT

⊘ 1 going   ⛶ Free

Early Bird Tour at the Elkhorn Slough Reserve 11/2
Hosted by: Bay Area Single Gen X & Boomers Social Meetup

📅 SAT, NOV 2 · 8:30 PM PDT

⊘ 2 going   ⛶ Free

Lesbian/Queer Social Mixer for Professionals Over 50
Hosted by: Monterey Professional Lesbians/Queer Women (50+)

📅 WED, NOV 6 · 6:00 PM PST

⊘ 2 going   ⛶ Free

Games
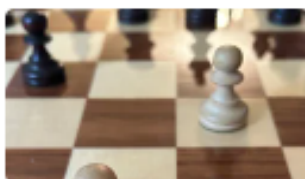Play group games in Monterey   See all

Board Game Night at Mythic!
Hosted by: Monterey Area Gamers

📅 THU, OCT 31 · 6:00 PM PDT

⊘ 2 going   ⛶ Free

Arthur Bisguier Open
Hosted by: Monterey County Chess Club

📅 SAT, NOV 16 · 9:15 AM PST
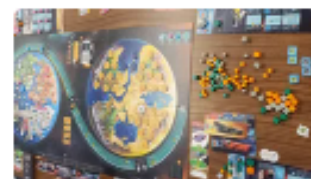
⊘ 1 going   ⛶ From $10.00

Draw, Drink, and Games
Hosted by: Monterey Artists and Friends

📅 SAT, NOV 9 · 12:00 PM PST

⊘ 1 going   ⛶ Free

Gaming at the Capitola Library
Hosted by: Lancelot's Merry Band of Gamers

📅 SAT, NOV 16 · 12:00 PM PST

⊘ 1 going   ⛶ Free

Union Meeting: Wednesday, 30 October
10:55 to 12:35 (over both lunch-hours)
Building 619 Auditorium (Mid-PoM)

ALL ARE WELCOME !
Refreshments will be served.

AFGE Local 1263
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5187 (Union Cell)
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"Together we are stronger"