



Buffalo Teachers Federation, Inc.
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President, PHILIP RUMORE

May 12, 2022

MEMO TO: Dr. Tonja M. Williams, Interim Superintendent, BPS
Nathaniel J. Kuzma, General Counsel, BPS
Members, Buffalo Board of Education

FROM: Philip Rumore, President, BTF

RE: Dependent Eligibility Memo – May 12, 2022

Once again, the District is demonstrating its lack of trust for its employees.

Instead of just sending correspondence to all employees relating who is defined as a dependent and asking that they advise the District of any issues, you hire an outside company “as the third-party administrator to conduct a dependent eligibility verification initiative”.

Do employees expect the District to cover the medical costs of non-dependents, of course not. However, your hiring of outside “truth police” as a first step shows your lack of respect for the honesty of all your employees.

Please respond to the following:

- The BTF requests copies of all documents and procedures that the District and Verifil intend to use to implement the above “Dependent Eligibility” Process.
- What and how many specific incidents occurred involving non-dependents receiving medical care?
- What will happen if an employee does not complete the “documentation”?

Please be advised that under the BTF/BPS Collective Bargaining Unit Contract:

- Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Western New York is to serve as the Third Party Administrator (XXVI (2) A), pg. 67
- “Confidentiality. In all matters of providing health care coverage there will be strict Confidentiality.” XXVI (2) A (1) (a) (v), pg. 68-69
- Maintenance of Benefits see XXXVII, pg. 91

In relation to your January 13, 2022 correspondence, we mistakenly thought that the District would have second thoughts about hiring truth police. Obviously, we were wrong.

cc: All Buffalo Teachers

Attachment: 1

From: Kuzma, Nathaniel <NKuzma@buffaloschools.org>
Sent: Tuesday, May 10, 2022 1:39 PM
To: Covington, Jody J; Lupe Sauer; Bill Orr; Armstrong, Aaron; jaimon peoples; Jeffrey C. Lathrop
Cc: Hollie-Mcgee, Tameki J; Floriano, Dana
Subject: Dependent Eligibility Memo
Attachments: Dependent Eligibility Memo.pdf

Union Presidents:

Please review the attached memo.

Nate



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Nathaniel J. Kuzma
General Counsel

To: Union President
From: Nathaniel Kuzma, General Counsel
Date: May 9, 2022
Re: Dependent Eligibility Verification

As a follow-up to the January 12, 2022 memo sent, I am informing you that the District has selected Verifi1, Inc. as the third-party administrator to conduct a dependent eligibility verification initiative to ensure that only eligible dependents are enrolled in the District's group health insurance plans.

The Verifi1, Inc. team has performed this service for both public and private sector employers across the country, along with over 30 organized labor unions. All Buffalo Public Schools employees who have dependents participating in our group policy healthcare plan, will be receiving an introductory letter on or about May 31, 2022, from Verifi1 explaining this process and timeline in detail.

Please note that participation in the verification process is not optional.

Employees will be required to provide verification of eligibility before September 30, 2022. We, therefore, encourage all employees to respond as soon as possible so that there is sufficient time to provide any additional information if necessary to complete the verification.

The key elements inherent with this initiative are as follows:

- **Notification:** Employees will first receive an initial communication, via both email and letter format, to inform them that a dependent eligibility verification is occurring. The communication explains how the process will work, what documentation will prove eligibility, and a timeline for the verification.
- **Education:** Employees will be educated on what constitutes a "dependent" via email, letter and website communications. If employees learn that they have dependent(s) on their plan that do not meet the eligibility requirements, they have the opportunity to remove them from the plan without question or consequence.
- **Reminder:** As the deadline approaches for the conclusion of the program, employees will receive reminders to submit their documentation, if they have not done so already.

- Results and Appeal Process: Once the verification process is completed, employees will receive their results. If they believe the results are inaccurate, they will have the opportunity to appeal the decision at that time.

If you have any additional questions involving this matter, please contact Dana Floriano, Benefits Manager, at 716-816-3755, dmloriano@buffaloschools.org.

Thank you in advance for your assistance and support regarding this vitally import endeavor.