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Compensation and Staffing News April 2021 *Benefits Tune-up Month!*



UUA Office of Church Staff Finances Mission

Guided by the values of our faith,
we equip congregations for excellence as employers
and their staff for financial competence and well-being.

You may need to click on continuation dots to view all articles and/or to see each one in its entirety.

July Health Plan Premium Adjustment

This article is adapted from communications being sent to congregational leaders and UUA Health Plan participants from Rev. Richard Nugent, Director, Church Staff Finances. A link to a more detailed letter is included.



On behalf of the UUA Employee Benefits Trust (Health Plan Committee) and the Church Staff Finances team, I am writing to share the difficult news that premiums for the various UUA Health Plans will be rising July 1.

Last fall, the Health Plan Committee struggled to set the 2021 rates for the UUA Health Plan. In addition to so many personal tragedies and organizational challenges arising from the pandemic, health plans – ours and others – wrestled to make sense of the effects of COVID-19. Given the circumstances, the Trustees decided not to raise rates in January because we were uncertain what the effects of COVID-19 would mean to our plan in 2021. In communicating the decision not to raise rates in January, we advised congregations that rates might be adjusted by as much as 10% in July.

The Trustees have reviewed recent claims data and made the difficult decision to raise premiums for all ages and plan levels by 10%, effective July 1, 2021, in order to ensure the financial health of our plan. We recognize this might be startling news to some, but please consider that this effectively means an increase of 5% for calendar year 2021 – comparable to commercial marketplace rate increases.

We expect to return to the normal schedule of raising premiums only in January. The Health Plan Committee will meet in October to set rates for 2022. We will do our best to minimize any increase.

I know this is disappointing news, and undoubtedly challenging as many congregations are assembling their 2021-2022 budgets. I wish the news was different, but we are living and working in extraordinary times – and this is certainly true for the delivery and financing of quality health care which the UUA Health Plan is proud to make available to the hardworking staff of our member congregations and UU-related organizations.

Be sure to inform participating staff of this change as employee deductions will be affected starting in July.

Please refer to this [more detailed explanation of the rate increase](#) and do not hesitate to reach out if I can be of any help to you and your leadership.

Staff Work is Changing – Again

Congregations are beginning to explore possibilities for adding in-person activities back into the mix alongside virtual options. What will this shift into [Multi-Platform](#) programming mean for staff? A new LeaderLab article offers questions and considerations to help you address emerging challenges so that staff can do their best work.

[Same Staff, New Expectations](#) reflects on what congregational staff need in these areas:

- Time
- Compensation
- Resources
- Agency
- Relationships
- Appreciation



The article goes on to name common situations and to provide general words of wisdom about staff work in the [Multi-Platform](#) era. It concludes with a list of resource pages that you may find helpful.

Please take a few minutes to read [Same Staff, New Expectations](#).

Transitions Support for Congregational Staff

The departure of a staff team member can lead into a fruitful time for reflection, visioning, and change. Some UU professionals are equipped to work with congregations during transitions, providing specialized skills and tools that help a congregation prepare for robust new leadership.

A new LeaderLab article, [Transitions Support for Congregational Staff](#), consolidates information for congregational staff who want to:

- Work effectively with an interim minister OR
- Prepare to serve congregations in a transitional capacity within their program area.



We encourage you to familiarize yourself with the resources on this page. For leaders in congregations anticipating a ministerial transition, please share the "Working with an Interim Minister" section with your staff.

Toll-Free Number for Insurance Questions

Email is usually the best way to reach members of the Church Staff Finances team because an email provides a "paper" trail and allows us to respond with links and resources.

But there are times when a phone call may be better. Just as one email, InsurancePlans@uua.org, allows you to contact everyone on the insurance side of our team, we now have a single number for insurance-related concerns: 888-792-7496. We request that you use this toll-free number for your insurance needs rather than calling the UUA phone numbers for individual staff. Thank you!