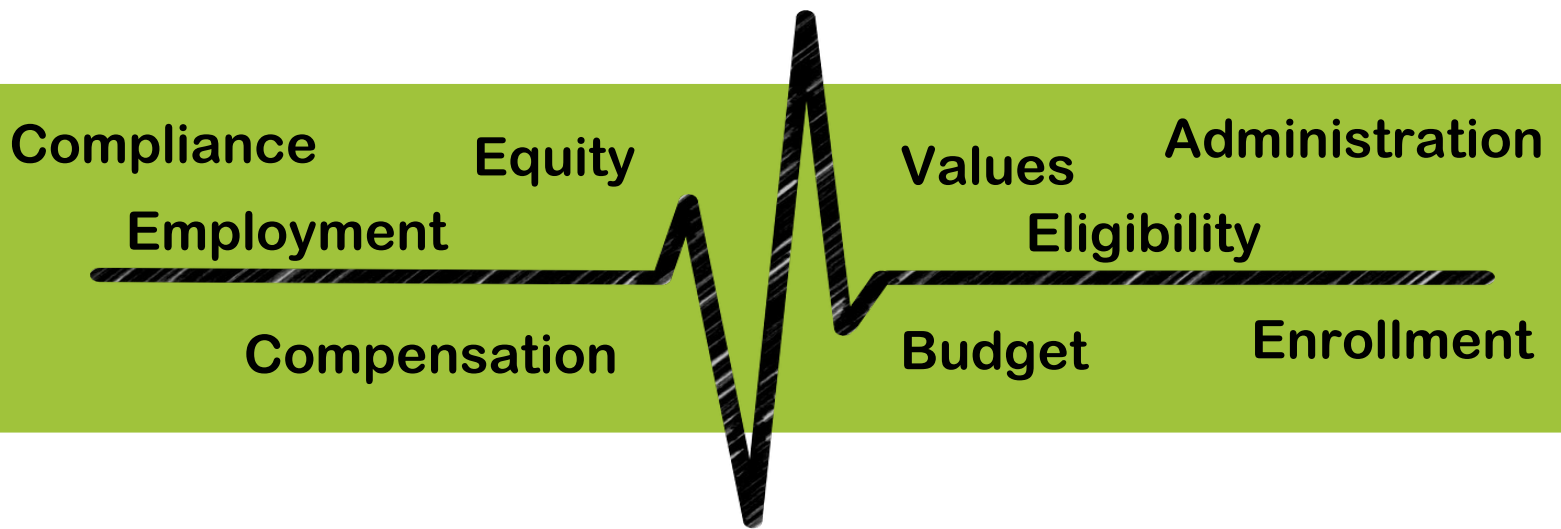




UUA Church Staff Finances



Benefits Tune-up Workbook

Part 2 - Group Insurance Plans

Know Our Plans
Live Our Faith



8th edition, February 2025

February 2025

Dear Congregational Leaders:

Thank you for making our high-quality, values-based benefits available to your employees. Offering benefits helps you to attract and retain excellent staff and is a way of practicing justice, equity, and compassion within your walls.

Federal law and our Plan rules govern the participation of your employees in our Plans – not your personnel policies or individual employment agreements. You have made a commitment to honoring the terms of our Plans. These terms comply with IRS and other laws, and they represent our Association's obligations to our Plan providers. Congregations and organizations that operate outside of Plan rules put their participation in our Plans at risk, jeopardize the UUA's ability to offer these benefits, and may negatively impact their employees.

The Benefits Tune-up Workbook is designed to help you:

- Understand the basics of our benefit plans
- Ensure that you have good protocols in place for benefits administration
- Check that internal documents and policies are consistent with Plan rules
- Confirm that all is in order or be alerted to necessary adjustments

We introduced the Benefits Tune-up Workbook in October 2017 and received very positive feedback. Now in our 8th edition, we continue to improve and clarify. We urge all participating congregations to complete the Workbook annually – and whenever a new congregational leader becomes responsible. Then refer to this Workbook on a regular basis. Make completion of the Workbook a team effort among a small group of staff and lay leaders with personnel and onboarding responsibilities. We hope you learn something in the process.

In the interest of simplicity, this Workbook does not include all Plan details, nor does it address every situation. See our Benefits, Compensation, and Aid Funds page for complete Plan information: <https://www.uua.org/finance/compensation>. Let us know how we can help you be a confident and reliable employer!



Rev. Richard Nugent, rnugent@uua.org
Director, Church Staff Finances

Please check in with us!

- Let us know that you've tuned up.
 - Send feedback about this Workbook.
 - Share something you've learned.
- <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/ocsftuneup>

Part 2: Group Insurance Plans

Dental, Life/AD&D, and Long-Term Disability

2.1 Eligibility and Enrollment

A. _____ We understand that all employees (not independent contractors) who are scheduled to work at least 750 hours per year (about 15 hours/week) for one or more participating employers are eligible to enroll in UUA Group Insurance Plans. **Note: interns are not eligible for Group Insurance Plans.**

This includes the following employees:

NOTE: If you make any of the Group Insurance Plans available to one employee, you must offer them to all eligible employees. However, you are not committed to paying the premium for all, or to paying the same percentage premium for each. You may, for instance, for Dental insurance, choose to pay a higher percentage of the premium for 30- to 40-hour employees than for those with fewer hours. Of course, we urge equitable policies in this regard.

B. _____ We understand that employees must enroll within 60 days of date of hire or qualifying event. **Otherwise:**

- **For Life and LTD**, they will need medical evidence of insurability and underwriter approval. ***It is extremely important that enrollment happens within 60 days of hire.***
- **For Dental**, they must wait for Open Enrollment (typically in November).

Who is responsible for ensuring that eligible new employees receive enrollment info upon hire and that enrollment happens within the 60-day window after hire or qualifying event? Who can double-check or be available as a backup?

_____ is responsible. _____ is backup.

During Open Enrollment, all eligible employees must be offered the opportunity to enroll in our Dental Plan. *There is NO open enrollment for Life or LTD.* Who communicates to staff about Open Enrollment each fall for the following calendar year?

_____ is responsible. _____ is backup.

C. _____ We understand that if Life or LTD is provided, both must be made available. (The employee does not need to enroll in both, and you may choose different contribution policies.)

2.2 Consistency of Agreements and Policies with Plan Rules

_____ We've checked 1) our congregation's personnel policies and 2) all letters of hire or employment agreements for individual employees, to make sure that all references to Group Insurance Plans are consistent with Plan rules.

Choose one:

_____ YES, we're all set.

_____ YES, and we found the following items that need to be changed or researched:

Plan for making changes, including who is responsible:

2.3 Ongoing Group Insurance Plan Administration

A. _____ We understand that employee changes must be made in writing and are submitted through this form: <http://www.uua.org/finance/compensation/insurance-employee-changes>. This includes address changes, changes in hours or salary, and departures.

_____ is responsible for completing change forms and communicating with Church Staff Finances staff.

_____ is available as backup.

B. _____ We understand that we get billed monthly, based on annualized wages for participating employees. See www.uua.org/finance/compensation/billing.

C. Who is responsible for tracking 1) qualifying events that deem an employee newly eligible, and 2) terminations or hours reductions that would make an employee no longer eligible?

_____ is responsible. _____ is backup.

D. _____ We understand that for Life Insurance beyond \$50,000 in coverage, a portion of the cost paid by the congregation must be imputed (added to taxable wages) as income on the employee's W-2 form as it is considered a taxable benefit. See:

<http://www.uua.org/finance/compensation/group/life/176232.shtml>.

E. _____ We understand that if Long-term Disability premiums are paid by the congregation (which the UUA recommends), the amount of the premium should be imputed (added to taxable wages) on the employee's W-2 form in order to ensure that any benefit paid out is not taxed. See:

<http://www.uua.org/finance/compensation/group/ltd/176239.shtml>.

2.4 Group Insurance Plans Reflection

Who helped complete this section of the Workbook? Does this include everyone named as a responsible party?

What did we learn from completing this section of the Workbook?

What are we doing differently going forward?

Date completed:

Please check in with us!

- Let us know that you've tuned up.
- Send feedback about this Workbook.
- Share something you've learned.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/ocsftuneup>

Compensation Reminders & What's Next

4.1 Reminders

A. Health and Dental Plans

- All eligible employees (who work, or are expected to work 750 hours or more a year) must be offered the chance to enroll.
- If they miss the enrollment window (30 days Health, 60 days Dental from first day of work), they must wait for Open Enrollment (November). No open enrollment for Life or LTD.
- Congregation's premium contribution does not need to be the same for all employees. (For instance, may be lower for part-time.) We encourage you to set an equitable policy.

B. Life/AD&D Insurance and Long-Term Disability Plans

- All eligible employees (750 hours, same as health & dental above) must be offered the chance to enroll.
- Enrollment window (60 days) critical! If missed, employee must undergo medical screening to apply. There is no open enrollment for Life or LTD.

C. Retirement Plan

- Employers must inform every employee (age 18+) about the Retirement Plan upon hire; employees must be enrolled, regardless of hours.
- Employees should make an employee contribution election, which may be \$0.
- Employer contributions begin after an employee meets the Plan's Year of Eligibility Service provision. Once satisfied, always satisfied; check for prior qualification.
- Employer's Retirement Contribution is the same percentage for all employees who have satisfied the Plan's requirement, as is the Match offer, if you provide Matching.

4.2 What's Next

A brief checklist for your consideration

- ☐ Have you reviewed UUA [Benefit Recommendations](#) and the [Congregational Salary Program](#), including the values-based checklist found in the Salary Process Guidance?
- ☐ Have you completed the Pay Administration and Benefits Administration checklists found on our [Compensation Standards](#) page? (The Benefits checklist is easy once this Workbook is done!)
- ☐ Are you providing annual cost-of-living adjustments? The third-quarter Consumer Price Index (CPI-U) increase from 2023 to 2024 was 2.6%%. As you budget for staff salaries in the year ahead, consider that a 2.6% wage increase is needed to roughly maintain a typical employee's purchasing power.
- ☐ Are employees progressing through the salary range for their position? (We expect employees reach midpoint in no more than 5 years if starting at the minimum recommended salary.)
- ☐ Are employees evaluated annually by their supervisor (to complement regular supervisory conversations about goals, needs, progress, etc)?
- ☐ Do all employees have job descriptions? Are these reviewed and adjusted as needed, as part of the annual evaluation process?
- ☐ Do you provide appropriate [professional expenses](#) to your staff?
- ☐ How can Church Staff Finances assist you? Email Comp@uua.org.