



Ohio Revised Code

Section 305.171 Group insurance coverage for county officers and employees.

Effective: September 28, 2012

Legislation: House Bill 509 - 129th General Assembly

(A) The board of county commissioners of any county may contract for, purchase, or otherwise procure and pay all or any part of the cost of any of the following insurance, coverage, or benefits issued by an insurance company or administered by a board of county commissioners or a contractor, for county officers and employees and their immediate dependents from the funds or budgets from which the county officers or employees are compensated for services:

(1) Group insurance policies that may provide any of the following:

(a) Benefits including, but not limited to, hospitalization, surgical care, major medical care, disability, dental care, eye care, medical care, hearing aids, or prescription drugs;

(b) Sickness and accident insurance;

(c) Group legal services;

(d) Group life insurance.

(2) Any other qualified benefit available under section 125 of the "Internal Revenue Code of 1986," 26 U.S.C. 125;

(3) A health and wellness benefit program through which the county provides a benefit or incentive to county officers, employees, and their immediate dependents to maintain a healthy lifestyle, including, but not limited to, programs to encourage healthy eating and nutrition, exercise and physical activity, weight control or the elimination of obesity, and cessation of smoking or alcohol use.

(4) Any combination of any of the foregoing types of insurance, coverage, or benefits.



(B) The board of county commissioners also may negotiate and contract for any plan or plans of health care services with health insuring corporations holding a certificate of authority under Chapter 1751. of the Revised Code, provided that each county officer or employee shall be permitted to do both of the following:

(1) Exercise an option between a plan offered by an insurance company and a plan or plans offered by health insuring corporations under this division, on the condition that the county officer or employee shall pay any amount by which the cost of the plan chosen by the county officer or employee pursuant to this division exceeds the cost of the plan offered under division (A) of this section;

(2) Change from one of the plans to another at a time each year as determined by the board.

(C) Section 307.86 of the Revised Code does not apply to the purchase of benefits for county officers or employees under divisions (A) and (B) of this section when those benefits are provided through a jointly administered health and welfare trust fund in which the county or contracting authority and a collective bargaining representative of the county employees or contracting authority agree to participate.

(D) The board of trustees of a jointly administered trust fund that receives contributions pursuant to collective bargaining agreements entered into between the board of county commissioners of any county and a collective bargaining representative of the employees of the county may provide for self-insurance of all risk in the provision of fringe benefits, and may provide through the self-insurance method specific fringe benefits as authorized by the rules of the board of trustees of the jointly administered trust fund. The fringe benefits may include, but are not limited to, hospitalization, surgical care, major medical care, disability, dental care, vision care, medical care, hearing aids, prescription drugs, group life insurance, sickness and accident insurance, group legal services, or a combination of any of the foregoing types of insurance or coverage, for county employees and their dependents.

(E) The board of county commissioners may provide the benefits described in divisions (A) to (D) of this section through an individual self-insurance program or a joint self-insurance program as provided in section 9.833 of the Revised Code.



(F) When a board of county commissioners offers benefits authorized under this section to a county officer or employee, the board may offer the benefits through a cafeteria plan meeting the requirements of section 125 of the "Internal Revenue Code of 1986," 100 Stat. 2085, 26 U.S.C.A. 125, as amended, and, as part of that plan, may offer the county officer or employee the option of receiving a cash payment in any form permissible under such cafeteria plans. A cash payment made to a county officer or employee under this division shall not exceed twenty-five per cent of the cost of premiums or payments that otherwise would be paid by the board for benefits for the county officer or employee under a policy or plan.

(G) The board of county commissioners may establish a policy authorizing any county appointing authority to make a cash payment to any county officer or employee in lieu of providing a benefit authorized under this section if the county officer or employee elects to take the cash payment instead of the offered benefit. A cash payment made to a county officer or employee under this division shall not exceed twenty-five per cent of the cost of premiums or payments that otherwise would be paid by the board for benefits for the county officer or employee under an offered policy or plan.

(H) No cash payment in lieu of a health benefit shall be made to a county officer or employee under division (F) or (G) of this section unless the county officer or employee signs a statement affirming that the county officer or employee is covered under another health insurance or health care policy, contract, or plan, and setting forth the name of the employer, if any, that sponsors the coverage, the name of the carrier that provides the coverage, and the identifying number of the policy, contract, or plan.

(I) The legislative authority of a county-operated municipal court, after consultation with the judges, or the clerk and deputy clerks, of the municipal court, shall negotiate and contract for, purchase, or otherwise procure, and pay the costs, premiums, or charges for, group health care coverage for the judges, and group health care coverage for the clerk and deputy clerks, in accordance with section 1901.111 or 1901.312 of the Revised Code.

(J) As used in this section:



- (1) "County officer or employee" includes, but is not limited to, a member or employee of the county board of elections.

- (2) "County-operated municipal court" and "legislative authority" have the same meanings as in section 1901.03 of the Revised Code.

- (3) "Health care coverage" has the same meaning as in section 1901.111 of the Revised Code.