

SHIBA and PEBB: Counseling roles

The PEBB (Public Employees Benefits Board) in Washington state offers health care benefits to many active and retired public employees. The Washington State Health Care Authority manages eligibility, enrollment and plan changes. See:

<https://www.hca.wa.gov/employee-retiree-benefits>

Ways SHIBA can assist PEBB retirees on Medicare

Potential enrollees often contact SHIBA for help with Medicare questions and may ask about choosing and enrolling in PEBB plans. SHIBA counselors are not trained to provide detailed assistance with choosing PEBB plans, but there is some very helpful information at: www.hca.wa.gov. Type “Retiree Enrollment Guide” in the search tool. You can share this guide with clients.

When PEBB members should contact SHIBA

Clients should contact SHIBA at 1-800-562-6900, Monday through Friday, 8 am to 5 pm if they need help with the following questions:

- How and when should I enroll in Medicare?
- What does Medicare cost and cover?
- I’m choosing the PEBB retiree Premera Medicare Supplement plan that does not include prescription drug coverage. Can you help me choose a Part D prescription drug plan?
- I already have a Part D prescription drug plan and it’s Open Enrollment. Can you help me compare drug plan options for the next year? (Medicare Annual Open Enrollment runs Oct. 15 through Dec. 7 each year.)
- I have limited income. Am I eligible for any help with my Medicare costs?

When clients should contact PEBB Benefits Services

Clients who are PEBB members can contact PEBB Benefits Services at 1-800-200-1004, Monday through Friday, 8 am to 4:30 pm or send a secure online message via <https://www.fuzeqna.com/pebb/consumer/question.asp> for help with the following services:

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- Enroll or change plans in the Annual Open Enrollment Period (Nov. 1 through Nov. 30 each year) or in a Special Open Enrollment (for example, new to Medicare, moved to another area, change in eligibility)
- Compare and contrast medical coverage options
- Provide information about dental coverage
- Add or drop dependents
- Defer retiree coverage
- Make a change to a name, phone number, etc.
- Help with eligibility or eligibility changes (like divorce, or becoming eligible for Medicare)
- Eligibility complaints or appeals
- Forms
- Payroll deductions or premium payments

After clients enroll in a PEBB medical coverage plan, they should contact their plan directly for questions about their coverage, benefits or costs. The phone number is listed on their plan ID card, or go to: <https://www.hca.wa.gov/employee-retiree-benefits>.