

EMPLOYEE BENEFITS GUIDE



BENEFITS OFFERING

In the past, as long as you provided health insurance and retirement benefits, your benefits were considered competitive. Now, the pressure is on employers to supply more diverse options.

Employee-friendly startups keep getting more creative with their benefits packages.

Further, the federal government, states and localities are mandating more employee benefits than ever. Consequently, it's important to revisit your benefits strategy to ensure you're meeting your legal obligations and the needs of your workforce.

**ASK YOURSELF
THESE
QUESTIONS AS
YOU
REEVALUATE
YOUR
COMPANY'S
BENEFITS...**

HEALTH BENEFITS

- Are you prepared for the projected increase in employer-sponsored health care costs each year?
- How valuable is health insurance — including for medical, dental and vision — to your employees?
- What is the participation rate — for employees and their families — in your group health plan?
- How much is the cost-sharing amount? Is it in line with industry standards?
- If you're an applicable large employer under the Affordable Care Act, do you have an efficient system for administering the requirements of the Act?

Be sure to consider all the health benefits options available to you — such as fully insured versus self-insured plans; preferred provider organization (PPO), health maintenance organization (HMO), point-of-service (POS) and high-deductible health plans (HDHP); health savings accounts (HSAs), health flexible spending accounts (FSAs) and more...

WHICH BENEFITS ARE LEGALLY REQUIRED?

- UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE
- FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE
- WORKERS' COMPENSATION
- DISABILITY INSURANCE

In most states, as long as you have employees, you must carry workers' compensation. The inner workings of the program, however, vary from state to state...

- **PAID SICK LEAVE**

- Are you familiar with the various types of employee leave that some states require — such as paid sick leave, family leave, jury duty leave, voting leave, bereavement leave and domestic violence leave?
- Do your employees work in a state or locality that mandates leave? If so, is the time off paid or unpaid?

- **HEALTH INSURANCE**

This is one of those benefits that straddles the fence by being both legally required and voluntary. Per the Affordable Care Act, employers with more than 50 full-time and full-time equivalent employees must offer qualified health insurance. If employers choose not to provide health insurance, they may have to pay a penalty.

Note that regulations — both federal and state — can change quickly, so check the details before changing a policy at your company.

IS OPEN ENROLLMENT STRESSING YOU OUT?

WHAT SEEMS TO BE THE PROBLEM?

- Making sure all employees enroll in benefits
- Giving employees access to their options
- Providing accurate data to carriers
- Maintaining effective communication

AHOLA'S BENEFITS SOLUTIONS ARE THE CURE!

- Built-in tracking and monitoring features, with periodic reminders during the enrollment period
- Employee self-service, available from anywhere at any time
- All data syncs across the single code base HCM platform
- Communicate open enrollment dates, meetings and locations, deadlines, and more...

3 Open Enrollment Mistakes To Avoid

1. Not Learning From the Past

For example, your use of outdated technology last enrollment season resulted in a tedious, slow-moving process. Obviously, you need a more efficient platform — one that will transform the next open enrollment experience.

2. Overestimating Employees' Benefits Knowledge

It's important that employees understand their deductibles, copays, in-network providers, out-of-pocket expenses, qualifying life events, etc.

3. Failing To Use a Broker, Consultant, or Third-Party Administrator

The demands of open enrollment vary— bringing in a benefits broker, benefits consultant or TPA can help minimize a lot of the stress that comes with open enrollment.

WHY AUTOMATE DATA TO INSURANCE CARRIERS?

Communicating benefits enrollment data and life change events to carriers manually is disruptive, and time-consuming. This process requires timeliness and accuracy, which can be challenging, particularly for larger organizations.

3 Benefits of Automating Carrier Communications

- The manual process is time-consuming and error-prone, which can put organizations at risk for costly errors and increased liability.
- Working with third-party providers can create another set of issues, such as not having a monitoring or feedback system in place, not knowing if and when the benefits data was communicated and whether it was completed accurately.
- Most benefits providers only allow groups with 100 or more employees to enroll using automated EDI technology. This prevents groups with low enrollment in specific plans from using this technology.

Fortunately, Ahola has a solution to make this process as seamless as possible for clients and their HR teams. Carrier Connectivity reduces the manual process of communicating highly sensitive benefits data and connects you to an extensive network of over 600 carriers.

ABOUT AHOLA

Founded in 1967, The Ahola Corporation is a family-owned company in Brecksville, Ohio.

Service offerings have expanded from payroll processing to include several Human Capital Management platforms and HR consulting that allow clients to focus on running their businesses and leave the compliance management to Ahola.



Access more free resources on payroll, human resources, benefits, tax compliance, and employee engagement at www.ahola.com.

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