MINUTES FROM THE MEETING OF THE STATE EMPLOYEE BENEFITS COMMITTEE
September 28, 2026

The State Employee Benefits Committee (the "Committee") met at 10:00 a.m. on September 28, 2026. The meeting was held virtually and in person at 841 Silver Lake Boulevard, Suite 200, Dover, DE 19904.

Committee Members Represented or in Attendance:
Dr. Neil Hockstein, Chair of the Delaware Health Care Commission ("DHCC"), SEBC Chair
State Treasurer Colleen Davis, Office of the State Treasurer ("OST"), Vice Chair
Director Brian Maxwell, Office of Management & Budget ("OMB")
Lieutenant Governor Kyle Gay, Office of the Lt. Governor
Secretary Christen Linke Young, Department of Health and Social Services, ("DHSS")
Commissioner Trinidad Navarro, Insurance Commissioner, Department of Insurance ("DOI")
Deputy State Court Administrator Ashley Tucker, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court Collins Seitz Designee, Administrative Office of the Courts ("AOC")
Controller General Ruth Ann Miller, Office of the Controller General ("OCG")
Paul Baumbach, President of the Delaware State Troopers Association ("DSTA") Designee
Jeff Taschner, President of the Delaware State Education Association ("DSEA") Designee
Director Stephanie Hartos, Statewide Benefits and Insurance Coverage Office, Secretary Yvonne Gordon Designee, Department of Human Resources ("DHR") – Non-Voting Member

Committee Members Absent:
Karen Peterson, State Retiree Representative
Bill Oberle, State Retiree Representative

Others in Attendance
Deputy Director Leighann Hinkle, SBO, DHR
Kristin Short, SEBC/Subcommittee Manager, SBO, DHR
Tyler Waad, Deputy Attorney General, DOJ, SEBC Legal Counsel
Kristy Akus
Michelle Baldassarre, OMB
Pamela Barr, SBO, DHR
Mark Brainard, Office of the Lt. Governor
Grant Brunner, SBO, DHR
Bob Clarkin
Corey Deck, WTW
Kristal Diaz, OPen
Natalie Di Sabatino Graef, DOI
John Fazio, WTW
Nina Figueroa, DHR
John Gadzinski, Highmark BCBSD Inc
Randy Garcia
Michelle Gast, WTW
Christina Haas, DOI
Heather Hernandez, SBO, DHR
Leighann Hinkle, SBO, DHR
Charlene Hrivnak, CVS
Meagan Iwaskiewicz, OPen
Heather Johnson, DHR
Steve LePage
Daniel Madrid, Finance
Walter Mateja, Merative
Samantha Mountz, DHR
Jennifer Moyer
Barbara Philbin
Danielle Pope
Naomi Poole
Matt Rosen, OGov
Paula Roy
Lori Ann Rhoads, Medical Society of DE
Jen Rini, DHA
Rebecca Scarborough
George Schreppler
Carrie Schiavo
Robert Scoglietti, LegHall
Jake Schaeffer, WTW
Aaron Schrader, DHR

Alex Shull
Brian Stitzel, WTW
Stephenie Tatman, OPen
Timothy Vessel, Highmark BCBSD Inc
Deputy Director Ann Visalli, OMB
Michael Volpe, DOL
Ashli Warman, SBO, DHR
Lavette Whaley
Michele Williams, DHR
Danielle Cross, SBO, DHR, Recorder

CALLED TO ORDER – DR. NEIL HOCKSTEIN, CHAIR OF DHCC
Dr. Hockstein officially called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m.

APPROVAL OF AUGUST 24, 2026, SEBC MEETING MINUTES – DR. NEIL HOCKSTEIN, CHAIR OF DHCC
A MOTION was made by Director Maxwell and seconded by Treasurer Davis to approve the minutes from August 24, 2026, meeting of the State Employee Benefits Committee (SEBC).

Roll Call Vote:
- Dr. Neil Hockstein – Yes
- Treasurer Davis – Yes
- Director Maxwell – Yes
- Lieutenant Governor Gay – Yes
- Secretary Linke Young – Yes
- Commissioner Navarro – Yes
- Controller General Ruth Ann Miller – Yes
- Ashley Tucker – Yes
- Jeff Taschner – Yes
- Paul Baumbach – Yes

MOTION ADOPTED by roll call.

Commissioner Navarro arrived at 10:05 a.m.

STATEWIDE BENEFITS OFFICE REPORT – KRISTIN BARNEKOV-SHORT, SBO, DHR
Ms. Barnekov-Short provided an update on WTW's independent financial evaluation of the Lantern Centers of Excellence program. The analysis found that the program generated $18.8 million in gross savings and $11.1 million in net plan savings. WTW also found no complications or readmissions within 30 days among Lantern participants compared with 42, or 0.21%, in the control population.

Director Maxwell asked about situations in which a participating Lantern physician performs procedures at a location that is not approved by Lantern. Director Hartos explained that physicians must meet Lantern's clinical criteria and facility participation is determined through Lantern's contracting process. Dr. Hockstein noted that a member's medical conditions may also affect the appropriate setting for a procedure.

Ms. Barnekov-Short provided an update on the 2027 Medicare Open Enrollment period for the Special Medicfill Medicare Supplement Plan and reviewed the status of the four RFPs currently in progress.

Ms. Barnekov-Short also provided an update regarding the Rothman Institute. Highmark previously notified members that Rothman would leave the GHIP commercial network effective October 1, 2026. Highmark subsequently reached an agreement with Rothman to maintain in-network access for non-Medicare members and will notify affected members of the updated network status. Highmark also confirmed that Rothman remains in-network for Special Medicfill members after termination notices were inadvertently sent to those members. Those members will also receive notification of the error. A member requested that a notice be posted to the SBO website.

EXECUTIVE SESSION PURSUANT TO 29 *DEL. C.* §10004(B)(6), LEVEL IV HEALTHCARE APPEAL
Dr. Hockstein stated that the next item on the agenda was to enter Executive Session.

A MOTION was made by Director Maxwell and seconded by DSTA Designee Paul Baumbach to move into Executive Session at 10:14 a.m.
MOTION ADOPTED UNANIMOUSLY.

The Public Session resumed at 10:46 a.m.

REVIEW OF CONSULTING REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP) SCOPE OF SERVICES – DIRECTOR STEPHANIE HARTOS, SBO, DHR
Director Hartos provided an overview of the Consulting and Actuarial Services RFP, which is anticipated to be released later this year with a contract effective date of July 1, 2027. She reviewed the services currently provided by the State's consultant and discussed proposed changes and additional areas of support to be included in the upcoming RFP.

Director Hartos explained that one of the proposed changes would allow vendors to submit proposals for one or more areas of work rather than requiring one vendor to provide all consulting services. She identified benefit consulting, actuarial analysis, procurement, and compliance as potential areas that could be separated within the RFP.

Secretary Linke Young stated that there is value in having a primary consultant with an overall understanding of the GHIP while also having the ability to use other vendors for specialized services. Director Maxwell asked how other states structure similar consulting contracts. Director Hartos stated that SBO had not conducted a formal survey but noted that, based on discussions with other states and a review of other state RFPs, multiple contract awards are common.

Members discussed the benefits and challenges of using multiple vendors, including coordination among vendors and whether auditing and compliance work should be performed separately from the vendor whose work is being reviewed. Director Hartos noted that dividing the work too narrowly could create additional complexity because many of the services overlap.

The Committee supported continuing to develop an RFP structure that would provide flexibility to use multiple vendors while maintaining coordination across the GHIP.

FINANCIALS – BRIAN STITZEL, WTW
Mr. Stitzel reviewed the FY27 GHIP trend assumptions and budget, including updates related to the Employer Group Waiver Plan (EGWP) and emerging GLP-1 experience. WTW recommended increasing the long-term medical trend assumption for Medicare-eligible members from 5% to 8% and recommended a 10% commercial pharmacy trend assumption for FY27. The FY27 budget reflects the previously approved 2.2% rate action.

DSEA Designee Jeff Taschner requested that WTW continue to show the impact of prior funding decisions on future funding needs and asked how funding at 4.2% in FY27 would have affected the projected 8.8% increase over the next three years. Mr. Stitzel confirmed that it would have reduced the projected increase. Director Maxwell and Mr. Taschner discussed prior rate actions and the impact of smaller, more consistent increases over time.

DSTA Designee Paul Baumbach asked for clarification regarding the items the Committee would be voting on later in the meeting. Mr. Stitzel clarified that the Committee would vote on the FY27 trend assumptions and FY27 GHIP budget and that future premium projections were not part of the requested action.

Mr. Stitzel also reviewed the July 2026 Fund Report, noting that July was approximately $1 million worse than budget, primarily due to higher-than-expected claims.

PUBLIC COMMENT
Ms. Cross noted that 2 written public comments were received prior to the meeting and were distributed to Committee members. One member of the public provided verbal comments regarding the Consulting and Actuarial Services RFP and GHIP funding and rate actions.

Following public comment, a committee member requested additional information regarding GLP-1 coverage for a diagnosis referenced in the written public comments.

APPROVAL OF FY27 GHIP TREND ASSUMPTIONS
A MOTION was made by Treasurer Davis and seconded by DSTA Designee Paul Baumbach to approve the FY27 GHIP trend assumptions shown on Slide 10.

Roll Call Vote:
- Dr. Neil Hockstein – Yes
- Treasurer Davis – Yes
- Director Maxwell – Yes
- Lieutenant Governor Gay – Yes
- Secretary Linke Young – Yes
- Commissioner Navarro – Yes
- Controller General Ruth Ann Miller – Yes
- Ashley Tucker – Yes
- Jeff Taschner – Yes
- Paul Baumbach – Yes

MOTION ADOPTED by roll call.

APPROVAL OF FY27 GHIP BUDGET
A MOTION was made by Director Maxwell and seconded by DSTA Designee Paul Baumbach to approve the proposed FY27 GHIP budget as presented on Slide 20.

Roll Call Vote:
- Dr. Neil Hockstein – Yes
- Treasurer Davis – Yes
- Director Maxwell – Yes
- Lieutenant Governor Gay – Yes
- Secretary Linke Young – Yes
- Commissioner Navarro – Yes
- Controller General Ruth Ann Miller – Yes
- Ashley Tucker – Yes
- Jeff Taschner – Yes

- Paul Baumbach – Yes

MOTION ADOPTED by roll call.

HEALTHCARE APPEAL DECISION

A MOTION was made by DSEA Designee Jeff Taschner and seconded by DSTA Designee Paul Baumbach to approve the Hearing Officer's recommendation on the Level IV Healthcare Appeal as presented in Executive Session.

Roll Call Vote:

- Dr. Neil Hockstein – Yes
- Treasurer Davis – Yes
- Director Maxwell – Yes
- Lieutenant Governor Gay – Yes
- Secretary Linke Young – Yes
- Commissioner Navarro – Yes
- Controller General Ruth Ann Miller – Yes
- Ashley Tucker – Yes
- Jeff Taschner – Yes
- Paul Baumbach – Yes

MOTION ADOPTED by roll call.

OTHER BUSINESS

DSTA Designee Paul Baumbach asked when the Committee would consider FY28 premium rate actions. Director Hartos stated that the Committee typically considers rate actions in February. Mr. Baumbach reiterated his request from the August meeting that options include a zero increase for Medicare-eligible participants.

ADJOURNMENT

A MOTION was made by Director Maxwell and seconded by DSEA Designee Jeff Taschner to adjourn the public session at 11:39 a.m. Motion was adopted unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

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Danielle Cross, Statewide Benefits Office, Department of Human Resources,
Recorder, State Employee Benefits Committee, and Subcommittees

A recording of the meeting is available at this link on the Delaware SEBC YouTube Page.