

—SPS ALERT—

SPS Alert 116: HR, Timekeeping, Payroll and Benefits Updates

Release date: 8/14/2019

Important Dates Coming Up

All Agencies: Training Dates

- SPS-BEN-301A-Processing Employee Benefits in Workday: TBA for New ABCs Only. This process starts with the submission of the Security Form for ABC access.

SPMS ONLY: Training Dates

- SPS-POS-201, Processing Personnel Transactions in Workday: 8/29/19, 9/26/19, 10/24/19, 12/5/19, 1/30/20 for new HRCs.

SPMS ONLY: Timekeeping and Payroll Quarterly Update Calls

- Quarterly schedule (Sept and December). The agencies will be advised in advance of the dates and time by the Payroll Consolidation Unit (PCU).

Important News and Reminders for SPS Benefits

FOR ALL AGENCIES

Getting ready for Open Enrollment in Fall 2019

Open enrollment will be here before we know it! Open Enrollment will be from October 15 – November 14, 2019.

Here are some things your agency should be working on to prepare:

- Contractual employees must have an **OPEN CONTRACT** that makes them eligible for Plan year 2020 benefits in order to get an Open Enrollment event in SPS during the Open Enrollment process starting on October 15th. This means that employees with contracts that **expire on (or before) Dec. 31, 2019** that do not have a Jan. 1, 2020 contract in SPS **will not** get an Open Enrollment event during the Open Enrollment period in October. Agencies should run the ***SPS Benefit Expiring Contract Report*** to manage this process. See more information below on updates recently made to this report.
 - Contracts that start on January 1, 2020 and are for 90 days or less will not meet the eligibility rules for an Open Enrollment event, so please make sure your start and end dates are accurate for the type and length of employment. See additional info on this issue below.
 - The only exception is employees identified in the ACA Measurement Period Reporting as ACA Eligible for 2020; these employees need an active contract and have no duration days requirement.
 - ***Benefits Only Agencies*** should send the January 1, 2020 contracts in the Delta File submission on **September 19, 2019** to ensure timely processing into SPS without errors.
 - ***SPMS and CPBI Agencies*** should make sure any contracts expiring prior to January 1, 2020 are updated by September 20, 2019.
 - ABCs and ABC Liaisons will be required to take the HIPAA Training through the Hub **prior to** the Open Enrollment period. Notifications from the Hub are sent to the email addresses in SPS. ABCs and ABC Liaisons should make sure their email addresses are up to date.
 - EBD will be conducting Open Enrollment Training in August and ABC Rec-Certification will occur in September. ABCs will be recertified each year in September going forward. The dates for Webex training for ABCs and ABC Liaisons will be sent out this week.
 - The ***SPS Benefit Expiring Contract*** report was recently updated to resolve some reported issues.
 - This report now requires you to enter a date range at runtime and the report will pull all employees with Contract End Dates in the date range you specified.
 - A column on the report identifies if the employee has current benefit elections
 - A column on the report identifies if the contract that is ending is the employees Benefit Job
 - A column on the report identifies the employees Benefit Job
 - This report should be run on a regular basis to identify upcoming expiring contracts
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- The report can be run for contracts ending on or before 12/31/19 to assist in identifying employees without a 1/1/20 contract
- A new report for Contractual Eligibility for Jan. 1, 2020 will be available soon as another way to review your contractual employee data.

REMINDERS: FOR ALL ABCs

- **All ABCs** should be running the **SPS Benefit Open Election Events – Employees** report on a weekly basis for the agency or agency units they are responsible for assisting. We will be reporting each agency's monthly report history to their HR Directors and Department Secretary.
- Events that go directly to the ABC for attaching documentation must be completed as soon as possible for the employee to have enough time to complete the elections by the 60th
- Employees should be encouraged to complete their benefit election event as soon as possible, after a life event or job change occurs.
- Incomplete and unsubmitted benefit events will be cancelled at the 61st
- Employees that attached incorrect documentation for life events or do not complete and submit elections within the 60 day window will lose access to the benefit event and will miss the opportunity to enroll in benefits.
- Employees should be reminded to check their work and/or personal/home email addresses in SPS, and to update them through the correct agency procedure. Email is used for benefit event notifications in SPS.

REMINDER!!! New Contracts for 90 days or less:

This is a reminder that if your agency completes contracts on a calendar year basis and you hire a new contractual employee between October 3 and December 31 and the contract end date is December 31, because the contract is 90 days or less, the employee will not be eligible for Benefits. If you intend to hire the employee for more than 90 days, you should expand the **contract end date** to the next calendar year end. This only occurs when it is a new employee that is hired 90 days or less from the end of the calendar year.

Example: Your new contract employee starts Nov 1, 2019, and your usual end date is Dec 31, 2019

If you would usually renew the contract on Jan 1, 2020 for an entire year, the original contract should be as follows:

Contract start date: Nov 1, 2019

Contract end date: Jan 1, **2021 (note: using a Jan. 1 end date will ensure an open enrollment event for the next plan year)**

If the original contract is 90 days or less, the employee **will not** get a Benefits event because they are not eligible. Please make sure all HRCs and HR support staff are aware of this potential issue and that your agency updates your procedures for the contractual hires within 90 days prior to the end of the calendar year.

FOR Benefit Only AGENCIES

REMINDER: Contract Extensions and Renewals Tips

For Benefit Only agencies:

- Contract renewals and extensions should be sent in the Delta File prior to the current contract end date.
- There should not be a gap between contract dates, if there was no employment gap
- Issues tend to come from effective dates that are incorrect:

For Extension of a current contract: use a date that is prior to the Delta File date and the current contract end date as the effective date (and not an effective date which was used previously for the contract).

Renewal of a current contract: use the Delta File date as the effective date for the contract renewal (example: June 27, 2019 for a July 1, 2019 renewal), the effective date cannot be the start date of the contract (since that date may be in the future).

- A contract start date cannot be changed in a Contract Extension.
 - Contract number and/or Job number doesn't change for an Extension; For a renewal, you send a new contract number.
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REMINDER-Ending Contracts and Terminations

For Benefit Only Agencies:

- When an employee contract ends, the employee is not automatically terminated from employment.
- An employee remains an active employee until a termination event is sent via the Delta File. This will impact your Master File, showing employees that no longer have a contract but have not been terminated.
- Termination events should be sent for employees when their contract ends if you are not renewing the contract.

For additional information, Benefit Only agencies should refer to the Shell IDD.

FOR SPMS and CPBI AGENCIES

SPS Ticket Issues

In an effort to address more pressing system issues, we are asking that agency staff use the following process before submitting a SPS Ticket:

- Field office staff should direct/discuss SPS procedural questions or policy questions with their Agency Headquarters staff first.
- HRCs, Timekeepers, Timekeeper Approvers, Payroll Partners, Budget and Finance Partners should seek advice from Agency HR Partners and HR Directors on questions and issues before submitting an SPS Ticket.
- Policy related questions should be directed to the appropriate DBM Division as needed.
- All HR, Time, and Payroll Support staff should refer to the SPS Job Aids and other resources prior to submitting a ticket. The SPS website is:

<https://dbm.maryland.gov/sps/Pages/default.aspx>

Click on **Help Center**, then choose the **HR** or **Time** tab for the appropriate list of resources.
