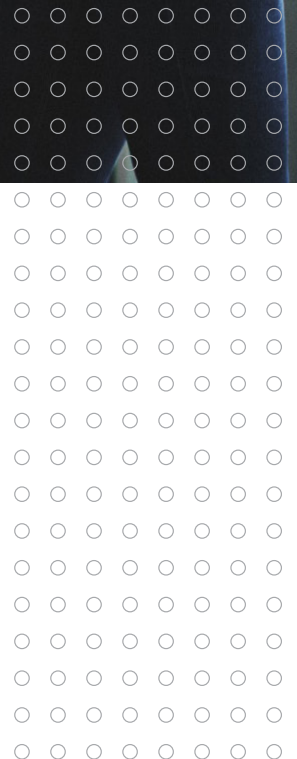




Checklist:

## **7 Steps to a Voluntary Benefits Program That Really Works**

Let's enhance your benefits and engage your employees



# 7 Steps to a Voluntary Benefits Program That Really Works



Voluntary benefits are an essential part of a complete employee benefits plan – one that meets the needs of your multi-generational workforce, fills coverage gaps, helps you compete for talent, and keeps your overall costs in line.

Review these 7 steps to a successful voluntary benefits program and then contact a HUB advisor to get started.

## 1. Identify Your Business Objectives

Start with a clear sense of why are you offering voluntary benefits.

- Compete for talent in your market?
- Satisfy and retain current employees?
- Implement as part of an overall cost management effort?
- Bridge coverage gaps in core medical and financial benefits?
- Reduce workers' compensation claims?
- Improve employee productivity?

## 2. Profile the Unique Needs of Your Workforce

Analyze your workforce demographics and claims history. Develop a profile of their benefits needs based on their life stage and individual circumstances.

- Demographic information should include:
  - Gender
  - Age
  - Marital status
  - Eligible dependents
  - Annual salary or weekly hourly pay averages
  - Job duties
- Claims data (if available) for the previous two to three years including:
  - Short- and long-term disability:
    - » Number of employees who went on disability leave and what they used to replace their income

- » Number of female employees within child-bearing age
- » Number of sole income households (i.e. single parents, unmarried employees, employees with disabled or out-of-work spouses)
- » Return to work rates
- » Number of outpatient procedures and diagnostic
- Chronic Conditions or Diseases (ie. Cancer, Diabetes, Heart Disease)
  - » Number of diagnoses and range of conditions
  - » Identify trends in diagnosis and treatment reviewing experimental treatment needs, second opinions access, costs of prescriptions and treatments
  - » Helps in evaluating the overall health of your employee population
- Injuries:
  - » Number of treatments due to injuries at Primary Care, Urgent Care and Emergency Room facilities
  - » Severity of injuries
  - » Average out-of-pocket cost of transportation for care and lodging of patient and/or family members
- Inpatient Hospitalizations:
  - » Number of hospitalizations and the average length of stay
  - » Number of hospitalizations due to sickness vs. injury

- Workers' Compensation
  - » Frequency of incidents
    - Chronology
    - On-the-job attribution
    - Demographic and job function
    - Impact of off-the-job prior incident and treatment
  - » Review your modification rates for the past two to three years.
  - » Compare your claims data versus industry averages.

- Audit and benchmark peer claims data of companies that match your:
  - Revenue size
  - Geography
  - Industry
  - Number of employees
- Review current voluntary benefits and their impact on reducing claims.

### 3. Review Your Current Benefits Offering

Conduct an audit of your current benefits plan to identify trends that may influence your decisions about voluntary benefits.

- Review premium rates against claims to understand links and gaps that are impacting increases in premium dollars.
- Gather and review ad-hoc employee feedback on struggles to pay medical expenses or other areas of satisfaction or discontent.
- Examine trends for paycheck advances or loans against 401(k)s.



If you currently offer voluntary benefits, an individual's policy total weekly premium should never exceed one hour of that individual's hourly pay. For example, if someone makes \$10 an hour - his or her premium should never exceed \$10 per week.

- Understand employee participation.
  - Track participation rates, reviewing two to three years of adoption and claims reports to identify if employees are enrolling in and using benefits.
  - Track changes in voluntary benefits participation and compare to changes in demographics for a specific time period to determine if changes in demographics impacted changes in participation.
- Track consumption of each offering by demographics to determine which benefits resonate with which segments; identify which segments are underserved or are offered a less diverse portfolio.

### 4. Gauge Employee Interest

Survey your employees to get a picture of their concerns, their priorities, and any factors preventing their participation in a voluntary benefits program. Explore the need for:

- Benefits that fill gaps in medical plans
- Financial protection
- Disease management
- Income protection
- Executive benefits
- Lifestyle and wellbeing solutions

### 5. Review Your Recruitment and Retention History

Look for any evidence that your employee benefits have had an impact on your ability to attract and keep productive employees.

- Review past declinations of offers to identify potential areas where benefits played a role in the refusal.
- Review exit interview transcripts to determine if benefits were a key element in dissatisfaction or the decision to leave the company.
- Benchmark competitor voluntary benefits offerings.

## 6. Review Your Rollout and Communications Plans

Revisit your voluntary benefits rollout plan and the communications tactics and channels used to inform and educate employees. Determine how these plans may impact enrollment rates.

- Review previous year's communication and enrollment efforts to determine employee engagement, access to education, successes and failures.
- Review current and past rollout schedules and identify missed communication opportunities either at open enrollment or at other times throughout the year.
- Identify the best time to reach employees through the available communication channels.
- Determine if voluntary benefits enrollment should coincide with your core benefits open enrollment or should be done off-cycle.
- Identify optimal enrollment channels, reflecting employee preferences, including:
  - Onsite Benefit Counselors
  - Online or Electronic Enrollment
  - Call Center Enrollment
  - Simplified Paper Application

- Review preferred communication channels to determine what will drive engagement and participation.
  - Manager and executive level communications
  - Pay check stuffers
  - Email campaigns from the company
  - Onsite group meetings
  - Onsite carrier resources used at benefit fairs and/or group meetings
  - C-suite announcement
  - Personalized benefits booklets
  - Posters and flyers
  - Webcast meetings
  - Home mailers
  - Videos or Avatars
  - Text messages

## 7. Review Your Broker Relationship

If you are already offering voluntary benefits, or have in the past, did your broker help you develop a program that really works? Review your broker's guidance and assistance on the following:

- Product recommendations that complement your core medical benefits.
- Product recommendations based on employee demographics.
- Multi-year product strategy and timeline that aligns with your goals for your core benefits.
- Premium affordability calculations review.
- Communications and education support.
- Administration and enrollment support.
- Post-enrollment assessments to benchmark successes and needed improvements.

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## Let's review your voluntary benefits needs.

When you add voluntary benefits to your core benefits plan, you can make a good plan great. We'll help you identify the optimal benefits to offer your employees, and create an effective communications and enrollment plan to ensure success. Request your quick-start consultation today.

**Contact a HUB Employee Benefits advisor today**

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Together, we'll tailor employee benefits solution to address the big issues you're facing today - and those that will affect you in the future.

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