
October 2022

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1. Your Federal Health Benefits, Medicare and Long Term Care Insurance. Paula Jakub, American Foreign Service Protective Association CEO, will hold a special virtual meeting for FEA-R members on Federal Health Insurance, Medicare, and Long Term Care Insurance. As we head toward open season next month, it is important to understand if any upcoming changes in the FEHB program will impact you. Along with changes, she will also discuss how your benefits interface with Medicare and the new federal Medicare Advantage Plans offered by the FEHBP. Also, Ms. Jakub will discuss what is happening in a number of States regarding Long Term Care insurance mandates, along with the program offered by the Federal government. This virtual meeting will be on Thursday, October 20, at 1 pm Eastern (10 am Pacific). To register for this upcoming event (and receive the Zoom link by email), visit:

https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_GY5jdl00TZK0RO9VohPzJQ

2. What do I need to know about Long Term Care Insurance? In preparing for the upcoming virtual meeting on Long Term Care insurance, members may wish to listen to a 42-minute podcast on the subject at “AFSPA Talks.” Just copy and paste “www.afspa.org/podcast” into your browser, and then scroll down to Season 3/Episode 7. (The hot link was not working.) Find out what LTC insurance covers and what questions you should ask, when considering an LTC program.

3. Traveling to Europe in 2023? Don’t forget your ETIAS, along with your passport. In mid-to-late 2023, US citizens will need an electronic travel authorization to visit much of Europe. Travelers to any Schengen-zone country (this includes Germany, Belgium, the Netherlands, Italy and Spain) will have to register with the European Travel Information and Authorization System (ETIAS). The process will involve a quick online application and a 7 Euro credit card payment. The authorization will be valid for unlimited entries within a 3-year period (or until the date of the applicant’s passport expires, whichever is sooner).

4. Are you ready for Election Day 2022? The NEA has created a website to provide its members with critical information about this November’s election. You can preview your ballot, check to be sure you are registered to vote, find out which candidates are supported by NEA State affiliates, and find your polling location. You will also be able to contribute to “The Fund for Children and Public Education” to support candidates that have been recommended by NEA for supporting public education. Visit: www.educationvotes.nea.org

5. Volunteers needed. Research shows that handwritten postcards are an effective way to get out the vote. NEA will provide the post cards and postage to volunteers who are willing to write a personal note on the pre-addressed (postage paid) card to NEA members reminding them to vote during the midterms. If you wish to volunteer, visit:

<https://educationvotes.nea.org/volunteer-opportunity-write-and-send-get-out-the-vote-postcards/>

6. Update on GPO/WEP repeal? The House Way and Means Committee held a markup to consider the Social Security Fairness Act (which would repeal GPO/WEP). They voted to move the bill without a recommendation. Although this does not kill the bill, it does delay the process a bit because it will not be moving to the House floor for a vote, at the moment. There is still a chance that the bill could move during the lame duck, after the elections.

7. Flu shot? Experts expect the flu will make a more severe comeback this winter. Older adults should seek out the flu shot that provides better protection for the elderly. (If those shots for older adults are not available, a standard flu-shot is better than none at all.) The flu vaccine effectiveness wanes over time, so it is usually recommended to get the shot in September/October.

8. Members helping (Mississippi) Members. As has been covered in the news, NEA members, public schools and the entire community of Jackson, Mississippi, are experiencing a severe lack of clean water resources due to a failure of local water treatment facilities. Schools have been closed and the community is struggling to get basic water needs met. To find out more, and to see how you can help, visit: <https://www.nea.org/advocating-for-change/new-from-nea/educators-fight-clean-water-jackson-mississippi>

9. How to Save Hundreds of Dollars on Travel/Recreational Costs. FEA-R wishes to thank Michael Gavin, NEA-Member Benefits representative, for his excellent virtual presentation last month on how our retired members can save hundreds of dollars on travel program and recreational activities. For those who missed that presentation, here is a quick synopsis to get you started in saving money.

a. Begin by visiting NEA Member Benefits website. If you go to www.neamb.com/start , you will find the page that shows the 6 most popular NEA-MB programs.

b. Enroll in the NEA Travel Program, and receive “\$500” in “Travel Dollars” which can be used to provide members with discounts on car rentals, hotels, airfares, resorts, cruises and much more. Members receive “bonus dollars” on their anniversary sign-up date and “\$100 Travel Dollars” when booking air travel.

c. Check out NEA-MB’s Discount Tickets Program. (From the website, click on the top banner “Benefits and Discounts” and then click on “Discount Tickets.”) At this site, FEA-Retired members can get discounts on movie tickets, along with savings on theme parks, water parks, sports programs, and Broadway shows. Explore all your options. You can also click on your city and see what’s available near your home!

If you have questions about how to access these benefits, feel free to contact Michael Gavin (mgavin@neamb.com)
