

HCAA Legislative Report

October 4, 2022

Respectfully submitted by Jim Edstrom and Linda Kolbusz-Kosan

September 20, 2022: Aetna Medicare Advantage plan will officially be the only health insurance option for roughly 140,000 retired state workers for the next five or more years. Aetna will be the sole insurer after selling the state on a group PPO (Preferred Provider Organization) plan that the company has not previously offered in Illinois. CMS is required to present the new contract to lawmakers on the Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability during the fall Veto Session which is scheduled to be held on November 15-17 & 29-31. **Open enrollment for state retirees has been pushed back to Nov.1 from the typical Oct. 1 start date.** While your carrier for medical and prescription drug coverage is changing, your dental carrier— Delta Dental—and vision carrier—EyeMed, if applicable, will remain the same. No action is required unless you want to opt out of the Aetna MAPD PPO Plan, add or remove dependents, or change dental/vision coverage, if applicable. If you and your Medicare-eligible dependent(s) are currently covered under the UnitedHealthcare MAPD Plan or a MAPD HMO Plan, you and your Medicare-eligible dependent(s) will be automatically enrolled in the Aetna MAPD PPO Plan. **This new plan will replace your current plan,** whether you're currently enrolled in the UnitedHealthcare MAPD Plan or one of the MAPD HMO Plans (Aetna, Health Alliance, or Humana) **The new plan will go into effect for enrollees Jan. 1.** The in person meetings, to be given by the state, are scheduled between Nov 1 & Nov 18 (locations unknown) plus there will be 3 virtual opportunities on Oct 25,26,& 27 (times unknown). Watch for an email and/or a mailing in mid October with more info.

- 294 Members of the House of Representatives have now co-signed H.R. 82, which would repeal the WEP (Windfall Elimination Program) and GPO (Government Pension Offset). A formal House vote has been requested. Under GPO, someone with a spouse who is earning Social Security, you will probably lose all Social Security spousal or survivor retirement benefits that would normally result from taxes paid by the spouse during the marriage. The WEP cuts up to half the value of a pension from the Social Security earned in other jobs in which the required FICA taxes were paid.

2022 General Election Tuesday, Nov. 8

Early Voting

Early voting begins Sept. 29 and runs through Nov. 7. Contact your local County Clerk's office to confirm your registration, for instructions on how to vote early, vote by mail, or vote in person. If you choose to wait and vote on Nov. 8, your local County Clerk can provide your polling location. In addition, you can see YOUR sample ballot in advance, so you can be more prepared to vote.

Here are some County clerk websites for nearby IL counties:

<https://www.cookcountyclerkil.gov/elections>

<https://www.lakecountyil.gov/3185/Elections>

<https://www.mchenrycountyil.gov/county-government/departments-a-i/county-clerk/elections>

<https://www.kanecountyclerk.org/Elections>

<https://www.dupagecounty.gov/election/>

Vote by Mail

The State of Illinois requires mail-in voting **applications** to be completed by Oct. 15.

Voter Registration Deadlines

- By mail: postmarked by Oct. 11
- Online (ova.elections.il.gov): by Oct. 23
- In person at designated location on Election Day, Nov. 8

BallotReady

A handy new tool for researching elections is now available at BallotReady (<https://www.ballotready.org/>). BallotReady allows the voter to:

- Compile a list of their elected and appointed officials
- Determine all candidates on their local ballot
- Find information about voting logistics
- Verify their voting Registration

This works throughout the US so those living out of state can use this website.

Don't Forget to be Prepared to Vote for Judges

There are many organizations which give information on judges including short bios, some of their cases, career highlights, and ratings. The ratings are Highly Qualified, Well Qualified, Qualified, Not Recommended, and No Rating. It is always good to check a couple of websites to be informed. This year, in particular, you will want to make sure to research and vote for the IL Supreme Court. There are 2 vacancies to be filled this year. The following are some of the organizations that have websites which provide helpful information and different perspectives.

IL State Bar Association isba.org
 Chicago Council of Lawyers Chicagocouncil.org
 Cook County Bar Association cookcountybr.org
 Alliance of Bar Associations
 Hispanic Lawyers Association of IL
 Women's Bar Association of IL
 Puerto Rican Bar Association
 Arab American Bar Association
 Black Women Lawyer Association\

Workers Rights Amendment

Voters will be asked to approve a proposed amendment to the Illinois constitution that would establish a constitutional right for employees to organize and bargain collectively, specifically to negotiate "wages, hours and working conditions and to protect their economic welfare and safety at work." The proposition would require a 60% approval rate to be added to the state's constitution. 27 states already have this law. Please see <https://www.nbcchicago.com/news/local/chicago-politics/workers-rights-amendment-will-appear-on-illinois-ballots-heres-what-it-is/2951080/> for full information.

School District 15 Ballot Proposition: Moving 15 Forward

"A community-driven plan focused on addressing District 15's highest priority educational and school facility needs"
<https://www.ccsd15.net/Page/10319>

Total Estimated Cost = \$186 Million

Half of project costs funded with "non-referendum" dollars:

- District funds would address \$93 million of improvements, half of the total project cost
- Downsized referendum proposal would fund \$93 million of improvements
- Estimated tax impact reduced to \$12.16/month for a home with \$300,000 fair market value