

# The Fund Office Report

APRIL 2005

## STEAMFITTERS

### **NEW HEALTH REIMBURSEMENT ACCOUNT TO COMMENCE MAJOR IMPROVEMENTS TO SECURITY BENEFIT FUND**

PLEASE READ THE COMPLETE VERSION OF THE CHANGES TO THE SECURITY BENEFIT FUND AND ESTABLISHMENT OF THE NEW HEALTH REIMBURSEMENT ACCOUNT THAT WAS MAILED TO ALL PARTICIPANTS UNDER SEPARATE COVER. ALSO, FUND ADMINISTRATOR, KEVIN J. DRISCOLL WILL BE PRESENT AT THE APRIL QUARTERLY UNION MEETING TO ANSWER ANY QUESTIONS THAT YOU MIGHT HAVE.

There has been considerable discussion over the past year about the new benefit structure that will be positively affecting the Security Benefit Fund in conjunction with the introduction of the new Health Reimbursement Account. **Please note that the new benefit structure starts on July 1, 2005.**

#### **SECURITY BENEFIT FUND**

Effective July 1, 2005, the rate to Individual accounts will be \$3.00 per hour for journeyman regular time and doubled for overtime [apprentices subject to regular percentage factors].

Benefits that will remain unchanged will be reimbursements for Unemployment, Disability, Worker's Compensation, Jury Duty, Term Life Insurance, Scholarship for Post-High School Education or Training, Severance, & Funeral & Death. The Supplemental Vacation benefit will be eliminated as of June 30, 2005.

The following benefits will be transferred to the Health Reimbursement Account: Medical, Dental, Drug, Vision, Hearing, Long-Term Care Insurance, COBRA Premiums, Medicare Premiums and Health Care Insurance.

In addition, there will be a newly established benefit for Financial and Housing assistance. If a benefit application for the Health Reimbursement Account (HRA) is larger than the balance in your HRA account, the difference between the application amount and your HRA account balance can be transferred to your HRA account. The transfer amount cannot exceed your Security Benefit Fund account balance and is not subject to tax.

#### **HEALTH REIMBURSEMENT ACCOUNT**

The new HRA, a separate trust fund established as part of the Steamfitters' Industry Welfare Fund, will reimburse you for all medical care and associated expenses not covered by insurance on a tax-free basis. Each participant will have an individual account balance, similar in concept to the Security Benefit Fund.

Effective July 1, 2005 the rate to individual accounts will be \$1.00 per hour for journeyman regular time, doubled for overtime (apprentices are subject to regular percentage factors). The maximum balance in your account cannot exceed \$5,000. Any balance in excess of this amount will be transferred

- Continued on Page 2 -

- Continued from Page 1 -

on a quarterly basis to your Supplemental Retirement Fund (401a Plan) account. Benefits allowed will be: Medical & Hospital, Dental, Prescription Drugs including over-the counter medicine, Vision Care, Hearing Aid, Medicare premiums, COBRA premiums, Long Term Care insurance, Other Healthcare insurance, Assisted Living Medical Costs and Final Medical Care Expense.

As always, please contact the Help Desk at 212-465-8888 ext. 244 with any questions.

## Metal Trades & Steamfitters

### HIPAA PROTECTS YOUR PRIVACY

Federal law requires that any adults health information be closely guarded and only used for certain select reasons. Thus, when you or a spouse contact the Fund Office often times we cannot discuss specific health information unless we ascertain with reasonable assurances that we are speaking with the effected person. In addition, a spouse cannot ask about another spouse's health information. On occasion, members or spouses become upset with our security measures. However, be assured we are only following federal law in protecting your personal health information.

## Steamfitters

### DISABILITY STATUS PROGRAM HELPS WITH YOUR HEALTH COVERAGE

**Under the rules of the Welfare Fund, you must report any injury on or off the job which will effect your ability to work to the Fund Office as soon as possible and your completed application must be received within thirty (30) days .The DSP can protect you from losing coverage if your illness or injury prevents you from working. As a prerequisite to the DSP application process, you must be covered in the Welfare Fund at the time of your injury or illness. You will be required to undergo an independent medical examination as part of the process prior to Trustee approval. Call the Fund Office Help Desk at Ext. 244 with any questions.**

“A friendly reminder.....”

Each quarter we use this space to remind you of a program's rules, regulations or benefit structure. This quarter we will refresh your memory about the rules when you return to work after retiring.

If a retired steamfitter participant, regardless of age, returns to work in the Industry, the Fund Office must be notified, in writing, within one week of commencing such employment regardless of which pension option you elect. Any additional years of service you may earn while on Return to Work status would be paid to you on a monthly basis at the benefit level in effect at the time you have re-retired. Payment, however, is not automatic. You must contact the Fund Office for the appropriate forms for any additional year(s) of service you have earned.

Please note that in the Metal Trades Branch if you return to work after you have begun to receive pension benefits, your benefit payments may be suspended for the period during which you work. We encourage you to contact the Pension Fund should you have any questions re-