

# Trailblazer Joint Powers Board EMPLOYEE BENEFIT SUMMARY - 2023

**Paid Time Off** *(Full-time & Part-time employees)*

Employees may use Paid Time Off (PTO) for vacations, illness, funerals, and personal business. PTO is earned based on the accrual rates shown below. PTO accrues on all hours paid to an employee, with the exception of overtime hours. PTO may be used in fifteen-minute increments. See Article 11 in the Personnel Policies section of the employee handbook for additional information.

**Accrual Rate Per Hour Paid (except on overtime hours)**

Newly hired up to 5 years	.0654 PTO hrs/hour worked	* 17 days/year
5 years up to 10 years	.0847 PTO hrs/hour worked	* 22 days/year
10 years or more	.1039 PTO hrs/hour worked	* 27 days/year

\* The **days/year** are approximations and serve only as a frame of reference.

**Holiday Pay** *(Full-time & Part-time employees)*

Trailblazer recognizes the six holidays listed below, for which employees will receive holiday pay. Since Trailblazer does not operate on these holidays, employees generally receive the day off. However, should a recognized holiday fall on a day of the week that Trailblazer generally does not operate, non-exempt employees do not get an additional day off unless PTO is used. Holiday pay is based on the number of hours of a regular work shift, which is defined for each employee by the employer and listed on the approved Operations Plan. Holiday pay for individuals working temporary schedules (whether greater or fewer hours) is also based on their regular work shifts. Employees are eligible for holiday pay after the first day of work.

**Recognized Holidays**

- |                           |                                |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------|
| • New Year’s Day          | • Labor Day                    |
| • Memorial Day            | • Thanksgiving Day             |
| • 4 <sup>th</sup> of July | • 25 <sup>th</sup> of December |

**Public Employees Retirement Association (PERA)** *(All employees)*

PERA is a retirement plan established by the Minnesota State Legislature for governmental agencies. Contribution rates are calculated on gross wages or salaries. The employee’s contribution is deducted on a pre-tax basis.

**Coordinated Plan Contribution Rates (2023):**

Employee .....	6.5%
Employer .....	7.5%

## **Term Life Insurance** *(Full-time employees only)*

Trailblazer pays the entire monthly premium for a \$15,000 term life insurance policy for the employee only. Employees may purchase at their own expense additional coverage for themselves and/or their dependents.

## **Health Insurance** *(Full-time employees only)*

- Employees may select from a large number of different health insurance plans available on the individual health insurance market.
- For 2023, Trailblazer endorsed a Blue Cross Blue Shield plan called **Blue Plus Minnesota Value HSA Gold \$3,500 Plan 207**. This is a High Deductible Health Plan (HDHP) with a SINGLE deductible of \$3,500 and a FAMILY deductible of \$10,500. A summary of this plan is included at the end of this document.
- **Trailblazer will reimburse 100% of the health insurance premiums for the endorsed plan for SINGLE coverage**, which means that an employee can select a health insurance plan that has ZERO cost for monthly premiums for single coverage.
- **Trailblazer will reimburse up to \$1,000 per month for premiums for FAMILY coverage**. For family coverage, the monthly employee cost will depend on a number of factors including the plan selected, the number of family members, and their ages. There is a maximum reimbursement for each individual family member.
- In addition to the high deductible health plan that Trailblazer endorsed, there are many other health plans that an employee can choose from, including traditional co-pay plans. See the section below titled *ICHRAs Explained* for more information.
- Full-time employees may choose to **WAIVE** health insurance coverage if they have health insurance coverage from somewhere else. Employees who waive coverage are eligible for a **\$300 per month taxable stipend** (up to \$3,600 per year).

### **ICHRAs Explained**

- Trailblazer offers an Independent Coverage Health Reimbursement Arrangement (ICHRA) in 2023. In its purest form, the ICHRA model provides the opportunity for an employee to purchase his/her own health insurance on the individual market and for the employer to reimburse the employee for the cost of that insurance up to a specified amount. The federal government introduced ICHRAs in 2020 as a more affordable way for employers to offer quality health care plans and to provide employees with more plan options to meet their specific needs.
- Trailblazer selected a company called **NEXBEN** to help administer the ICHRA model in 2023. To simplify the reimbursement process, Nexben collects the billing data from all the health care plans that the Trailblazer employees select and then sends a single invoice to Trailblazer. After Trailblazer pays the bill, Nexben then pays all of the insurance providers. Trailblazer will deduct any employee contributions during the payroll process using pre-tax dollars, except for any employee contributions for plans listed on the insurance exchange.
- “On-Exchange” health insurance plans are subsidized by the government and are not eligible for pre-tax employee contributions. Therefore, employees must select a plan that is not listed on the health insurance exchange, known as **MNsure** in Minnesota, to be eligible to use pre-tax dollars for any employee contributions.

- Trailblazer will pay the cost of \$30 per month per employee to use Nexben services. All full-time employees are required to sign up/register with Nexben, even if the employee chooses to waive coverage.
- To be eligible for Trailblazer's reimbursements toward health insurance premiums, all full-time employees and their family members are required to use Nexben to enroll for health insurance, including Medicare.
- Nexben also coordinates seamlessly with three other online vendors to help employees find an insurance plan on the individual market that works best for them. The three vendors are eHealth, HealthSherpa and Stride Health. Employees access the services from all three companies via the Nexben online portal. The insurance consultants/advisors will provide assistance by telephone or video chat.
- Trailblazer strongly encourages employees to use eHealth for assistance to enroll in their health insurance plans, including Medicare, as eHealth is the only service that is able to facilitate Off-Exchange, On-Exchange, and Medicare enrollments.

### **ICHR Employer Contributions**

- **For SINGLE coverage, Trailblazer will reimburse employees up to 100% of the cost of the monthly premium** for the health care plan on the individual market that Trailblazer endorses. Even though an employee may select any plan that is available on the individual market, Trailblazer will only reimburse the employee up to the monthly premium of the plan that Trailblazer endorses. Therefore, an employee will pay out-of-pocket when selecting a different plan with higher premiums, and an employee choosing a less expensive plan will forfeit the difference between the maximum employer reimbursement and the lower price of the selected plan.
- **For FAMILY coverage, Trailblazer will reimburse the employee up to \$1,000 per month for any plan that the employee selects. For Trailblazer's purposes, family coverage is defined as the employee plus at least one other family member including a spouse, domestic partner, or child. Except for Medicare, all family members need to enroll in the same plan.**
- Trailblazer will only reimburse the premium for non-tobacco users. Any additional premium for tobacco use will be paid for by the employee.
- The exact amount of employer reimbursement varies for each employee because the pricing in the individual plan market depends on the employee's age and home address. More specifically, pricing is different for employees living in Area 5 (including Sibley and McLeod Counties) versus Area 8 (including Wright County).
- Employees enrolled in **MEDICARE** may be eligible for an employer reimbursement of up to **\$500 per month** for any out-of-pocket costs related to Medicare premiums or supplements. Any employee age 65 or older must enroll in Medicare since the law does not allow an employee to purchase an individual health insurance plan at this age. An employee must enroll in Medicare through the Nexben platform if the employee desires to take advantage of any employer contribution or if the employee intends to pay for any out-of-pocket Medicare premiums with pre-tax dollars.
- There may be some circumstances where the Nexben platform cannot accommodate the administration of certain Medicare scenarios. In these cases, the employee may need to make payment and then Trailblazer may need to write a check to reimburse the employee.

## **Health Savings Accounts (HSAs)**

- Employees selecting a High Deductible Health Plan (HDHP) may be eligible to participate in a Health Savings Account (HSA). Employees are responsible for managing their own eligibility and contributions into HSAs. All full-time employees are allowed to select HDHPs, but not everyone is eligible for a HSA (federal regulations determine eligibility).
- Trailblazer allows eligible employees to make pre-tax payroll deductions into HSAs via *Further* (this is the name of the company that administers the HSA accounts). However, please know that *HealthEquity* recently acquired *Further*.
- **For high deductible SINGLE plans, Trailblazer Joint Powers Board will contribute \$291 per month, or up to \$3,492 per year, into a qualifying HSA account administered by Trailblazer Joint Powers Board.**
- **For high deductible FAMILY plans, Trailblazer Joint Powers Board will contribute \$500 per month, or up to \$6,000 per year, into a qualifying HSA account administered by Trailblazer Joint Powers Board.**
- The maximum HSA contribution limits for 2023 are \$3,850 for single and \$7,750 for family. There is an additional \$1,000 catch-up contribution allowed for both single and family plans for anyone age 55 or older.

## Summary of Blue Plus Minnesota Value HSA Gold \$3500 Plan 207

### In-Network

Metal Level	Gold
Network	BLUE PLUS VALUE
Deductible (Ind/Fam)	\$3,500 / \$10,500
Embedded Deductible	No
Max Out-Of-Pocket (Ind/Fam)	\$3,500 / \$10,500
Embedded Max Out-Of-Pocket	No

### Office Visits

Preventive Care Services	No Charge
Primary Visit	\$0 after deductible
Specialty Visit	\$0 after deductible
Urgent Care	\$0 after deductible
Emergency Room Visit	\$0 after deductible

### Tests

Diagnostics	\$0 after deductible
Imaging	\$0 after deductible

### Hospital

Outpatient	\$0 after deductible
Inpatient	\$0 after deductible

### Prescription Drug Coverage

Generic - Tier I	\$0 after deductible
Preferred Brand - Tier II	\$0 after deductible
Non-Preferred Brand - Tier III	\$0 after deductible
Specialty Drugs - Tier IV	\$0 after deductible

### Out-of-Network

Deductible (Ind/Fam)	\$20,000 / \$40,000
Max Out-Of-Pocket (Ind/Fam)	Not Covered / Not Covered
Co-insurance	50%