



Health Matters

Minute

DECEMBER 2009



New and improved Healthy Incentives is as easy as 1, 2, 3 . . .

Changes are coming to the Healthy IncentivesSM program in 2010. Information will be mailed to your home address in late December. It will include the latest information about the county's new partner for the Healthy IncentivesSM program, WebMD, as well as information about how to earn the lowest out-of-pocket expense level for your 2011 medical benefits.

If you have recently moved, contact your human resources or payroll representative and be sure that your mailing address is updated so you will receive this important information without delay.

The rules and deadlines for the Healthy IncentivesSM program are the same: you and your spouse/domestic partner must each complete the wellness assessment by Jan. 31 and an individual action plan by June 30 to earn the gold out-of-pocket expense level for the next year. However, the choices for individual action plans and the process for completing them have changed.

In 2010, coaching calls are no longer an individual action plan. You can request the support of a personal

health coach to help you with your health goals, but coaching calls alone will not count toward earning the gold out-of-pocket expense level. To get started:

Register

Beginning Jan. 1, 2010, you can register at www.kchealthyincentives.com, the new Healthy IncentivesSM Web site powered by WebMD.

Registering is simple. Just enter:

- the **Healthy IncentivesSM ID** that is included in the packet mailed to your home; and
- a **work or personal e-mail address**. WebMD will share important information with you via e-mail, including reminders to take the wellness assessment and get started on your individual action plan. If you do not have an e-mail account, you can sign-up for a free e-mail account by following the instructions provided when you register.

After you register follow Steps 1, 2, and 3 (below) to go for gold!

Step 1: Take the wellness assessment by January 31, 2010

Be sure to have your latest blood pressure, cholesterol and blood glucose measurements handy. After completing the online wellness assessment, you'll receive

an easy-to-understand report that identifies your personal health risks and provides you with a customized plan to help reduce or eliminate these health risks.

Step 2: Complete your individual action plan by June 30, 2010

Seven new individual action plans give people more choice about how to maintain or improve their health. The new plans include: the Live Well Challenge; Free and Clear Tobacco Cessation; Weight Watchers at Work[®]; and four different WebMD online Lifestyle Improvement Programs that focus on exercise, nutrition, stress management and weight management.

You'll be able to begin your individual action plan immediately after you complete the wellness assessment. Paper versions of the wellness assessment and exercise and nutrition individual action plans are available at a cost to the county of \$18 per person.

For more information call 206-205-5017 or visit www.kingcounty.gov/HealthMatters.

Step 3: Visit the rewards page frequently

The new Healthy IncentivesSM page, powered by WebMD, is your personal portal to good health. Based on your health profile, your customized home page will deliver personalized news and access to the resources to take more control of your health, including: health news, medical encyclopedias, health related newsletters and Symptom Checker.

The rewards page allows you to track your individual benefit status (gold, silver, bronze). Plus, if you have selected one of the four WebMD online Lifestyle Improvement Programs (exercise, nutrition, stress management or weight management) as your individual action plan you can also check your progress from the rewards page.

Ross Johnson, December Health Hero

I would like to nominate Ross Johnson, Vehicle Maintenance Mechanic of 30 years for Metro Transit as a health hero.

Ross just turned 60 this year and keeping fit comes easy for him. He has never been a user of any tobacco products, keeps physically active, eats a healthy diet, always making sure the appropriate servings of fruits and vegetables are included in his daily food plan, wears a pedometer and generally gets over 10,000 steps a day.

I believe Ross is a health hero because he has taken all the steps in his life to live a healthy lifestyle and he

is now reaping the rewards of that healthy lifestyle by not having to deal with diabetes, high blood pressure, obesity and all the other maladies that many seniors face as they age. He is cognizant of the cost of health care and does everything he can to use the health plan wisely and cost effectively. His choices that lead to good health certainly helps him enjoy his life fully and still do the things he did as a young man. His good health is also a benefit for the county because his choices help to keep the cost of health care down.

Cindy Lee, Benefits and Retirement Manager



Doing fine in 2009: Progress report on the Healthy Incentives

Since Healthy IncentivesSM began in 2005, King County employees have been doing their part to improve health and reduce costs. 2009 proved a watershed year, marking significant progress towards better health and controlling costs.

Cost savings

Prior to Healthy IncentivesSM, health care costs at King County were rising at 11% a year. By 2009 expenses had slowed to 9% growth a year, a reduction of \$18 million from original projections.

Healthier employees, families

Healthy IncentivesSM has been successful not only in helping healthy folks stay healthy, but also in actually improving the well being of both employees and their spouse/domestic partners (spartners).

According to Thompson Reuters, King County employ-

ees and their spartners showed steady improvement in 12 out of 14 health indicators over the past four years, including blood pressure, weight and tobacco use. Researchers say these health improvements are particularly notable given the county's aging population and low turnover. Without innovative wellness programs (like Healthy IncentivesSM) experts normally expect decreases in health each year.

Between 2006-2009, the percentage of employees who were above recommended BMI ranges dropped from 67.8% to 65.4%. Tobacco use for employees and spartners has plummeted from 10.1 percent to 6.3 percent.

For more stats and info about Healthy IncentivesSM in 2009, go to www.kingcounty.gov/HealthMatters and click on "December Health Matters".



Employee resources and tips from December Health Matters

Healthy Incentives presentations – Learn more about important changes to the Healthy IncentivesSM program by attending a presentation in December or January. The presentation (pdf) is also available online: www.kingcounty.gov/HealthMatters. Employees who do not have internet access can contact the Health Matters Team at 206-205-5017 or e-mail FocusOnEmployees@kingcounty.gov and request a paper copy of the presentation, **Frequently Asked Questions** and the **Individual Action Plan Guide**.

Stress Less – Learn more about holiday stress and how to avoid it. Go to [\[Matters\]\(http://www.kingcounty.gov/HealthMatters\) and click "December Health Matters".](http://www.kingcounty.gov/Health-</p></div><div data-bbox=)

Move More – Your time may be tight but we've got lots of tips on how to work physical activity into a busy holiday schedule. Click on "December Health Matters" from www.kingcounty.gov/HealthMatters.

Eat Smart – Get tips to help you indulge in healthy eating during the holiday season. Go to www.kingcounty.gov/HealthMatters, "December Health Matters".

Quit Tobacco – King County offers comprehensive benefits can help make the move. Click "Quit Tobacco" from the **Health Matters** site or call 206-263-6085.