

BENEFITS UPDATE

Many of our active and retired members have been experiencing issues with their benefit coverage, as well as the Federal Government's National Dental Plan. The following updates outline the current status of these matters.

Car Rental Provision While on Medical Travel

Active members were recently advised that, effective January 1, 2026, car rentals would no longer be covered. This information was incorrect.

The issue resulted from a miscommunication between the company and Pacific Blue Cross. There have been **no changes** to this coverage, which continues to include transportation between the hotel, hospital, and airport during medical travel.

Pacific Blue Cross has been instructed to reinstate this coverage. The Union has also requested a full review of any claims that were previously denied for this reason.

Third-Party Bookings

Pacific Blue Cross no longer accepts third-party bookings for car rentals, hotels, or flights.

Despite ongoing discussions over the past several months, there has been little progress on this issue. Members are now required to book medical travel services **directly** with the car rental company, airline, travel agent or hotel.

If you engage third party booking services through online platforms (e.g., Trivago, Expedia, Economy Bookings) you do so **at your own risk**.

If a third-party booking is used, members must submit:

- The receipt from the third party (showing the amount paid), **and**

- A receipt from the service provider (car rental company, hotel, airline) confirming the service was used, **but there are no guarantees that you will be reimbursed.**

If you have already had a claim denied due to submitting only a third-party receipt, you are advised to contact the service provider and request a copy of the contract or confirmation of service. This documentation should then be resubmitted to Pacific Blue Cross.

National Dental Plan

Many retired members who applied for the National Dental Plan were initially accepted. Eligibility is based on income and whether the applicant has access to another dental plan.

The Federal Government received T4A information from Rio Tinto indicating that some retirees still had access to dental coverage. This appears to be due to remaining balances in Retiree Dental Plan B, even after members reached age 72 and believed their coverage had ended.

This has created a discrepancy:

- T4A records suggest access to a dental plan.
- While Pacific Blue Cross has indicated in some cases that no coverage remains.

The Union has been engaged in discussions with the company for several months, but the issue remains unresolved. This situation may impact retirees' eligibility for the National Dental Plan.

To address this, the Local Union has engaged our National Union to support lobbying efforts with the Federal Government. We are advocating for improvements to the National Dental Plan eligibility criteria, including allowing coordination of benefits—where an existing plan would act as the first payer, followed by the National Dental Plan.

If you have questions or require assistance with your claims, please contact the Union Hall.

YOUR UNION AT WORK!