

## HOW TO CONTINUE YOUR BENEFITS

Insurance & Benefits will receive notification when your employment with the District ends. Once notified, we will send information to you advising what benefits you currently have and the benefit termination date for each. You will, however, be able to extend medical, dental, and/or vision through COBRA.

Under federal law, COBRA allows you to continue your current benefits for you and your dependents (if applicable) up to the maximum of 18 months. You will have up to 60 days from the benefit termination date or the date of the notice (the later of the two) to elect those benefit(s) you wish to continue. Once elected, you will have up to 45 days to pay the first premium(s). COBRA coverage begins the day after the benefit termination date. If COBRA coverage is cancelled for non-payment or is voluntarily cancelled, it can never be reinstated.

Effective February 17, 2009, President Obama introduced the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA). ARRA provides COBRA premium subsidy for employees whose employment is involuntarily terminated (i.e. loss of position) between September 1, 2008 and December 31, 2009. Under this provision, employees that are involuntarily terminated may elect COBRA and will be required to pay only 35% of the regular COBRA premium. The subsidy will pay the remaining 65% of the COBRA premium for a period of up to nine (9) months. The subsidy may end earlier than nine (9) months if:

- ◆ You become eligible for coverage under another group health plan or Medicare.
- ◆ COBRA coverage ends - due to failure to pay the required 35% of the COBRA premium.

**Please note**....even though, you may be eligible to receive the COBRA subsidy, the rules of COBRA will still apply.

Through COBRA, the benefits you currently have will remain the same. You can not change plans (i.e. 903 PPO Plan to 706 PPO Plan) at this time. You, as a COBRA participant, will have the same opportunity as active employees to make changes during the District's annual Open Enrollment in January/February.

Disability insurance is one benefit that you can not continue through *COBRA*. However, if you currently have an active disability claim for which you are receiving disability benefits, then your disability benefits will continue until the benefit period ends or when you are no longer considered disabled (whichever comes first).

Your life insurance can be converted to a whole life insurance product by contacting Minnesota Life Insurance Company.

If you have cancer insurance, it is portable; therefore, you may take it with you and continue coverage on an individual basis by contacting Bay Bridge Administrators.

For more information, go to the Insurance & Benefits' website and click on Benefit Link *COBRA* or click here - <http://public/dept/ibm/cobra.htm>. This will provide you with detailed information regarding *COBRA* (i.e. benefits - termination date, how to continue, cost, etc.). If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Insurance & Benefits at 337-8321.