

your money, a magazine from WEA Member Benefits

your \$™

SPRING 2020



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{president's letter

Dave Kijek, President/CEO, WEA Member BenefitsTM

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Member Benefits and you: We're in this together



After the market crashed in 2008, many of our members with stock mutual fund investments saw their account balances drop drastically in a short time. Some wanted to get out of stocks all together. And,

despite the counseling of our experienced staff, some did. But those who stuck it out recovered.

The impact of COVID-19 is no different. Folks are understandably anxious about their finances. But one of

the best things you can do right now for your retirement remains the same: Stay calm and stay the course for the long term.

Our staff is here to help. If you are uncertain about your investment strategy, don't hesitate to give us a call. We can help you evaluate your options in an objective (nonemotional) way.

It's important to protect yourself against financial loss as well. Scammers use misleading e-mails, texts, and phone calls to try to gain access to your personal information. Familiarize yourself with their common tactics on page 6 so you're less likely to take the bait. And learn how umbrella insurance plays an important role against financial loss on page 8.

We're partnering with a new company to better meet your long-term care insurance needs. Associates of Clifton Park's staff of licensed professionals are looking forward to serving you. And don't forget about our fifth annual Student Art Contest! It's going to be a special year. Learn more on page 10.

Visit our kiosk section to learn more about how the SECURE Act may impact your financial plans, and much more.

Remember, we're here for you during this challenging time—and we'll be here in the better days ahead. Wishing you and your family good health both physically and financially.



IRA and 403(b) news

We're here for you

Especially during these uncertain times, we remain committed to your financial well-being. Our team is still available from 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays and is dedicated to serving you. Call us at 1-800-279-4030 if you have questions or need assistance with your retirement savings or personal insurance accounts. Visit our website at weabenefits.com for important updates and to access your accounts.

Your privacy is important to us

Protection of your nonpublic personal financial information is a priority. Access the privacy notice online at weabenefits.com/privacy to view our policies regarding your personal information. If you have questions, call us at 1-800-279-4030.

Tax and IRA contribution deadlines extended

The deadline to file taxes and to make an IRA contribution for 2019 has been extended from April 15, 2020, to July 15, 2020. If you wish to make an IRA contribution in 2020 and apply it to 2019, some stipulations apply. Call us for assistance at 1-800-279-4030.

IRA 5498 forms

Form 5498 is an informational tax form to all Traditional and/or Roth IRA account holders. The form reports the December 31, 2019, fair market value as well as any contributions, rollovers, conversions, and/or recharacterizations received in the account for 2019. Please be aware there may be a delay in receiving the form this year due to the tax filing and IRA contribution deadline change. Call us if you have questions.

Required minimum distributions waived for 2020

The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act was signed on March 27, 2020. Included are rules waiving required minimum distributions (RMD) from 403(b) and IRA accounts for the calendar year 2020. If you would like more information about your 2020 RMD and what options are available to you, please contact our Member Service Representatives at 1-800-279-4030, Extension 8567. For more information on the how the CARES Act of 2020 might affect you, please visit weabenefits.com.

NEW! IRA now available out of state

You've asked and now it's here! We've expanded our IRA eligibility guidelines to include members and their families living outside of Wisconsin. For details and a list of states currently available, visit weabenefits.com/ira.

Information current as of 04/01/20, see weabenefits.com for updates. Content in this magazine is for informational purposes only and is not intended to constitute legal, financial, or tax advice. Certain recommendations or guidelines may not be appropriate for everyone. Consult your personal advisor or attorney for advice specific to your unique circumstances before taking action.

The Trustee Custodian for the WEA Member Benefits IRA accounts is Newport Trust Company. Certain state residency requirements may apply.

The 403(b) retirement program is offered by the WEA TSA Trust. TSA program registered representatives are licensed through WEA Investment Services, Inc., member FINRA. If you choose to invest in the 403(b) or IRA programs, fees will apply. Consider all expenses before investing. Mutual fund management and redemption fees may apply.

T. Rowe Price New Era Fund

We occasionally get questions from members regarding the **T. Rowe Price New Era Fund** and the role it plays in your overall investment strategy. Here is an overview to help you better understand the fund.

The T. Rowe Price New Era Fund is a specialty fund. Specialty funds invest primarily in the securities of a particular industry, sector, type of security, or geographic region. As a nondiversified fund, this fund operates predominantly in the energy and industrials sector, with a majority of its holdings in companies that focus solely on natural resources such as oil and gas. Fifty-five percent of its stocks are based in the United States, while the other 45% are outside of the United States.

The earnings and tangible assets of funds that invest in natural resource companies may benefit from periods of accelerating inflation. The T. Rowe Price New Era Fund is built on long-term gains, which is why it could be used as a hedge against inflation if placed in a well-rounded portfolio.

But it is also a cyclical fund. This means it may experience explosive growth and portray large gains and profits during certain business cycles, while in other economic cycles it may post moderate or below average returns, as well as principal loss. It also has a great deal of sensitivity subject to natural disasters, declining currency value, market liquidity, or political instability, which can all have negative impacts on the performance of the fund.

So when building your portfolio, make sure you are balancing out your risk and accounting for the variety of economic events that can occur over your lifetime.

If you have further questions about the fund, give us a call at 1-800-279-4030.

This is not an offer. Securities can be offered by the prospectus only. The T. Rowe Price New Era Fund is not suitable for all investors and the prospectus should be read carefully by an investor before investing. Investors are advised to consider the investment objectives, risks, charges and expenses before investing. This prospectus, which is available at SEC.gov and weabenefits.com/investments, and may be obtained by calling 800-279-4030, contains this and other information about the fund.

{your retirement

KEEP CALM AND INVEST ON



The COVID-19 virus has had a worldwide impact and the news changes daily. It may be an anxious time, but it's not a time to panic when it comes to your retirement investments and saving for the future. We explain why.

As of March 2020 when this article is being written, we're dealing with an unprecedented health crisis. Our personal lives are being affected in a myriad of unexpected ways. It is understandable that most of us probably feel anxious and unsure about the future.

The daily news has raised fear in investors, and the disruptions to our daily lives have changed the way we're spending our money. But when it comes to saving for your future, it's more important than ever to keep a clear head.

You may be tempted to stop funding your retirement account, move it to something very conservative, or cash part of it out. But before you make any rash decisions, take a breath and remember: **One of the best things you can do right now for your retirement is to stay the course for the long term.**

Noted investor Warren Buffet saw this over 30 years ago when he described two "super-contagious diseases" that will forever have occasional outbreaks: Fear and greed among investors. As he famously stated as a strategy against this "disease," people should "...be fearful when others are greedy and be greedy only when others are fearful."

Although too simplistic to be construed as Buffet's recommended investment strategy, his point is well founded. It's all too common for investors to bolt when things go poorly.

And at the moment, fear is ruling. That's why it's more important than ever to be as rational as you can about your investments during this trying time. Getting some perspective can help you get there.

HISTORY IS OUR TEACHER

Failing to recognize the dangers of letting your emotions drive investing decisions can be disastrous when your life savings are at stake. To understand what effect moving assets out of equities during a volatile market such as the 2008 recession has on account returns, in 2017 Fidelity took a poll of their investors and found that those who continued to contribute to their 401(k) plans between June 2007 and June 2017 benefited from, on average, a tripling of their account balance. For the average baby boomer, the account balance in their 401(k) plans was \$115,000 in June 2007, fell to \$85,000 at the beginning of 2009,

and rose to \$315,000 by June of 2017 (Forbes).

Admittedly, it can be difficult to look at a significant drop in your investment portfolio. But if, for example, you stayed the course during the 2008 recession, you were rewarded with an over 11-year bull run. Consider that fact in light of today's market.

Further, stock market corrections happen more than you probably realize. Over the past 70 years, the benchmark S&P 500 has undergone 37 corrections of at least 10%, not including rounding (Yardeni Research). Stock market corrections usually run their course quickly, and you may profit much more by keeping the long-term view in your sight. (Past performance does not guarantee future results.)

CAREFUL ABOUT GETTING TOO CONSERVATIVE

It's understandable if the market volatility makes you feel like you want to go with more conservative investments or even pull out of your mutual funds all together. But know that while that may shield you temporarily, those alternatives

have a risk as well—the risk that the rate of inflation will outpace the rate of return on your investments. For example, putting all your savings into cash would leave you exposed to erosion in its value from inflation. Younger people would find it extremely difficult to accumulate meaningful savings. Retirees would shorten the number of years they could cover their retirement expenses, as they still need exposure to stocks and bonds to maximize their nest egg.

Money invested in a fixed-income product like the Prudential Guaranteed Account (PGI)* with Member Benefits may provide investment stability, but it also limits earnings. If you choose to invest entirely in the PGI, you lose the ability to earn as much as you may have been able to if you had invested more diversely in stocks.

Mike Driscoll, Managing Director of Sheridan Road and an Accredited Investment Fiduciary, has 40 years of experience and a lot of knowledge in the financial industry. Mike is also a longtime WEA Member Benefits advisor, and has personal work experience with the PGI. He explains, “The guaranteed fund from

Prudential provides stability in periods of market disruptions. Because the fund does not invest in stocks, it allows investors to minimize the impact of volatility in the equity markets. However, the fund is not designed for short-term trading, but for long-term stability of a *portion* of an investor’s account balance.”

Keep these things in mind: If you’re a younger person, time is on your side in terms of the market and your future ability to generate income. If you’re older and closer to retirement, you may want to be more conservative with your investments—but don’t miss out on the potential earnings of stocks and bonds. Delaying Social Security is another option. It may be a good time to revisit your spending goals and budget so you know exactly where you stand today.

Creating a well diversified portfolio appropriate for your personal situation is important and may help you with market volatility. How to determine what is appropriate is based on factors like your age, your goals, your time horizon (when you need to use the money you invest), and your emotional tolerance for risk.

DON'T TRY TO TIME THE MARKET

Emotions and deeply ingrained biases influence our decisions every day. They are also deeply rooted in personal experiences that influence our decision-making. But they can cause us to behave in irrational ways. Especially in times of uncertainty, investors tend to make investment choices based on emotion rather than careful consideration of their long-term plan. “It’s tempting to sell stocks or cash out your retirement savings when things look shaky, then buy again when the outlook is bright. But trying to time the market almost never pays off because no one really knows what will happen next, even in these challenging times,” says Brenda Echeverria, Financial Planning Supervisor at Member Benefits. “Moving out of your investments into cash or very conservative investments means you may lose any opportunity to recover your losses when the stock market rebounds.”

Mike explains that Nobel Prize-winning psychologist Daniel Kahneman demonstrated this emotional tendency with his loss aversion theory, which

| continued on page 9



*Interest is compounded daily to produce a yield net of Prudential's administrative fee of 0.60%. PRIAC is compensated in connection with this product by deducting an amount for investment expenses and risk from the investment experience of certain assets held in PRIAC's general account. For more information, go to weabenefits.com/pru.

Don't get reeled in by phishing scams

Phishing (pronounced FISH-ing) is one way scammers try to get you to reveal personal or confidential information for illicit use. Learn how to avoid their hook so you're less likely to take the bait.

*RESPONSE REQUIRED. We emailed you a little while ago to ask for your help resolving an issue with your PayPal account...We noticed some unusual log in activity with your account. Please check that no one has logged in to your account without your permission. To help us with this and see what you can and can't do with your account until the issue is resolved, **log in** to your account and go to the **Resolution Center**...*

Have you ever received an e-mail like this? This is just one example of many common phishing e-mails that tend to make the rounds. Most of us have received more than one—in fact, over 100 billion spam e-mails like this are sent every day.

Phishing is a scam in which a person uses fake e-mails, texts, and/or phone calls to try to get you to share valuable information such as your Social Security number, account numbers, or user names and passwords. Once they have this information, they may steal your money, your identity, or both. They may also try to access your computer

or network by installing ransomware or other programs after you've clicked

a link in one of their e-mails or texts. These programs can lock you out of your computer and allow thieves to steal your personal information.

Don't take the bait

There are a few common tactics you can watch out for that scammers use to try and entice you to hand over your personal information.

Familiarity. Using familiar company names, or pretending to be someone you know, is known as e-mail spoofing. The e-mail appears to be from a trustworthy source, like a legitimate company, family, friend, or even coworker, and lends the recipient a false sense of security that makes them more likely to open files and click on links.

Web site spoofing is often used in concert with the fake e-mail by linking it to a Web site that looks legitimate, but isn't.

When the user goes to the site, they may be asked for sensitive financial or login information. These fraudulent Web sites may also contain malicious code that ends up on the user's computer.



Top frauds of 2019

According to the Federal Trade Commission (FTC), these were the top schemes reported by more than 3.2 million people in 2019.

- 1. Number one fraud: Imposter scams.** Imposters pretended to be calling from the government or familiar business, a romantic interest, or a “family member” with an emergency. People reported losing more than \$667 million to these schemes, which they often paid with a gift card.
- 2. Top government scam: Social Security imposters** induced fear by threatening people with arrest by marshals or police officers until the imposters received money. The median individual loss was \$1,500.
- 3. Phone calls** were the main way people reported being contacted by scammers. Those who didn’t hang up and followed through on scammers’ requests had a median loss of \$1,000.

During 2019, FTC law enforcement actions led to more than \$232 million in refunds to people who lost money. If you spot a scam, report it to the FTC at ftc.gov/complaint.



Timing. Attackers often take advantage of current events and certain times of the year, such as natural disasters, health scares (like COVID-19), major political elections, and holidays.

Attention. Attracting your attention with lucrative offers or eye-catching statements is another common tactic. For example, a message may claim you just won an iPhone, gift, or large amount of money. Remember, if it seems too good to be true, it probably is.

Enticement. Scammers will try to encourage you to click on a link or open an attachment. They often tell a story to trick you by claiming they’ve noticed suspicious activity, such as stating there’s a problem with your account, directing you to make a payment, or announcing you’re eligible for a refund.

Limited time only. Phishers rely on urgency to increase the odds of pressuring you to ACT NOW and quickly hand over your sensitive information. A legitimate Web site for a bank, credit card company, or other organization isn’t going to have an air of desperation about it by posting urgent messages on their Web site. If you see this on a site you visit, double check the URL to make sure you’re actually in the right place.

Avoid getting hooked

- Stay vigilant and be wary of unsolicited requests for your personal information online, by e-mail, or by phone.
- Do not share any user names, account numbers, or passwords with anyone, and don’t use the same password across accounts.

- Never trust alarming e-mails, and don’t open attachments from strange e-mails you may receive.
- Use security software on your computer and keep it up to date.
- Set your mobile phone software to update automatically so you don’t miss

“https” and have a closed padlock icon in the status bar. (Eventually all sites will be required to have a valid SSL.)

- Carefully read any e-mail messages you receive. Is it missing your name? Is there bad grammar or spelling? Is it asking you for personal information?

*PLEASE UPDATE YOUR ACCOUNT. Hi Dear, We’re having some trouble with your current billing information. We’ll try again, but in the meantime you may want to update your payment details. **UPDATE ACCOUNT NOW.** Need help? We’re here if you need it. Visit the [Help Centre](#) or [contact us now](#).
–Your friends at Netflix*

critical updates that protect against security threats.

- Use two-factor authentication on all accounts that offer it—besides using a password, you also add a second step like a fingerprint or special code. This makes it harder for scammers to log in to your accounts if they do get your user name and password.
- Back up your data someplace not connected to your home network, such as an external hard drive or cloud storage site.
- Unsure about a link to a Web site? Look the business up separately online and call them directly, telling them about the message you received. Your bank, for example, will never ask you to send your password or personal information by mail or e-mail.
- While not a guarantee of a Web site’s legitimacy, look for secure Web sites with a valid Secure Socket Layer (SSL) certificate. They’ll begin with

- Hover over links (don’t click on them!) to see the actual URL you will be directed to. Look at the web address carefully—it may just be one letter off or something similar.

Sources: consumer.ftc.gov, us-cert.gov, phishing.org

Take action

Subscribe to FTC updates
ftc.gov/stay-connected

Forward phishing e-mails
spam@uce.gov
reportphishing@apwg.org

Report scams
ftc.gov/complaint

{your insurance

Get covered!

**Umbrella insurance plays an important role
in your financial security**

Even careful people can find themselves liable for the injury of others. Catastrophic events don't happen often, but they can happen to anyone at any time. For example:

You cause a serious car crash that results in multiple injuries and property damage.

A guest is injured at your house and they are out of work for over a month.

You're accused of verbally assaulting someone and they sue.

In the event that the costs associated with an accident or injury exceed your auto or home policy's standard liability coverage, an umbrella (additional liability) policy can help cover the additional funds you may owe—and that amount can be significant.

What do you have to lose?

Umbrella insurance is considered essential to building financial security for you and your family. It helps protect your assets from the unexpected. You've worked hard for your home, car, and other assets; however, a large lawsuit can wipe out your current savings as well as what you stand to earn in the future. Imagine the impact on your family. Think about it—how much can you afford to lose?

Most people are surprised at how much exposure to risk they have as they lead their everyday lives. Examples include:

- Dog bites.
- Recreational vehicles.
- Swimming pools.

- Social media posts.
- Losing control of your vehicle on an icy road.

What does umbrella insurance cover?

Umbrella insurance provides extra coverage for medical bills or lawsuits that exceed the limits of your home insurance, as well as the damage you do to the personal property of others.

Besides the extra liability protection, a personal umbrella policy will pay your legal expenses if a liability claim is brought against you, whether the claim is legitimate or not. These costs are paid in addition to your policy limit.

A personal umbrella liability policy will also provide you with protection if you face liability for certain acts not usually covered by your home policy, including:

- False arrest.
- False imprisonment.
- Libel.
- Slander.
- Defamation of character.
- Invasion of privacy.
- Wrongful eviction.

What doesn't umbrella insurance cover?

Umbrella insurance will *not* cover you for:

- Damage to your own personal property.
- Criminal acts you may commit.

- Flood damage to your own home or apartment.
- Contracted worker injuries (they should have their own insurance).

Protect your financial security

If you have auto and home/renters insurance with WEA Member Benefits, you may be eligible to participate in our umbrella insurance program. The great news is that you can buy \$1 million of additional liability protection very economically—or choose from \$500,000, \$2 million, or \$3 million coverage options.

Premiums are determined by circumstances. Provided you qualify, it is one of the most economical ways to protect your assets and future earnings.

As an additional option, we offer up to \$1 million of uninsured and underinsured coverage. Some companies are no longer offering this coverage, but we feel it's important as it helps protect our members, their family, and their passengers.

Learn more
weabenefits.com/umbrella

Request a quote
1-800-279-4030

Property and casualty insurance programs are underwritten by WEA Property & Casualty Insurance Company. The terms and conditions of your coverage are exclusively controlled by your written policy. Please refer to your policy for details.

demonstrates that people feel the pain of losing money more than they enjoy gains. Our natural instinct is to flee the market when it starts to plummet, just as greed prompts us to jump back in when stocks are skyrocketing (Capital Markets Group, *How to Handle Market Declines*, March 2020). Adds Mike, “Emotional reactions are normal when events that impact us seem beyond our control. You wouldn’t be human if you didn’t fear loss. But keep in mind that both (instincts) can have negative impacts on your finances.”

Right now, many people are trying to time the market by moving their funds around. There are risks and limitations to this strategy. For one, most investments, including several offered by Member Benefits, have trade restrictions that place a limit on short-term trading. Those who make too many trades within 30 days of purchase could find themselves put on “roundtrip restriction,” which bars shareholders who employ this tactic from making trades for a certain number of days.

If you are in the PGI and participant level protections (PLP) become active, it could limit the outflows from the account. Although PLPs do not apply to benefit responsive withdrawals (such as retirement income), if triggered, they do restrict withdrawal activity. Remember, PLPs are there to protect the account and account holder. For more information on PLPs, please visit weabenefits.com/protecting-a-legacy.

If you are considering cashing out your retirement funds temporarily and putting them in the bank, know this: Doing so may make you subject to taxes—and you may be limited in coming back to your retirement program. Also keep in mind that the PGI offers a higher interest rate than a bank.

YOU HAVE A UNIQUE ADVANTAGE

As a Wisconsin public school employee, you have an advantage that many do not—the Wisconsin Retirement System (WRS) pension plan. This gives you a foundation of retirement income

weabenefits.com

STAY ON COURSE

Investors who have been willing to ride out the volatile returns of stocks over long periods of time generally have been rewarded with strong positive returns. ***A long-term investment strategy offers a balanced approach to both risk and reward.*** Best practices associated with long-term investment strategies often include the following:

◆ **Keep a long-term focus and don’t try to time the market.**

◆ **Spread out your risk.**

Diversifying, or putting your money in different types of investments, has long been recognized as an effective way to manage your risk. In theory, when certain types of investments are declining in value, other types are gaining value. A well diversified portfolio can lessen the impact of market volatility. Know your risk tolerance and invest accordingly. (Diversification does not protect against losses or assure a profit.)

◆ **Utilize dollar cost averaging.**

If you continue making regular, ongoing contributions to your retirement account, when the market falls you will be able to purchase more shares of a mutual fund for the same dollar contribution. It’s like buying when the market is on sale. The last thing you should do is stop contributing—it’s like skipping the sale on school supplies and waiting for them to go back to full price before buying. (Dollar cost averaging does not assure a profit and does not protect against loss in a declining market.)

◆ **Save early and save more.**

Contribute as much as you can to your savings plans as early as possible to get the full benefit of compound interest. Compounding happens when earnings on your investments are reinvested in your account. The reinvested earnings may also have earnings, and then those earnings are reinvested and so on.

◆ **Rebalance your portfolio as needed.**

◆ **Investigate investment options.**

We have a variety of investment options available to suit your needs. Take our investor suitability questionnaire at weabenefits.com/risk to find out what investment style may be best for you. Then visit weabenefits.com/investmentstrategy to review investment strategy options.

◆ **Take advantage of Member Benefits’ expertise.**

Investing involves market risk, including the loss of principal.

you can’t outlive.

Keep this in mind when you’re reading articles about the market and the COVID-19 crisis. The general population these articles are referring to are in a different situation than you are. It’s like comparing apples to oranges.

If your WRS pension and Social Security are taking care of a substantial percentage of your living expenses, you may not need to be so conservative with your 403(b) and IRA accounts. But of course, everyone needs to make the best decisions based on their own situation, investment objectives, and risk tolerance.

If you want a more in-depth review

of your savings strategy, contact us for a complimentary consultation. You may find yourself investing too conservatively, not conservatively enough, or you may just have questions and need some guidance. Visit weabenefits.com/service/financial-consultations. Or if you have questions, feel free to call us at 1-800-279-4030. Our staff is still available to help you from 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday.

This article is for informational purposes only and is not intended to constitute legal, financial, or tax advice. Certain recommendations or guidelines may not be appropriate for everyone. Consult your personal advisor or attorney for advice specific to your unique circumstances before taking action.

SECURE Act retirement law may impact your financial plans

The Setting Every Community Up for Retirement Enhancement (SECURE) Act, a new retirement law, was enacted on December 20, 2019, with many provisions effective January 1, 2020.

Significant changes made by this new legislation may impact you and your financial plans, especially for those in their 50s and 60s who are nearing retirement. The new law includes changes to required minimum distributions (RMD) for both you and your beneficiaries.

Highlights of the plan include:

- Account owners who turn age 70½ after December 31, 2019, can start taking their RMD at age 72.
- The “Stretch IRA” has been eliminated for most, but not all, beneficiaries. Many beneficiaries will now see a shorter distribution period for inherited retirement accounts under this change.
- If you are age 70½ or older and have earned income, you can now make a Traditional IRA contribution starting in the 2020 tax year. This also includes spousal contributions.

It's very important to review your beneficiary designations on your retirement accounts to ensure they align with the new rules and your wishes. If you have a trust, revisit the trust's language to see if it still aligns with your intended goals. In addition, take a look at your tax situation and how the new rules will impact the true amount of wealth you are passing to your children.

There may be several strategies to consider depending on your circumstances, so it pays to be proactive. Call a Member Benefits consultant, your tax advisor, or your attorney for assistance.



Get more details about the SECURE Act by visiting weabenefits.com/secure-act-2020-faqs.

New partnership for long-term care insurance



Later this spring, Member Benefits will be partnering with Associates of Clifton Park to better meet our members' long-term care insurance (LTCi) needs.

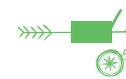
Experts say 70% of those who reach age 65 will need some type of long-term care (LTC) during their lifetimes. LTCi may minimize the impact of any LTC you may need in your retirement.

Policies can be tailored to cover varying circumstances. Consider what you can afford, how long you might need LTC services, and how much time will pass before you need to start receiving benefits from the policy.

Associates of Clifton Park is looking forward to sharing their years of insurance expertise with you to help you make informed decisions about your LTC options. Learn more by calling 1-800-893-1621 or send an e-mail to weabenefits@longtcare.com.

Program administered by Associates of Clifton Park. Long-term care (LTC) insurance products are underwritten by multiple LTC insurers.

Adventure Explore



Get ready for an adventure with our **Fifth Annual Student Art Contest!** Our 2020 contest theme is *Adventure and Explore*. Artwork could be about places students have traveled or dream of traveling to, an imaginary place, a creature who is adventurous...the ideas are endless!

The contest is open until April 30, 2020, to Wisconsin public school students. To enter your child's or student's artwork, visit weabenefits.com/studentartcontest.

Tips for paying for Health care in retirement

Are you planning on joining the popular FIRE (financial independence/retire early) movement soon? If you want to retire before you qualify for Medicare, then you've probably wondered about how you're going to pay for your health care. Health care spending in the U.S. reached \$3.6 trillion in 2018, or \$11,172 per person (Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS)).

Before you start, keep this in mind: Figuring out when you can retire isn't predominantly driven by your savings; rather, it's driven by your expenses. Determining the income you need each year to support your lifestyle is important, as well as estimating your future health care costs and insurance options.

Fortunately, you have several options to choose from based on your individual situation.

Employer-sponsored health insurance for retirees

Your school district may offer the option to continue your health insurance coverage as you enter retirement. If so, be clear on what is actually offered and their approach on covering premiums for spouses/partners/dependents. Rising costs are leading many employers to change the retiree benefits they offer, so approach with some caution and be sure you have enough flexibility to go with the changes.

Health savings account (HSA)

An HSA is a tax-advantaged account to help people save for medical expenses that high-deductible health plans don't cover. Your district may offer this in lieu of employer-sponsored insurance after retirement.

COBRA coverage

COBRA typically extends your current employer-sponsored plan for up to 18 months after you retire. It can be quite expensive. You may be able to use funds from an HSA to pay for premiums.



Affordable Care Act

This public market place for insurance varies in cost by age, state, insurer, plan level, and year. Depending on your income, you may qualify for subsidies.

Private insurance

This is often significantly more expensive than the public exchange, but it may be preferable if you have the resources or specific medical needs. Be careful not to miss the open enrollment period.

Spousal health plan

If your spouse is still working, they may be able to enroll you in their plan, which can be the easiest and most cost effective option. Be sure to talk together about the timing of your retirement and the possibility of other options to bridge the gap.

Work part-time

Some retirees choose to work part-time for the insurance, which can still give you flexibility and plenty of time off depending on the job.

In general, plan for escalating costs over time. Health care costs are anticipated to rise by an average of 5.5% per year over the next decade (CMS). Invest in healthy habits to help you enjoy life and make living more affordable.

Consider whether early retirement is worth cutting back on enjoyable lifestyle expenses in order to pay for health care costs—there is no wrong answer, but it's important to understand the costs and benefits.

Spring SAFETY CHECK

Maybe you set aside time for spring cleaning every year, or perhaps Marie Kondo (a popular "tidying expert") has you feeling inspired to start clearing out the clutter. But what good is all that cleaning if you haven't done what you can to ensure a **safe** home? Here are some home safety tips to add to your spring cleaning plans.

INSIDE

- Check cleaning supplies and dispose of those leaking or no longer used.
- Replace batteries in smoke and carbon monoxide detectors.
- Check fire extinguishers and the expiration date.
- Clean and inspect your dryer vent.
- Get a professional inspection of your air conditioning system.
- Check locks on windows and doors, secure valuables and outdoor equipment, and test/update your home alarm system if you have one.
- Review or create your family emergency plan. Visit ready.gov for guidance.
- Update your family first aid kit.

OUTSIDE

- Clean eavestroughs and inspect the roof—DIY or hire a professional.
- Check recreational equipment like swing sets, bikes, etc., for any needed repair or replacement.
- Before you start digging for that new yard project, call Diggers Hotline to get underground utility lines marked.
- Inspect your outdoor grill. On gas grills, make sure hoses are intact and the igniter works.

We're here for you.

Update regarding the COVID-19 outbreak

On March 24, 2020, Governor Evers announced a "safer at home" order due to the COVID-19 virus. We want you to know that during these uncertain times, WEA Member Benefits remains committed to your financial well-being.

WEA Member Benefits is considered an "essential" business because we provide insurance and financial services to our members. For the safety of our staff, a majority of our employees are working remotely. However, we are continuing our operations as usual without interruption. Please contact us if you have questions or need assistance with your retirement savings or personal insurance accounts. Our team is available from 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays and remains dedicated to serving you. We thank you in advance for your patience as you may experience longer hold times due to increased call volume.

We encourage you to utilize our online account services to access important documents and make changes to your accounts. If you haven't already done so, please consider setting up your online account access.

- **Retirement:** Visit weabenefits.com/yourmoney. Find instructions on how to log in for the first time, information on funding your 403(b) or IRA account, get statements, change future allocations, request a trade, opt-in to electronic communications, and more.
- **Insurance:** Visit weabenefits.com/yourinsurance. Create a new login, make policy payments, view and print policy documents, file an insurance claim, change paperless preference, and more.

For over 45 years, WEA Member Benefits has been dedicated to serving our members. We continue to be here for you during these challenging times, and we look forward to serving you and your family for many years to come. Thank you for placing your trust in us.

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