

## **Employee Benefits Advisory Committee**

### ***Committee Charge***

The charge of the Employee Benefits Advisory Committee (EBAC) is to advise the President - through the Senior Vice President (SVP) of Operations and Finance - on the status of current and prospective university employee benefit programs and to provide feedback on such programs when appropriate. (status = plan design, competitiveness, cost, etc.)

### ***Process***

EBAC acts in an advisory capacity to the President, through the SVP of Operations and Finance. Committee feedback will not be binding on the administration, but the views of the committee are an important influence on policies and procedures related to matters within the charge of the committee.

The Committee is tasked with providing feedback on benefits related issues that impact plan participants. Committee members' insight is important to obtaining an understanding of plan participant perspectives and satisfaction with the status of current/prospective benefit plan offerings.

While benefits related issues that come before the committee may be particular to a covered person(s), resolution of such issues must be made in the best interests of all plan participants and take into account employer provided benefits regulation, as well as the sustainability of ISU's group benefit programs.

Due to the complexity of benefits regulation and the financial planning required for self-funded benefit plans, the committee relies upon benefits and actuarial consultants to ensure accountable reporting to the SVP of Operations and Finance on the status of current/prospective benefit plans.

## ***Specific Charge and By-Laws***

The EBAC shall:

1. Periodically provide feedback regarding existing or prospective benefit programs, to address:
  - a. Any changes in laws and regulations;
  - b. The requests and needs of Faculty, Professional and Scientific, and Merit employees; and
  - c. Competitive market hiring conditions, retention of current work force, and institutional priorities
2. Regularly review the financial status of benefits programs, identify measures for maintaining fiscal balance of programs and give appropriate advice on the future structure of benefit programs.
3. Review the effects of policies on University and plan participant benefit costs and on enrollment patterns.

## ***Membership***

Members of the committee represent a cross section of university employees. The EBAC has the following members:

Chairperson (Appointed by the SVP of Operations and Finance)  
Faculty Senate (Appointed by Faculty Senate President)  
P&S Council (Appointed by P&S Council President)  
Merit Staff (Appointed by Merit Group)  
Vice President of Extension and Outreach  
Ames National Laboratory  
ISU Foundation  
Office of the SVP and Provost  
Office of the President  
College – Agriculture and Life Sciences  
Ivy College – Business  
College - Design  
College - Engineering  
College – Human Sciences  
College – Liberal Arts and Sciences  
College – Veterinary Medicine  
Division of Operations and Finance  
Division of Student Affairs  
Retirees Association  
Senior Manager of Fringe Benefits Accounting and Compliance (FBAC) – Ex-officio  
Director of UHR Benefits – Ex-officio  
Associate Vice President of Finance – Ex-officio

UHR Benefits Specialist – Ex-officio  
Procurement Services Representative – Ex-officio  
Committee Recorder – Ex-officio

1. All members must have an interest in and commitment to monitoring benefit programs and developing recommendations/solutions when benefits issues arise.
2. Appointment of new members shall be completed no later than August 31 of the year positions expire. Members are appointed by the leader of their respective unit.
3. Members serve for a period of three years and may be reappointed for additional terms
4. Membership terms begin September 1 of each year and expire August 31.
5. Any member who misses two consecutive regularly scheduled EBAC meetings will be contacted by the EBAC recorder to discuss the member's willingness to continue to serve on EBAC. Additional absences shall result in the replacement of that member.
6. Members are expected to attend the annual vendor review meetings that occur each year in June to be best informed on the vendor relationships, plan performance and product offerings.
7. Vacancies that occur for any reason shall be filled in alignment with the membership structure above.
8. Each member's EBAC role is in addition to the member's regular duties as an employee. Each member's EBAC role includes:
  - a. To attend all meetings;
  - b. If the member is a voting member, to vote on all motions made at meetings;
  - c. To bring to meetings the relevant concerns, thoughts and/or suggestions of benefit- eligible subscribers of the EBAC member's department or college.

### **Meetings**

1. The EBAC meets at 1:10 P.M. on the first Tuesday of February, March, April, May, September, October, November, and December with meetings arranged at other times as needed. A majority of the voting members constitutes a quorum. Meeting times may be adjusted to align with the needs of the committee. Meetings are conducted in a consensus fashion, with votes only on actionable items. One meeting each year will be dedicated to EBAC member education.
2. Notice of regular meetings should be sent to EBAC members by e-mail in advance of each meeting. The notice shall state the time, place, and location of and the proposed agenda for the meeting. A quorum must be present for a meeting of the EBAC to convene and conduct business. A quorum is defined as a simple majority of EBAC voting members.
3. The Chairperson may call special meetings of EBAC, as needed to address issues related to development, implementation, coordination, and administration of the benefits programs. Special meetings may be called pursuant to a resolution adopted by a majority of the members of the Administrative Committee. Any such call must specify the

matter(s) to be acted on at the special meeting and only such matter(s) may be acted on at the special meeting.

4. The Chairperson may invite visitors (leadership, vendor representatives) to attend EBAC meetings and present on topics as needed.
5. Each voting EBAC member is permitted to cast one vote on each motion or other items presented by the Chairperson.

### ***Administrative Committee***

1. The Administrative Committee is composed of the Chairperson, two voting members from EBAC designated by the SVP of Operations and Finance, Senior Manager of Fringe Benefits Accounting and Compliance, Associate Vice President of Finance, UHR Benefits Specialist, Director of UHR Benefits, and the Committee Recorder. The Administrative Committee may invite other guests as needed.
2. The Administrative Committee is determined based on position. Each member of the Administrative Committee shall serve until their successor has been named.
3. The Administrative Committee sets the agenda for meetings, recommends changes in procedures as needed, establishes rapport and coordination with guests or individuals to facilitate the work of EBAC, calls special meetings as required, and provides overall and general guidance and direction for EBAC.
4. The Chairperson may approve additional agenda items proposed from the floor of the committee meeting.
5. The duties of the Chairperson include convening and conducting EBAC meetings and meetings of EBAC Administrative Committee.
6. The Committee Recorder takes, prepares, and distributes minutes of EBAC meetings and Administrative Committee meetings.

### ***Agendas***

The meeting agendas are to be determined by the Chair, in consultation with the Administrative Committee. The agenda items typically include at a minimum the approval of the minutes of the prior meeting, informational topics, action items, new business topics, old business topics, employee concerns, and other business. The Chairperson and Administrative Committee will consider any item requested by an EBAC member at least seven business days before the meeting. The agenda and draft minutes of the preceding meeting should be distributed to EBAC in advance of the meeting.

### ***Annual Vendor Presentations***

Once a year, typically in June, annual presentations from benefit program administrators will be requested. These presentations should include programmatic and financial results for the year,

market trends and forward looking projections, recommended programmatic changes, and an update of any legislative actions pending.

### ***Communications***

The advisory work of the committee culminates in a recommendation delivered to the Senior Vice President of Operations and Finance. Subsequently, the SVPOF discusses the recommendation with the President who then makes a final decision regarding the issues brought forth and in conjunction with the Board when necessary. All formal communications, including campus wide messages and internal communications, on committee activities and senior leadership's decisions will be led by the Administrative Committee in consultation with the Office of Strategic Relations and Communications. The Administrative Committee will update Strategic Relations and Communications on a regular basis regarding matters of significance before the committee and collaboratively discern the need for campus updates or messaging.

Committee members may consider keeping leaders of their unit/department apprised of significant topics under discussion. Similarly, committee members may consider responding to employees within their units who have raised specific issues, concerns or ideas. Personal communications such as these may be helpful, as information obtained and discussed by the committee through its engagement with key benefit consultants and advisors is often extremely detailed and complex.

### ***Important Considerations for All Committee Members***

Committee members are tasked with providing feedback on issues that impact employees and their families. The insights brought to the committee by members from their individual units are important for discussions on various programs and alternatives. However, because the ISU Plan operates as a large self-funded-pooled group, committee members must provide feedback on issues from the perspective of what is reasonable and beneficial for all university employees. While some benefits related decisions will be welcomed, others will be perceived by some as negative (e.g., increased costs). Regardless, committee members must take a holistic view and consider how to best support a competitive, sustainable and high-quality ISU benefits program.