



JUNE 2009

Welcome to the first edition of the *Benefit News*. This quarterly newsletter is brought to you by the DAS Benefits Team and is meant to provide you the most up-to-date information about the State of Iowa's employee benefits.

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RETIREMENT INVESTORS' CLUB (RIC)

RIC NEWS

Get paid to participate!

The Retirement Investors' Club (RIC) is a supplemental retirement savings program offered by the State of Iowa to help you save for your retirement. As a participant, you contribute through payroll deduction to your

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Visit the DAS Benefits Web site (<http://benefits.iowa.gov>) for more topics of interest.

457 account and the State makes contributions to your 401a match account on your behalf. You are fully vested in both accounts from day one.

Beginning July 1, 2009, any amount you contribute to your 457 account **up to \$75/month will be matched 100% (with the exception of SPOC-covered employees.)** The maximum match benefit of \$75/month will be paid to your 401a match account. This is a \$1 for \$1 employer match up to a maximum match contribution of \$75/month.

If you contribute...

- \$25 - \$75 a month, the state will match 100% of that amount.
- more than \$75 a month; the state will match 100% of the first \$75 each month.
- less than \$75/month, **you owe it to yourself** to consider increasing your contribution amount to receive the total match benefit of \$75/month (\$900/year).

It pays to participate!! No other investment pays a 100% return on your money! Call RIC toll-free at 866-460-4692 if you want to enroll or increase your monthly investment amount.

WEB UPDATE

The RIC website has a new and simpler web address. The new address is <http://ric.iowa.gov> . Please note that site navigation to the left of each webpage has been enhanced. If you have pages of the RIC website saved as favorites, please resave them with the new addresses. Please let us know if you experience any problems or would like to see additions/changes.

MARKET JARGON

Balanced Fund: A mutual fund that buys a combination of common stock, preferred stock, bonds, and short-term bonds, to provide both income and capital appreciation while avoiding excessive risk. The purpose of balanced funds (also called hybrid funds) is to provide investors with a single mutual fund that combines both growth and income objectives, by investing in both stocks (for growth) and bonds (for income). Such diversified holdings ensure that these funds will manage downturns in the stock market without too much of a loss; the flip side, of course, is that balanced funds will usually increase less than an all-stock fund during a bull market.

Target-Date Fund - also known as a lifecycle or age-based fund - is a highly diversified mutual fund designed to remain appropriate for investors in terms of risk throughout a variety of life circumstances. Accordingly, lifecycle funds offer different risk profiles that investors can shift invested funds between in order to manage risk effectively as they move from youth to middle age to retirement. Although lifecycle funds all share the common goal of first growing and then later preserving principal, they can contain any mix of stocks, bonds, and cash.

Both of these types of funds are available through the RIC.

SAVINGS SPOTLIGHT

Do you wonder if you should change your investments? You work hard to put money into your retirement account, so it's important that you periodically review the performance and value of your investments. Some participants are hesitant to review their investments because they are not sure how.

Call your agent today, ask them to meet with you and explain what impact recent market performance has had on your investments. Ask them to help you read your statement. Ask them if you are still invested appropriately for your retirement savings goals. Many of us do not need to make any changes, but you won't know until you ask. If you're not sure who your agent is, call the provider directly at the numbers listed below and ask for an agent in your area to meet with you to discuss your accounts.

Hartford	800-424-2825 ext. 47627	Nationwide	877-677-3678
ING	800-555-1970	VALIC	800-945-6763

DID YOU KNOW ...

The S&P 500 index in its present form began on March 4, 1957? Thanks to the computer technology emerging at the time, this index could be calculated and disseminated in real time. The S&P 500 is widely used as a measure of the general level of stock prices. It includes both growth and (generally less volatile) value stocks, and stocks listed on NASDAQ as well as the NYSE.

Download a copy of the S&P 500 Index fact sheet at http://ric.iowa.gov/documents/SP_500_Factsheet.pdf for additional information.

GROUP INSURANCE

ARRA AND COBRA SUBSIDY

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) was signed by President Obama on February 17, 2009. A portion of this new legislation made changes in COBRA continuation rights for persons who are involuntarily terminated from employment.

If you are laid off or involuntarily terminated from employment between now and December 31, 2009 and you elect COBRA continuation, you may be eligible for a reduced COBRA premium. If eligible, you will be required to pay only 35% of the monthly COBRA premium in order to continue health and/or dental coverage. The State will pay the remaining 65% of the premium each month.

This subsidized premium is available to you, if eligible, for up to nine months. After the nine month period, coverage may be continued to the 18-month maximum allowed time period by your payment of the full monthly premium amount.

All terminating employees will be automatically notified of ARRA and their COBRA rights within two weeks of their last paycheck. Employees involuntarily terminated or laid off will receive additional information regarding their COBRA rights, their possible eligibility for the subsidy under ARRA, and the election process.

DELTA DENTAL ID CARDS

If enrolled in dental insurance, Delta Dental will mail new ID cards to your home beginning July 1. This action is being taken in response to employee concerns that current cards utilize employee Social Security number and may be used for identity theft purposes.



You will receive two ID cards regardless of being enrolled in single or family coverage. Your name will be on the ID cards but the cards will not be personalized with your dependents' names.

If you need more than two ID cards, contact Delta Dental's customer service at 1-800-544-0718 or order ID cards at Delta Dental's Subscriber Connection, <http://www.deltadentalia.com/subscriber>.

To ensure confidentiality, the ID card will have an alternate 10-digit ID number that providers can use to file claims.

Because the ID cards will be mailed to your home, it is very important to make sure that IowaBenefits contains your correct address. If you're not sure, check IowaBenefits or ask your Personnel Assistant to verify your address. Cards returned with undeliverable addresses will be forwarded to the DAS-HRE benefits unit. Minimizing returns will be helpful for everybody.

DEPENDENT ELIGIBILITY VERIFICATION

If you have an adult child aged 19 or older enrolled in your health or dental coverage, you have received or will receive a dependent eligibility verification notice from DAS. DAS must verify the status of all children over

19 annually to ensure eligibility and taxability. DAS will mail a verification notice to you if you have a dependent child age 19 or older. The notice is sent 60 days prior to your child's birthday.

The verification form is mailed to your home. You may receive two forms, one for medical and one for dental, for each child affected. You must respond to all forms if you receive more than one. **It is very important that you respond. Failure to return the certification form will mean that your child's coverage will be terminated on the first day of the month following your child's birthday.**

PHARMACY

CONSUMER REPORTS BEST BUY DRUGS

The DAS Wellness Web site (<http://das.hre.iowa.gov/wellness/index.html>) provides a wide array of information designed to empower you to take charge of your health. Information on the Web site ranges from fitness, fitness centers (throughout the state), health screenings, nutrition, general information about prescription drugs, smoking cessation, weight management, wellness tools and yoga to name a few.

At the Wellness Prescription Drug Web site (http://das.hre.iowa.gov/wellness/prescription_drugs.html) are Consumer Reports Best Buy Drugs updates. These updates help you to talk to your doctor about prescription drugs, and find the most effective and safe drugs that also give you the best value for your health care dollar. Some of the recent updates at the Wellness Prescription Drug site deal with Type 2 Diabetes and enlarged prostates.

Consumer Reports Best Buy Drugs is just some of the useful information at the DAS Wellness Web site. The site is updated regularly with information you can use. If you have not visited the DAS Wellness Web site lately, it is worth your time to review the site for information to improve your health.

WELLNESS

SMOKING CESSATION

We are coming up to the first anniversary of the "Smokefree Air Act." The legislation that prohibits smoking and the use of any other tobacco product in all public areas went into effect July 1, 2008.



If you need assistance to stop using tobacco products, we have made arrangement with Wellmark for you to participate in QuitNet **at no cost**. QuitNet is a Web-based service designed to help individual tobacco users through the quitting process. Your QuitNet program not only gives you access to QuitNet cessation counselors to provide you with personal support, but **free** nicotine-replacement therapy if ordered through QuitNet's Website. (It can't be ordered through the pharmacy).

To participate in QuitNet, you must enroll through Wellmark's Web site (www.wellmark.com). A link to registering at Wellmark's Web site is at the DAS Wellness Stop Smoking Web site (http://das.hre.iowa.gov/wellness/stop_smoking.html). After registering at Wellmark's Web site, access to QuitNet can be made using the following instructions (http://das.hre.iowa.gov/wellness/wellness_documents/quitnet_accessing_directly_post%20registration.pdf).

Quitting smoking is one of the best things you can do to improve your health.

OTHER BENEFITS

DART ACCESS PROGRAM

The Des Moines Area Regional Transit (DART) Unlimited Access Program was budgeted and approved for FY2010. State of Iowa employees in the Des Moines metro region can take advantage of DART's services by

simply showing their State of Iowa employee ID. In order to take advantage of DART's program, you will need a sticker on your state ID or a DART pass for employees who do not work on the Capital Complex.

Since the program was initiated in April 2008, the number of State of Iowa riders totaled 78,458, an average of 8,718 riders per month.



Remember, you can take all local and express (including Ankeny and Altoona) DART routes, as well as all DART shuttles and Paratransit services. Also, in addition to going back and forth from work, you can take advantage of DART services for personal trips.

Stickers and passes are available at the DAS Customer Service Desk which is located in the Hoover Building, Level A. The DAS Customer Service Desk is open from 7:30 AM through 4:30 PM.

EMPLOYEE DISCOUNT PROGRAM

The Department of Administrative Services is happy to continue offering our Employee Discount Program to all State of Iowa employees through PerkSpot.



What is PerkSpot?

As an employee, PerkSpot is your personal online savings resource – a place to find discounts and rebates on goods and services from many of the best known brand names in the U.S – online and off, nationally and locally.

Here's all you need to do to put PerkSpot to work for you.

Register, Shop, Buy and Save!

From your home computer, go to The Department of Administrative Services' PerkSpot site (<http://www.iowa.perkspot.net>) and follow the step-by-step instructions to register. All the discount information is ready for you on our site, you just have to login to have access to all our discounts – many are updated each week! Just pick out what you'd like, follow the instructions provided on PerkSpot and check out. PerkSpot's savings are convenient and valuable – from everyday purchases like groceries to special purchases like family vacations or auto insurance.

It's all possible on PerkSpot.

DAS-SPONSORED BENEFIT EDUCATION

Benefit knowledge is power!

Employee benefits can be confusing. Benefit education is a service provided by DAS benefit staff. Learn to make the best use of your benefits by taking advantage of benefit education opportunities.

The presentations are held from 9:00 AM – 10:30 AM, unless otherwise noted, on the dates listed below.

Continuing Benefits at Retirement: 7/1, 8/5, and 9/2

Deferred Compensation Basics: 7/14, 8/11, and 9/8

Deferred Compensation Distributions: 7/28, 8/25, and 9/20

Group Insurance Overview: 7/8 (1:00 PM – 2:30 PM), 8/12, and 9/9

Wellmark's Wellness Services and Tools: 6/23 (1:00 PM – 2:00 PM), 6/25

To find out more about benefit education, check out the DAS Benefit Education (http://benefits.iowa.gov/benefit_education) Web site.