



PENNSYLVANIA ASSOCIATION OF RETIRED STATE EMPLOYEES

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State Office Report – May 2022

We hope all of you are well and hoping for some nice Spring weather soon. We received some good feedback on the letter that was sent in January and in conjunction with the Executive Committee it was decided to send another letter rather than the traditional newsletter.

Some highlights since January:

1. Once again, we used Zoom technology to hold the regional meetings. These were well attended and productive. We hope that next year these will return to in-person events.
2. Our current contract with Davis Vision ends in October of this year. Davis Vision has proposed a new 5-year contract and we will be meeting with them to obtain more details of their proposal. Once we have more information the Benefits Committee will review the details and a decision about next steps will be made. Please note anyone who currently has the vision insurance – your current policy will remain in effect until the end of your term of insurance (12 months from when you began) regardless of what decision is made about a new contract.
3. Many have seen advertisements on OTC (over the counter) or online hearing devices. These are now allowed under a proposal from the FDA. We discussed these devices with True Hearing (formerly Hear in America) and they are reviewing these and may well add them to their offerings. One comment made was that a hearing evaluation might reveal a more serious issue that you would not know about by purchasing something online or at a local store. The BOSE Company, well known for sound, offers them and they do have an online test that you can take from home. True Hearing also offers an online test. You can find these tests at their websites.
4. Unfortunately, unscrupulous individuals will use tragedy to falsely seek money from kind people like all of you. This is just a word of caution to be sure to whom you are making donations, if you don't recognize the organization delay giving until you have time to check out the organization and be certain it is legitimate.
5. The State Office will be moving to a new location in July, our current lease expires the end of July. Our new office will have a Mechanicsburg address but is only a few miles from our current offices in Camp Hill, it is also conveniently located near the turnpike at Route 15N.
6. We are working on plans for the Governing Board Meeting to be held in September once again in Gettysburg. Soon your chapters will have more details on the 50th anniversary meeting.
7. Vice President/Treasurer Allan Hansen has announced that after 13 years with PARSE he will be stepping down from his position. The chapters all have details on this position, or you can call Allan at the State Office at 1-888-809-7429. Please note however that this position requires you to work at the State Office and is not a tele/remote work situation.

8. Our membership numbers are good and exceed where we were at this time last year. Reminder invoices were mailed in March (for the chapters dues collected by the State Office). If you have not paid your dues or are uncertain you can call the State Office at 1-888-809-7429.
9. I want to remind all that the PARSE dues are annual and for the period Jan. 1st thru Dec. 31st of the year. We send invoices in the fall for the next year. Some people think that the dues are due annually on the month they joined, that is not the case.
10. Novak Strategic Advisors, the PARSE Government Relations representatives is tracking multiple pieces of legislation that are of interest/concern to retirees. The most notable is HB13 introduced by Rep. Frank Ryan. This is a property tax elimination proposal that replaces the property tax revenue with other sources of revenue. Of concern to PARSE is the increase to the current sales tax, adding new 2% sales tax on food and clothing and the most significant will be taxing retirement income (pensions, IRA withdrawals, annuities) at a new personal tax rate of 4.92%. NOVAK has been tracking this and the sentiment seems to be that many legislators have concern with this legislation. It is currently in committee. This will be watched and if there is any movement PARSE will act.
11. We want to clarify what assistance PISI (AMBA) can provide for members. PISI is the PARSE partner and prepared to answer your general Dental and Vision questions and help you purchase a Dental and Vision program that is exclusive to PARSE members. Questions about claims cannot be addressed by PISI. While PISI administers the PARSE dental and vision plans, all inquiries regarding general claims questions/statuses should be addressed directly with the insurance carriers: Dental - United Concordia Dental Customer Service at 1-800-332-0366 and Vision - Davis Vision 1-800-999-5431. **If you have not done so already, we advise that you create an account with United Concordia, this will allow you to see your claims and how payments and your share has been determined. If you are having issues with denial of a claim and your provider feels it is in error, we then recommend you contact PISI directly to see if a resolution is available. PISI, by law, cannot see your claims information/history- which is why you will need to have all documents (explanation of benefits and reason for denial) available when you call PISI. PISI needs this information to assist you.** We also advise that if your dental provider is recommending a major service such as crowns, bridges etc. you request that they submit to United Concordia a pre-determination request. The request will define if the procedure is allowed and will also provide you with your out-of-pocket costs. Please keep in mind that using an in-network provider will save you money and the United Concordia website provides you with a way to find dentists in your area who participate (PARSE is in the "Advantage Plus Network").

Sincerely,



Tom Judge

President, PARSE