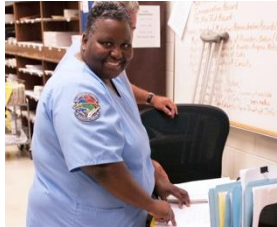




# NORTH CAROLINA Office of *State Human Resources*



## **NCFlex HBR Spring Training**

**May 2021**

# Agenda

- NCFlex Team Intro
- Admin Manual Updates and Reminders
- Documentation for QLEs
- COBRA Subsidy
- NCFlex's New Consultant – Segal
- Upcoming Changes to Plans and FSA Reminders

# NCFlex Team - OSHR

## **Benefit Manager**

- Linda Forsberg

## **Administrative Assistant**

- Dianne Griffiths

## **Benefit Consultants**

- Amy Tyndall
- Cindy McNeil
- Kara Rouse
- Kimberly Winters
- Robert (Bob) Kelley
- Sarah West



Linda



Dianne



Amy



Cindy



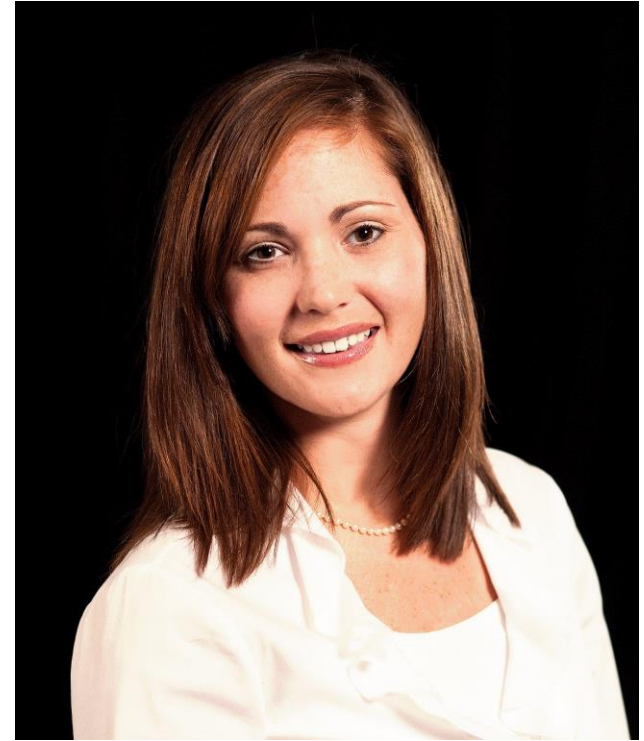
Kara



Kimberly



Bob (Robert)



Sarah

# NCFlex HBR Admin Manual Updates

- Disability Plan added throughout
- Contacts updated – vendor and NCFlex
- Waiver of premium chart added
- “Continuation Periods While on Leave” chart added
- University leave section updated
- Additional clarifications added to QLE chart

# NCFlex HBR Admin Manual Reminders

## Rehires vs. Transfers

- Use list in Admin Manual to see participating NCFlex groups – to identify transfers
- 30-day or less break = Transfer and benefits should not have a break
  - Benefits should stay the same
  - FSA – consider election at prior location and contributions already made
  - Receiving agency may need to take extra month of premium to make up gap
  - Gap may show in Benefitfocus but not on vendor side
- More than 30-day break = Rehire
  - Treated as a New Hire

# Admin Manual Reminders Cont.

## Exceptions

- For changes outside of a QLE or Annual Enrollment window
  - Do not submit if EE is still within 30-day window
  - General inquiries – [ncflex@nc.gov](mailto:ncflex@nc.gov)
- Submitted by HBR on behalf of employee
- Typically administrative error or unavoidable situation
  - EE missing 30-day QLE window
  - HR/PR system error
  - Missing Annual Enrollment



# Admin Manual Reminders Cont.

## Exceptions

- Please do not include HIPAA Info
  - SSNs
  - Medical Information
- Include all pertinent information such as:
  - Details of why window was missed and life event (if applicable)
  - Which plan(s) and coverage level (Low, High, GTL \$150k, etc.) and who is covered (EE Only, EE + Child, etc.) – Do not include premium amounts
  - Retro Exceptions: Has employee utilized benefits – reach out to vendors
- Section 125 and plan rules taken into account to be in compliance

# Admin Manual Reminders Cont.

## NCFlex and Vendor Contacts – When to use each?

- Vendors have dedicated account managers and contacts for HBR and Payroll Centers
  - Please do not give out to employees – employees may contact vendor customer service (toll-free numbers on back of guides on [www.ncflex.org](http://www.ncflex.org))
- Reach out to vendor contacts for:
  - Complicated claim items, vendors may reach directly to employees if needed
  - ID Cards
  - Invoice questions (for payroll) – but if you see a pattern, loop in NCFlex
  - Employee payment activity while on leave to help reinstate benefits correctly when the employee returns
- Contact NCFlex – [ncflex@nc.gov](mailto:ncflex@nc.gov)
  - Employee issues in enrollment system
  - Exceptions/Appeals
  - General plan rule questions

# BINGO BREAK!

# Admin Manual – Leave Updates

## Plan continuation while on Leave

- Paid leave vs. Unpaid leave sections – Updated
- University section on Unpaid leave is separate – Updated
- ALL GROUPS:
  - STD (TSERS) section – only applies to employees who have NOT been separated (including but not limited to: Retired, Resigned, Terminated and etc.)
  - If an employee separates employment during their 12-month STD benefit period:
    - NCFlex benefits should end the last day of the month following their separation date.
    - Employing units should follow the plan rules summarized in the Coverage Termination section of our Admin Manual and the Coverage Termination sections of each Certificate of Insurance.

# Admin Manual – Leave Updates

- New Charts in Admin Manual
  - Outlines important time periods and details – Continuation Options; Waiver of Premiums
    - Example: Voya plans = 12 months continuation for medical LOA & Non-medical is 30 days
      - After continuation ends they must port or convert the policy to keep it.
- Dental and Vision while on Leave
  - Employees should not pay COBRA vendors, follow info from charts in Admin Manual – Provide to employees when they go on leave in case they have to pay vendors directly (LWOP)
- Future developments
  - We hope to move our dental and vision plans to iTedium in the late summer for COBRA administration

# Admin Manual - Qualifying Life Events (QLE)

- Use QLE chart for guidance when helping employees
- Employees have 30 days to make a change, this includes returning from LOA
- Adding an agency specific plan is not a QLE to drop an NCFlex plan – EEs can make this change during Open Enrollment

# QLEs and Documentation

- NCFlex will begin requiring documentation soon
- For most situations, documentation used for SHP changes can be used
- We are finding a lot of employees making changes with no real QLE – this effects our vendor experience and our rates
- More to come:
  - How review process will work
  - What documentation we will accept for different changes

# American Rescue Plan - COBRA Subsidy

- Effects Dental and Vision
- 100% subsidy for coverage from April 1 through Sept. 30, 2021
  - Does not extend normal COBRA coverage period
- Triggering event is loss of coverage due to involuntary termination of employment or reduction in hours
  - Applies to all qualified beneficiaries who lose coverage (e.g., spouse and dependents)



# American Rescue Plan - COBRA Subsidy

- Assistance Eligible Individuals (AEIs) are those whose involuntary termination of employment or reduction in hours occurred:
  - During the subsidy period.
  - Prior to the subsidy period but they have existing COBRA coverage extending into the subsidy period.
  - Prior to the subsidy period and have not elected COBRA. But if they had elected, coverage would have extended into the subsidy period (the second bite at the apple).
    - Includes those who elected and subsequently dropped COBRA coverage before the subsidy period begins.

# American Rescue Plan - COBRA Subsidy

- Notices have to be sent to employees eligible by end of May
- COBRA members are being charged for April and May (until notices are received) but will be refunded
- Groups should have lists of employees possibly eligible
  - Groups should notify Wex (COBRA vendor used by Benefitfocus for dental and vision) of who is eligible
- Model notices were released by DOL, for different scenarios
  - NCFlex suggested to combine so as not to send wrong notice
- Still to come:
  - Who pays originally and who files for tax credit

# New NCFlex Consultant

- NCFlex went out to bid in 2020 for consultation services
  - Changed from Aon to Segal
- We use our consultant to evaluate our plan options and help guide us stay within plan rules per the IRS
- As an HBR/UBA/Payroll contact, you have direct contact with employees – any changes that you would like to see?
  - Survey on the screen

# Upcoming Changes to Plans

- Dental Rates to possibly change for 2022
  - This year rates were discounted due to low utilization last year
- Will go out to bid for Cancer and Critical Illness benefits for 2023
- Reminder of FSA Changes we announced in February
  - No changes to FSAs being allowed outside of a QLE

# Health Care FSA Changes Reminder

- Temporarily allows the rollover of 100% of unused 2020 account balance into 2021.
- Temporarily allows the rollover of 100% of 2021 account balance into 2022.
- Temporarily allows the rollover funds to become available immediately.
  - Before, funds were held until after the runout period (filing deadline for prior year, i.e. 4/30/21 for the 2020 plan year).
- Run out (deadline to file claims) extended to 4/30/22 for 2020 money (expenses dated 1/1/20 – 12/31/20).
- Run out (deadline to file claims) extended to 3/31/23 for 2021 money (expenses dated 1/1/21 – 12/31/21).
- New year funds still used prior to rollover funds.

# Dependent Daycare FSA Changes Reminder

- Grace period for 2020 extended through 12/31/2021. This allows employees access to their unused 2020 contributions for qualified expenses through 12/31/2021.
- Grace period for 2021 extended through 12/31/2022 allowing unused 2021 contributions to be utilized in 2022.
- Temporarily extends the maximum age from age 12 to age 13, for dependent care children who aged out in the 2020 plan year. This allows the unused 2020 contributions to be used for children who turned 13 in 2020.
  - Only until they turn 14
- Run out (deadline to file claims) extended to 4/30/22 for 2020 money (expenses dated 1/1/20 – 12/31/21).
- Run out (deadline to file claims) extended to 3/31/23 for 2021 money (expenses dated 1/1/21 – 12/31/22).

# Resources

- HBR Administration Manual
- NCFlex Enrollment and Benefits Guides
- NCFlex Team and Vendor Account Managers
- Attend fall Train-the-Trainer
- NCFlex.org
  - HBR section
  - New Hire section
  - Plan information and links
  - Videos
- Monthly HBR newsletter and alerts

# Thank you!