

# CORE CONNECTION

A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER  
FOR LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION EMPLOYEES



October 14, 2020

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## Annual Enrollment

**October 1st - November 15th**

Annual enrollment for the 2021 plan year begins October 1, 2020 and runs through November 15, 2020. The Office of Group Benefits (OGB) has hosted informational meetings for members across the State of Louisiana beginning in September.

**It is important to note that this is a passive enrollment. If a member would like to remain in their current OGB health plan with the same covered dependents for the 2021 plan year, they do not need to do anything. Their coverage will continue for the 2021 plan year.**

**[Members enrolled in the HSA and/or FSA options MUST update their contributions in LEO for 2021.](#)**

### **Active Employees Annual Enrollment Meetings**

Meetings were held virtually through zoom by region. If you missed the available Active Employee meetings, click [here](#) to view a recorded video of the presentation.

### **Non-Medicare Retirees Enrollment Meetings**

Meetings will be held in person and will require registration through EventBrite. Please note that due to Hurricane Laura, there will be no meetings in Lake Charles this year. **The full meeting schedule can be found [here](#).** A recorded version of the presentation is available [here](#).

Employees may also visit the [OGB Annual Enrollment website](#) for more information on their benefits and what you need to know about 2021 annual enrollment.

If you have any questions, please contact OGB customer service at 1-800-272-8451.

## Annual Enrollment Appointments

**Hurricane Laura Victims**

Due to the devastation left in the wake of Hurricane Laura, the Office of Group Benefits (OGB) has opened up call-in appointments before and after regular working hours for victims of the storm to call in and speak with a customer service representative about their benefits and 2021 benefit options.

Appointments are available on a **first come, first serve basis** between **7:00 AM - 9:00 AM** and **4:30 PM - 7:00 PM, Monday through Friday**. To schedule an appointment, please call OGB customer service at **1-800-272-8451**. On the date and time of your scheduled appointment, an OGB customer service representative will call you at the number you provided.

Members with questions about a specific plan benefits should contact their plan administrator at the number listed below:

- **Access2Day Health** - 1-800-797-9503
- **Blue Advantage** - 1-866-508-7145
- **Blue Cross Blue Shield of Louisiana** - 1-800-392-4089
- **Discovery Benefits** - 1-866-451-3399
- **Humana** - 1-877-889-9885
- **Peoples Health** - 1-866-912-8304
- **Via Benefits** - 1-855-663-4228
- **Vantage Health Plan** - 1-888-823-1910

***Walk-in visits at the OGB offices are by appointment only.***

## 2021 Insurance Premium Credit

### **Live Better Louisiana Deadline Approaching**

Due to the closure of many clinics because of COVID-19, the Office of Group Benefits has **extended the Live Better Louisiana deadline to Friday, October 30, 2020**. You have extra time to complete a checkup at a Catapult Health Clinic or your doctor's office. Completing the checkup before the deadline will earn you a \$120 premium credit on your 2021 health insurance premium with Blue Cross.

You will have until **Friday, October 30, 2020, to attend any remaining Catapult Health clinics**. You can also visit your primary care doctor and have him or her fill out and fax in the [Primary Care Provider form](#) by **Friday, October 30, 2020 at 5 p.m. CDT** in place of going to a Catapult Health clinic.

### **What do you do?**

Schedule your appointment online at [www.TimeConfirm.com/OGB](http://www.TimeConfirm.com/OGB) or call **1-877-841-3058**. Complete your clinic to get the

Schedule your appointment online at [www.TimeCommit.com/OGB](http://www.TimeCommit.com/OGB) or call 1-877-641-3036. Complete your clinic to get the credit. If you are not able to go to a clinic, have your doctor fax a completed [Primary Care Provider Form](#) to Catapult Health.

### Upcoming Clinics

Below is a list of clinics scheduled throughout the state. Due to clinics being canceled in response to the COVID-19 stay at home order, OGB has extended the deadline to complete your wellness visit until **October 30, 2020!**

Live Better Louisiana Clinics	
Date (Week)	Location
10/12-16/2020	Assumption Parish Schools - (Napoleonville) Central Office - Jefferson Parish School Board (Harvey) Florida Parishes Human Services Authority (Hammond) DOTD District 08 (Alexandria) Grambling State University (Grambling) Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (Baton Rouge) Louisiana Motor Vehicle Commission (Metairie) DOTD District 62 (Hammond) Nicholls State University (Thibodaux) LSU Shreveport (Shreveport) Northwestern State University (Natchitoches) LA School of Math Science & Arts (Natchitoches) 1st Circuit Court of Appeals (Baton Rouge) Central Office- Franklin Parish School Board (Winnsboro)
10/19-23/2020	Vernon Parish School Board - Hornbeck High School (Hornbeck) Delgado CC City Park (New Orleans) Jefferson Parish School Board Emenes Building (Harahan) Central Office - Jackson Parish School Board (Jonesboro) Bossier Civic Center (Bossier City, LA) Northshore TCC Lacombe Campus (Lacombe) DOTD District 62 (Hammond) Supreme Court of LA (New Orleans) DOTD District 02 Crescent City Connection Division (New Orleans) Sabine Parish School Board - Central Office (Many) Northeast LA War Veterans Home (Monroe) Nicholls State University (Thibodaux) NOCCA (New Orleans)
10/26-30/2020	Baton Rouge Marriott (Baton Rouge) Central Office - Jefferson Parish School Board (Harvey) Jackson PSB - Quitman High School (Quitman) Office of Public Health - Alexandria Parish Health Unit (Alexandria) Nunez Community College (Chalmette) Capital Area Human Services District (Baton Rouge) University of New Orleans (New Orleans) Delgado CC City Park (New Orleans) DEQ - Southeast Regional Office (New Orleans) Central LA Technical Community College (Alexandria)

## 2020 Flu Shot Clinics

**October 13th - November 10th**

The Division of Administration will be hosting several **flu immunization clinics** in the **Claiborne Building** located in the **Rapides Room (#3-230)**. Appointments are encouraged to promote social distancing. Click [here](#) to schedule an appointment.

Please bring the following to the clinic:

1. [Informed Consent for immunization & COVID Screening](#)
2. Copy of Insurance Card

Date	Time
Tuesday, October 13, 2020	10:00 AM - 1:00 PM
Monday, November 2, 2020	10:00 AM - 1:00 PM
Tuesday, November 10, 2020	10:00 AM - 1:00 PM

# DINA Insurance Event

October 27th

David Dearie Insurance (DINA) will have a booth set up in the Claiborne building on **Tuesday, October 27th from 8:00 AM - 4:00 PM** in the **Colorado Room (#1-141)**.

Click [here](#) for more information on DINA insurance options.

## December 2020 BESE Meetings

### Important Dates

Action	Deadline	Contact
Notify Policy of items to be included in December 2020 BESE tracker	12:00 PM - Wednesday, November 4th	<a href="#">Ryan Gremillion</a>
Notify Policy of any BoardDocs extension requests	12:00 PM - Friday, November 6th	<a href="#">Ryan Gremillion</a>
Submit Bulletin revision <b>drafts</b> to Policy for <b>final</b> review	5:00 PM - Friday, November 6th	<a href="#">Ryan Gremillion</a>
Submit allocations to Grants Management	5:00 PM - Wednesday, November 11th	<a href="#">Randy Littleton</a>
Submit Contracts/Amendments and Contract Summary Forms to Education Finance	5:00 PM - Wednesday, November 11th	<a href="#">Belinda Flaherty</a>
Submit Bulletin revisions to Policy for <b>final</b> review	5:00 PM - Friday, November 13th	<a href="#">Ryan Gremillion</a>
Submit talking points to Policy	5:00 PM - Monday, December 7th	<a href="#">Ryan Gremillion</a>

Saturday, December 5th - All meeting agendas and material available to the public

**\*\*Tuesday, December 15th - Wednesday, December 16th - BESE and Joint BESE/BOR meetings\*\***

## COVID-19 Return to Work Guidance for LDOE Employees

### Phase Three Extended

On October 8th, [Gov. John Bel Edwards extended Phase 3 order](#) until at least November 6th, including the statewide mask mandate.

In alignment with guidance issued from the Governor's Office and LDH, the Department has provided the [COVID-19 Return to Work Guidance for LDOE Employees](#).

#### **Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA or Act)**

We would like to remind all employees of the FFCR Act which requires certain employers to provide their employees with paid sick leave and expanded family and medical leave for specified reasons related to COVID-19. These provisions will apply from April 1, 2020, through December 31, 2020. For more information, click [here](#).

#### **Facial Coverings Required**

A mask, scarf, bandanna or other such facial covering **must be worn** upon entering and leaving the office building. A mask **must be worn** anytime you step away from your desk and enter into a common space such as hallways, walkways, stairwells, elevators, kitchens, break rooms, meeting rooms, and restrooms.

\*\*Employees assigned to private offices or individual cubicles may remove the facial covering **only while working alone** within their designated work space. The facial covering must fully cover the mouth and nose area and may not contain images or text that is inappropriate or may be offensive to others.

Please note that **not all staff are expected to report to the Claiborne building** at this time. If you are expected to return to the building, your Assistant Superintendent will notify you.

## Teleworking Logs

### Due Weekly

As a reminder, each employee who continues to work remotely two days each week or every day (Monday - Friday) should

continue to update and complete the weekly [teleworking log](#), or a similar log, and submit to their supervisor for approval at the beginning of each week (outlining tasks) and at the end of each week (outline notes relative to each task).

## Human Resources Updates

### Housekeeping Items

In an effort to better serve our employees, the Office of Human Resources will share monthly updates to ensure employees know where to find the HR information they may need and who to contact for assistance.

#### Human Resources Contacts

Human Resources has developed an HR Contact List to assist employees with knowing which HR contact they should reach out to in order to receive a timely response. This document can be found [here](#) and on the Google Shared Drive: *LDOE Documents and Training > Human Resources > HR Documents > Employee Information*.

#### FAQs for Filling a Vacancy

The updated [FAQs for Filling a Vacancy](#) is available on the Google Shared Drive: *LDOE Documents and Training > Human Resources > HR Documents > Recruitment and Onboarding*. This document will provide helpful information and guidance on the process for filling a new or existing vacancy.

## Update Outlook Contact Information

Many office moves have taken place and we are asking that each employee take a moment to ensure their contact information is up to date. Specifically, we want each employee to make sure their office location and office phone number are updated in both their email signature and Outlook contact card.

Please [click here](#) for instructions on updating your Outlook information.

#### Email Signatures

Each LDOE employee should have an email signature on each outgoing email. The Department requires the format below for all emails sent from LDOE employee email accounts, including replies. Please note that personal taglines are not allowed. Please reference page 7 of the [Communication Style Guide](#).

Name  
Title  
Louisiana Department of Education  
1201 North Third Street  
Baton Rouge, LA 70802  
Phone number

Louisiana Believes

## Prohibited Political Activity for Classified Employees

In preparation of the upcoming election season, the Department of State Civil Service would like to remind classified state employees of the "do's and don'ts" of political activity. It is important that classified employees are aware of the restrictions that apply to you, and your spouse, in regards to ALL local, state, and federal elections.

Article 10, Section 9 of the State Constitution and Civil Service Rules 14.1(e), (f), and (g) govern the political activities of classified state employees. The United States Supreme Court has recognized that a state has the right to limit the political activity of its workers in order to ensure the enforcement and application of laws for the common good and not for the good of one candidate or political party. The Supreme Court has also recognized the right of a state to restrict such activity in order to avoid the appearance of such support. **This means that classified state employees must avoid the ACTUAL support of a candidate, party, or faction and avoid the APPEARANCE of giving such support.**

You may click [here](#) to view General Circular Number 2020-048 for specific details related to prohibited political activity.

The prohibited political activity training can be found in [LEO](#) under the **My Training** tab. Simply search **CPTP Prohibited Political Activities WBT** on the left hand side of the screen under **Find**.

If you have questions about what political activities you may or may not be involved in as a classified state employee, please contact the LDOE Human Resources team, or the Department of State Civil Service at P.O. Box 94111, Baton Rouge, LA 70804-9111, by phone at (225) 342-8274, or email [scsinfo@la.gov](mailto:scsinfo@la.gov).

## State Combined Charitable Campaign

## State Combined Charitable Campaign October 1st - December 1st

The 2020 [State Combined Charitable Campaign](#) (SCCC) will be held from **October 1, 2020 through December 1, 2020**. The SCCC is the only state approved charitable activity that enables payroll deducted contributions from LaGov HCM paid state employees. Employees have the option to donate through the convenience of payroll deduction or make a one-time gift via cash, check, credit card, or through payroll deduction.

### Online Enrollment through LEO!

Although the SCCC does not officially launch until October 1, 2020, employees can begin designating their payroll deductions for the SCCC through LEO. Click [here](#) for instructions on how to contribute to SCCC using LEO. **Only one enrollment method is necessary, online through LEO or by paper pledge form, not both.**

Pledge forms will be distributed to each LDOE office over the next few weeks. **All pledge forms, online donations and special event/fundraiser revenue are due to Human Resources by December 1, 2020.** If you do not receive a pledge form by September 30th or have any questions about the SCCC, please contact [Staci.Johnson2@la.gov](mailto:Staci.Johnson2@la.gov).

Visit <http://www.lasccc.org> for more information about the SCCC, fundraising ideas, and to view a list of participating charities.

## 2020 Annual Training Reminder

### Must be completed by December 31st

In an effort to avoid system overload and/or issues for OTS, we would like to encourage everyone to complete the **CPTP Preventing Sexual Harassment 2020** and **2020 Code of Ethics for Public Servants** trainings in LEO as soon as possible. **Please make sure to print your certificates upon completion, this is your proof of course completion.** In the event of system issues, providing your certificate will ensure that you receive credit for completing the training course(s).

### Required Supervisor Training

We would also like to remind all employees that are in job titles considered part of the supervisory training group of the **Preventing Sexual Harassment for Supervisors-WBT** training. These employees are required to complete an additional web-based training to raise awareness of supervisors regarding the prevention of sexual harassment.

## Live Better Louisiana

### October Newsletter

#### Halloween Safety Tips

COVID-19 has put a damper on many of our favorite festivals and events but what about Halloween? If your kids are anything like mine, they are already talking about what they want to dress up as and how they can't wait for Trick or Treat. But is it safe for the kids to go trick or treating this year? The CDC has released some tips that will help families to safely celebrate this fall holiday while still having fun.

#### Low Risk Halloween Activities:

- Carving or decorating pumpkins as a family
- Carving or decorating pumpkins outside, at a safe distance, with neighbors or friends
- Decorating your home for the holiday
- Doing a [Halloween scavenger hunt](#) where children are given lists of Halloween-themed things to look for while they walk outdoors from house to house
- Having a virtual Halloween costume contest
- Having a Halloween movie night with people you live with. (Here's a list of [kid-friendly Halloween flicks](#) to stream!)
- Having a scavenger hunt-style trick-or-treat search with your household members around your home

#### High Risk Halloween Activities:

- Participating in traditional trick-or-treating where treats are handed to children who go door to door
- Having trunk-or-treat where treats are handed out from trunks of cars in parking lots
- Attending crowded indoor costume parties
- Going to an indoor haunted house where people may be crowded together and screaming
- Going on hayrides or tractor rides with non-family members
- Traveling to a rural fall festival that is not in your community

Please click [here](#) to view the October Live Better Louisiana Newsletter for more information from OGB.

## 2nd Quarter Safety

### Review by October 31st



## Distracted Driving

In 2019, there were more than 38,000 deaths in auto accidents. Each year over 2.5 million of people are involved in automobile accidents for a variety of reasons:

- Cell phone usage - 1.6 million
- Distracted drivers - 421,000
- Texting - 330,000 (1 in 4 accidents)

### Preventing Distracted Driving Accidents:

- Turn your cell phone off when you get in your vehicle or use your phone's "Do Not Disturb While Driving" feature
- Don't look at your passengers to have a conversation
- Don't read the newspaper, book or map while driving
- Have your music loaded before you go
- Do your grooming before you drive
- Avoid eating while driving

Click [here](#) for more information and tips on how to prevent distracted driving.

## LDOE Employee Support Website

The [LDOE Employee Support Google Site](#) is a newly designed, dedicated space for the most up-to-date information for LDOE staff. By now, all LDOE employees should have received an email granting access to the site, which includes information about COVID-19, tools and resources for managing and working remotely, HR resources, as well as guidance from the Office of Technology Services (OTS).

In addition to reviewing content found on the [LDOE Employee Support Google Site](#), employees are strongly encouraged to continue reading Core Connection, which includes pertinent information for all state employees.

We hope this new intranet will be a helpful resource for all LDOE employees. For questions regarding the site, please contact [ldoecommunications@la.gov](mailto:ldoecommunications@la.gov).

## LDOE Brand and Communications Style Guides



Both guides can be found in your Google Team Drive under LDOE Documents and Training > Public Affairs > Branded Documents, and will be updated as new templates and tools are created. You can provide feedback to the Office of Public Affairs by emailing [\\_DOE-PublicAffairs@la.gov](mailto:_DOE-PublicAffairs@la.gov).

## Employee Birthdays - October



<b>1st</b> Michael Bock Antiqua Bradley-Hunter Fang Xu	<b>2nd</b> Laura Bowling Denise Karamales Emily Parker	<b>3rd</b> Alishia Ancar Allen Bourgeois Lee Smith	<b>4th</b> Kristie Duchamp Meredith Jordan	<b>5th</b> Amy Lambert Christina Potter
<b>6th</b> Madeline Swift	<b>7th</b> Latoya Davis	<b>8th</b> Bridget Rev	<b>9th</b> Shannon Hunt	<b>10th</b> Brandi Chapman

	Terrance Hodges	Leanne Toups		Kiersten Peltier
<b>11th</b> Marcie Buckle Sarah Fletcher	<b>12th</b> Dequan Bujol Kelly Parker	<b>13th</b> Tamella Ellerson	<b>14th</b> Melanie Mayeux	<b>15th</b>
<b>16th</b> Symetress Armwood	<b>17th</b>	<b>18th</b>	<b>19th</b> Merlyn Tejada	<b>20th</b>
<b>21st</b> Jeffrey Holcomb Debi Threeton	<b>22nd</b> Toya Porter	<b>23rd</b> Linda Lambert	<b>24th</b> April Allen Shirley Foster Stephanie Holloway	<b>25th</b> Felicia Jackson Yaxin Lu
<b>26th</b> Quentina Timoll	<b>27th</b> Kenyatta Walton	<b>28th</b> Ronnie Davis Emmy O'Dwyer Deijon Pollard	<b>29th</b>	<b>30th</b> Trey Anding
<b>31st</b>				

## Team Member Spotlight

Do you want to brag on a team or team member? Have great news to share? Please email [Maranda.Rispon@la.gov](mailto:Maranda.Rispon@la.gov) to be featured in the edition of the Core Connection.

### Leslie Gilliland, Career and College Readiness

Congratulations to Leslie Gilliland for being recognized as a 2020 Census Brand Ambassador by the US Census Bureau. Leslie Gilliland represented the LDOE at the Governor's 2020 Census kick-off press conference and the inaugural meeting of the

Complete Count Committee in New Orleans. Additionally, Leslie represents the LDOE at Governor John Bel Edwards's State Complete Count Committee for the 2020 Census.



*\*Submissions for the November 11th Core Connection must be received by Wednesday, November 4th.*

## Welcome Our Newest Employees



## **LDOE is pleased to welcome our newest employees to our team!**

Shanna Beber - Director of SRCL - Teaching & Learning (Early Childhood)

Sharon Necaie - Director of Humanities - Teaching & Learning (Academic Content)



Terrance Hodges  
Accountant  
Appropriation Control

### **LDOE Contacts**

Cade Brumley  
State Superintendent of Education  
(toll-free) 877.453.2721  
Twitter @LouisianaSupe

### **LDOE Links**

[LDOE Website](#)  
[Contact Us](#)