

Office of Employee Relations  
and Labor-Management Committees

# QUARTERLY UPDATE

Q2 | April - June 2025



Office of  
Employee Relations

## OFFICE OF EMPLOYEE RELATIONS MISSION

To advance the performance of state government through collaborative labor relations, workforce training, education, and benefits.

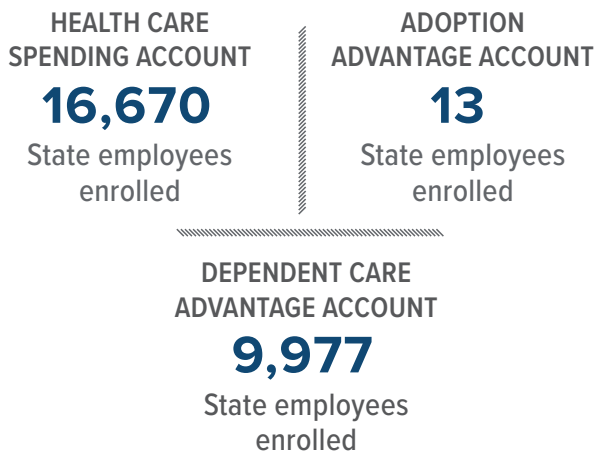
## NYS HEALTH INSURANCE PLAN/EMPLOYEE BENEFITS MANAGEMENT UNIT

### PRE-TAX PROGRAMS

Flex Spending Account (FSA): Health Care Spending Account (HCSA), Dependent Care Advantage Account (DCAA), and Adoption Advantage Account.

The Flex Spending Account (FSA) Program is a pre-tax program that saves employees money on health care and dependent care expenses.

Enrollments for the 2025 FSA as of June 30, include:



### PRE-TAX TRANSPORTATION BENEFIT NYS-RIDE

As of June 30, **4,305** employees participated in NYS-Ride transit. With NYS-Ride, the State realized a 12-month annualized savings of **\$63,227** (the net of FICA savings minus lost tax revenue), and employees saved an average of **\$610** per year.

Parking remains constant with  
**619** employees enrolled.

### Highlights

#### The Empire Plan - Hospital Program

The Health Insurance Council eliminated extension clinic facility fee co-payments. Enrollees are now subject only to a \$25 co-payment at an extension clinic, unless during the visit they receive additional outpatient services (labs, radiology, diagnostics) which incurs a \$50 co-payment.

#### The Empire Plan - Live Health Online

April – May 2025:

- **916** new registrations
- **1,878** virtual visits total
- Medical: **1,142** visits
- Behavioral Health: **727** visits

#### The Empire Plan - Medical/Surgical Program

24/7 Nurseline: Over **15,000** calls were placed and nearly **4,000** referrals from Nurseline to other Empire Plan Programs and services.

Scalp-Cooling Legislation: **45** utilizers plan-wide have received **\$88,000** worth of benefit coverage for this newly enhanced care.

#### The Empire Plan - Prescription Drug Program

CVS reported an overall drug trend increase at **16.8%** for the Empire Plan Rx Program, including rebates.

#### The Empire Plan - Mental Health and Substance Use Program

Staff provided training to over **100** Employee Assistance Program (EAP) Coordinators on mental health and wellness benefits available to NYSHIP enrollees.

### WORKFORCE AND ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The Public Service Workshop Programs (PSWP) PSWP delivered **63** workshops to **1,138** participants completing training.

#### Statewide Training Initiatives Training Directors' Roundtable

**1** webinar was held in May, providing the training community with professional development, updates, and discussions on Statewide training initiatives.

*A Statewide Learning Management System (SLMS) Primary Administrator* training took place in June, with a total of **16** participants trained.

*An Instructional Design Certificate Program* was announced, which will occur in July in Albany. **25** participants from **13** different agencies will attend a three day in person training.

**Professional Development Committee (PDC)**  
The PDC met on twice this quarter.

#### PEF Grant Programs

The Workforce Initiatives and Labor Management Nursing Grants application period was opened. **6** agencies submitted grant applications. The PEF PDC will meet in July to decide which grants to award.

#### Leadership Development Programs Excelsior Service Fellowship Program

**33** Excelsior Fellows from cohort ten who are in their second year of the fellowship participated in the April professional development sessions, as well as **22** Excelsior Fellows in June.

**56** Excelsior Fellows from cohort eleven who are in their first year of the fellowship participated in the May professional development session.

#### PEF Leadership Development Program (LDP) for PEF-represented Employees

Selections were made for the next round of the PEF LDP. There are three LDP's beginning in mid-July with **40** PEF-represented employees in each cohort.

New York State/New York State Correction Officers & Police Benevolent Association (NYS/NYSCOPBA) Joint Labor-Management Committee Reimbursement Program

NYSCOPBA Education and Training Program (ETP): **22** applications from nine applicants were approved for a total expenditure of \$24,463.

New York State/Police Benevolent Association of New York State (NYS/PBANYS) Joint Labor-Management Committee Reimbursement Program

PBANYS Education and Training Program (ETP): **4** applications from 3 applicants were approved for a total expenditure of \$6,427.

State-PEF Professional Development Committee (PDC) Public Employees Federation (PEF) Reimbursement Programs

PEF College Tuition Reimbursement (CTR) Program: **955** applications from 531 applicants were approved for a total expenditure of \$1,253,477. Of these applications, 146 were reimbursed under the Nurses' Enhanced CTR Program at an amount of \$199,413.

PEF Workshop and Seminar Reimbursement (WSR) Program: **375** applications from 305 applicants were approved for a total expenditure of \$109,586.

PEF Certification and Licensure Exam Fee Reimbursement (CLEFR) Program: **80** applications from 73 applicants were approved for a total expenditure of \$32,440.

PEF Certification and License Renewal Fee Reimbursement (CLRFR) Pilot Program: **146** applications from 146 applicants were approved for a total expenditure of \$31,968.

Management/Confidential (M/C) Reimbursement Program

M/C Tuition Reimbursement Program: **41** applications from 28 applicants were approved for a total expenditure of \$43,587.

M/C Certification and Licensure Exam Fee Reimbursement (CLEFR) Program: **5** applications from five applicants were approved for a total expenditure of \$1,533.

## NYS & CSEA PARTNERSHIP FOR EDUCATION AND TRAINING (Partnership)

### Job Skills and Professional Development (ASU, ISU, OSU, and DMNA)

The *2025-2026 Tuition Benefits Program* on April 1. The Program has changed this year to a diminishing balance program. Eligible employees can now receive up to \$5,000 in standard benefits and an additional \$2,500 if they are in a targeted NYS program. Members can save money on tuition and exam costs in pursuit of a college degree, essential skills, or job-specific certifications.

The *Spring 2025 Skills for Success* program ended in May. **744** unique members applied for a total of 1,767 seats in one or more classes. From February to May, a total of **69** courses and webinars were available in **10** categories.

Registration for the *2025 Skills for Success Summer Online Series* is now underway. Over **12** live instructor-led webinars will be available in July and August.

Planning for the *2026–2028 Applied Skilled Trades Program* is underway. Partnership staff held **1** virtual and **8** in-person meetings with Labor and Management leaders across regions 1-6 to discuss program details, trade and location options, eligibility, and next steps.

### Applied Skilled Trades Program

**93** employees graduated from the *2023-2025 Applied Skilled Trades Program* in late May and early June from the following regions: Long Island Region (electrician), Southern Region (carpenter and electrician), Capital Region (electrician), Central Region (plumber/steamfitter), and Western Region (plumber/steamfitter and electrician).

### Adult Education Basics

*English for Speakers of Other Languages 1* in CSEA Capital Region 4 and *Math Refresher 2* (Online) ended in April with a total of **32** learners.

### Labor-Management Services

Labor-Management Services staff conducted a pre-training needs assessment for the Department of Transportation (DOT) Region 4 Wyoming residency Labor-Management Committee on April 1.

Staff conducted a pre-training needs assessment for the DOT Region 4 Genesee-Orleans Residency Management team on April 8.

Staff presented a customized Labor-Management Committee Process training to SUNY Albany on April 9.

Staff conducted a pre-training needs assessment for the DOT Region 4 Monroe West residency Labor-Management Committee on April 15.

Staff conducted a pre-training needs assessment for the DOT Region 4 Wayne-Ontario Residency Labor-Management Committee on April 29.

Staff presented a customized Labor-Management Committee Process training to DOT Region 4. A total of nine residencies and 67 committee members participated in the training on June 25-26.

### Tuition Benefits



**1,323** employees have applied for 2,881 benefits since the 2025 - 2026 Tuition Benefits Program, which began on April 1, 2025. So far, **563** benefits have been paid, totaling \$862,771.



**171** employees are participating in the following targeted tuition programs: Commercial Driver's License (43), HVAC (4), RN/LPN (121), and Welding (3).



Staff continue to administer the Tuition Benefits Program for CSEA, Inc.; Health Research, Inc.; NYS Teachers' Retirement System; State University Construction Fund; and VOICE/CSEA.

### ONLINE LEARNING

Approximately **1,086** employees from **144** agencies and facilities are participating in the Partnership's Online Learning program for 2025.

**ONE-YEAR CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS**  
**229** employees are participating in the *Customer Service*.

**244** employees are participating in *The Organized Office Worker*.

**253** employees are participating in the *Microsoft Word Basics*.

**SIX-MONTH ONLINE CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS**  
**232** employees are participating in *Critical Thinking and Problem-Solving*.

**258** employees are participating in the *Successful Business Writing*.

**224** employees are participating in *Microsoft Collaboration Tools*.



### GRANT PROGRAMS

**12** grants were approved this quarter. Grant totals for the NYS and CSEA contract period spanning from 2021-2026 are provided below:

- **300** Quality of Work Life grants have been approved for **18** NYS agencies and **22** CSEA locals, totaling \$570,890.
- **4** Safety and Health grants have been approved for \$104,250.
- **2** Labor-Management Workforce Development grants have been approved for \$1,944.



### SAFETY AND HEALTH

The NYS & CSEA Safety and Health (A-15) Committee met on April 30 to discuss areas of mutual concern.

The NYS & CSEA Safety and Health Planning Committee met on June 13 to discuss areas of mutual concern.

Applications for forklift training for the summer season are still being accepted.

### ADVISEMENT SERVICES

Advisors responded to **5,500** calls and emails from employees requesting advice and information on issues such as tuition benefits, financial aid, basic skills, nursing programs, starting, or returning to college, and high school equivalency test preparation.

### Field Associate Activities

Staff hosted information tables at **63** NYS agencies/facilities and CSEA events.

Field associates made **1,118** phone, text, and email contacts with NYS managers and CSEA leaders statewide regarding Partnership programs and services.

They also held **155** meetings with CSEA leaders and NYS managers across the State to provide an overview of Partnership programs and services.



## WORK-LIFE SERVICES

### NYS Network Child Care Centers

The Centers continue to experience staffing shortages, this is consistent with what is occurring statewide and industry-wide. Such staffing shortages pose major challenges to the childcare centers. The lack of proper staffing contributes to the inability to open all classrooms and enroll the requisite number of children to operate at full capacity. According to the information provided by the child care centers in the 2024 Network Child Care Center survey, the licensing capacity of all of the centers was **3,101** and the enrollment was **2,233**.

In addition, the expansion of Universal Pre-K has severely impacted preschool enrollment within the centers. More three and four-year-old children are now enrolling within their local public schools rather than attending the Network Child Care Centers, adding to their inability to reach full capacity.

### Health and Safety and Professional Development Grants

The NYS Network Child Care Centers are eligible to participate in the 2024-2025 Grants. During this quarter, staff reviewed grant reimbursement applications and documents submitted by the Centers who were approved for reimbursement. Of the **29** Centers participating in the Network, **23** centers applied for grants, totaling approximately **\$252,000**. In addition, staff have been traveling to NYS Network Child Care Centers to conduct grant audit site visits as well as provide technical assistance as needed.

#### Directions: Pre-Retirement Planning Webinar Sessions

DIRECTIONS: Pre-Retirement Webinars, which are offered to executive branch employees who are at least 50 years old and eligible to retire within five years are offered every month. During this quarter, webinars were held in April, May, and June. Four 90-minute webinars were held. They included the Deferred Compensation Plan (DCP) and Pension webinars on Tuesdays, and Social Security and NYS Health Insurance Plan (NYSHIP) webinars on Wednesdays. There are **105** liaisons at State agencies who assist with promoting the webinars to employees.



**Webinar Attendance:**  
April: **713** employees  
May: **457** employees  
June: **602** employees

### Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

#### Utilization

There were **5,261** first contacts by employees and family members during this quarter. In addition, the EAP main office received **98** calls from employees requesting assistance and **59** website requests for assistance.

The most frequently reported issues were related to workplace/job performance, mental health, stress, finances, and career/education.

#### EAP Critical Incident Response

EAP coordinators responded to, and assisted with, **22** critical incidents.

#### Certified Employee Assistance Professionals (CEAP)

The CEAP certification is a nationally recognized professional credential in the employee assistance field. **1** staff member earned their CEAP this quarter. A total of **20** coordinators and **13** staff currently have earned the CEAP credential.

#### Wellness

There were **3** statewide wellness webinars related to WellNYS Daily To-Do topics with a total of **608** participants. Topics were *Make Moments of Movement*, *Travel this Summer with I LOVE NY*, and *Discover the NYS Parks Wellness Challenge*.

There are **93** WellNYS Ambassadors from **23** different agencies who promoted the WellNYS Everyday program to employees in their agencies and contributed to monthly virtual meetings.

## WORK-LIFE SERVICES continued . . .

As of the end of June, there are **3,558** subscribers to the WellNYS Daily To-Do and It's Move Time emails.

### Outreach

EAP reached **25,865** employees during this quarter by hosting in-person events such as meet and greets, union activities, wellness events, and benefit fairs.

The EAP, Wellness Program and the Employee Benefits Management Unit staff presented a workshop for the Directors of Human Resources on *Elevate Employee Mental Health and Wellbeing* through EAP, *Wellness, and Health Benefits*.

### Employee Assistance Program Coordinator Training

Professional development continued by addressing topics including the aging process and elder care resource planning, addressing trauma, gender issues, mental health and stigma in the workplace. Sessions focused on familiarizing attendees with available resources and their optimal utilization. There were **44** sessions with **769** participants.

Training included:

- *The Aging Process and Eldercare Resource Planning*
- *Navigating Trauma Effectively*
- *NYS Gender-Based Violence and the Workplace Training* for EAP Coordinators
- *Raising Mental Health Awareness and Reducing Stigma at Work*
- *Talk Saves Lives* (Suicide Prevention)
- *Employee Benefits Training for Coordinators*
- *Carelon Behavioral Health Training*
- *Workplace Diversity, Inclusion, and Sensitivity*
- *Regional Resources/Case Studies*
- *Regional Rep Committee/Supervisor/Employee Orientations*

### Foundational Training

This quarter, a total of **20** foundational training classes were held. Ten in-person and ten virtual.

Training is being delivered according to the detailed schedule in the current foundational training catalog. Three additional virtual foundational training sessions are scheduled for July 2025.

### Regional Resource Training

Training began in April and will continue through August 2025. Training sessions on Regional Resources/Case

Studies and Regional Rep Committee/Supervisor/Employee Orientations have been successfully delivered to EAP coordinators, committee members and agency staff. To date, **11** in-person training classes have been delivered.

### Employee Assistance Program Coordinator Foundational Training

This quarter, a total of **20** foundational training classes were held. Ten in-person and ten virtual. Training is being delivered according to the detailed schedule in the current foundational training catalog.

### Multi-Agency Programs

The Capital Area Multi-agency coordinators continue to provide in-person and virtual support to **17** NYS agencies. They have actively provided meet and greets at multiple agencies. The coordinators are in the process of creating a grant subcommittee for the upcoming grant application and have been providing virtual Lunch and Learns such as neurodiversity in the workplace.

Binghamton's Multi-agency continues to meet monthly. Coordinators and committee members are working towards hosting events and programs, including a resource fair in Endicott. The Multi-agency EAP coordinator for Office of Temporary and Disability Services offered a regional resource training for coordinators on motivational interviewing.

The Utica Multi-agency EAP coordinator continues to have many client contacts. There are plans to host a table in the Utica State Office Building in mid-July. The EAP committee chairperson has been selected and received her orientation.

The Syracuse Multi-agency held a promotional event with over **100** participants and hosted a table at the DOT safety training at the NYS Fairgrounds.

The Watertown Multi-agency planned a wellness/benefit fair for employees at the Dulles State Office Building. Committee members attended Department of Transportation safety training to promote EAP services to employees in three counties.

During this quarter, New York State/United University Professionals Joint Labor-Management Committees (NYS/UUP JLMC) staff continued with the implementation and administration of labor-management funded programs and activities for UUP-represented employees as follows:

### Dr. Nuala McGann Drescher Leave Program

Established under the statewide Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee, the Dr. Nuala McGann Drescher Leave Program seeks to promote diversity, inclusion, and equal opportunity in SUNY's workforce. The Program enhances employment opportunities for employees who are preparing for continuing appointment (academic employees) or permanent appointment (professional employees) by providing salary for a replacement while the employee is on leave. The Committee met in April to review applications for the Fall 2025.

- **17** applications were received and **10** were approved for a total of **\$90,326**.

### Individual Development Award (IDA) Program

The IDA Program, which is established under the statewide Professional Development Committee, is designed to support a variety of professional development projects or activities for eligible full-time and part-time academic and professional employees that will assist them to develop their full professional potential and to prepare for advancement including those related to an employee's research and publication of manuscripts that are not provided by the employee's campus, department, program, or through other funding sources.

During this quarter, IDA applications which were submitted by the Campus Professional Development Committees were reviewed and approved by NYS/UUP JLMC staff:

- **29** campuses submitted applications for review
- **2,069** applications were reviewed
- **\$1,907,186.36** was awarded

### Professional Development Grant Program

This Program is intended to fund a professional development project or activity to assist three or more employees to develop their professional potential and to prepare for advancement. Eligibility is similar to the

Individual Development Awards Programs.

- One application was submitted for funding four UUP-represented employees to attend the SUNY Technology Conference in Lake Placid. The committee awarded **\$2,812.27** for eligible travel related expenses and conference registration.

### Campus Grants Program

This program is intended to fund projects or activities that address mutually identified needs among the other four committees which benefit groups of employees at one or more campuses. Funding is provided for projects or activities that make the workplace safer, encourage and promote professional development, expand diversity, equity and inclusion in the workplace, explore issues pertaining to the application of technology, and promote opportunities for employees with disabilities. Two applications were received during this quarter.

- One application was awarded **\$15,000** for salary replacement of three UUP-represented employees for the project *Reimagining English Studies at UAlbany: Developing Digital Arts, New Media, and Multimedia Assignments in Literature, Rhetoric, and Creative Writing*.
- One application is under review.

### Certification, Licensure Exam Fee Reimbursement Program (CLEFR)

Applications were reviewed and approved to reimburse employees for exams that are job or career related to improve skills and gain the knowledge necessary for promotional opportunities and career mobility within SUNY.

- **135** applications were received and are being reviewed for reimbursement.
- **32** applications were reimbursed, totaling **\$523,440**.

### Certification and Licensure Reimbursement Program-Renewals (CLRP-Renewals)

This Program reimburses the fees for certification, licensure, or designation renewals that are required for the employee's position. The fee renewal is based on the requirements in the classification standard for the applicant's current title, or as included in the job description or job announcement for a specific position.

- **104** applications were received and are being reviewed.

#### Empire KnowledgeBank (EKB)

Applications were processed for licenses that provide employees access to a variety of eLearning products to enhance their professional and career development, for certification preparation, and continuing education in a variety of areas.

- **18** Empire KnowledgeBank (EKB) eLearning licenses were activated during this quarter.

#### Ongoing projects include:

- Meeting with statewide labor-management committees to discuss and review programs and revise guidelines as needed.
- The NYS/UUP JLMC Executive Committee met on May 7 and discussed needed adjustments to guidelines and applications, goals to promote the programs more widely, and anticipated changes to committee composition.
- The program guidelines were reviewed and revised by staff and are under review by the committee members.
- Continuing to focus on strategies to promote labor-management programs to campus staff and employees.

- A monthly joint marketing sub-committee meeting was established to facilitate continuous progress, discussions on communication strategies, and the development of relevant materials.
- Two Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion sub-committee meetings took place to discuss and develop strategies and promotional materials to increase the visibility and participation in the Dr. Nuala Drescher McGann Leave Program.
- Draft promotional materials were developed for **8** of the LMC programs.
- Initiating the procurement process to secure training services for delivering professional development workshops to develop new skills and knowledge for employees to advance.