

Part 3
**Q &A Eligibility: Averaging Qualifying Months for Nonpermanent,
Career Seasonal, and Instructional Year Employees**
2/11/2008

- 1. Do employers within education have to use one of the three methods of calculation to figure half-time, or can we use one we create based on our own definition of “full time?”**

Determine “half-time or more” for instructional year employees based on each institution’s definition of “full-time.”

To be eligible for benefits as an instructional-year employee, employees must average half-time or more on an instructional or school year basis. Therefore, if employers consider full-time to be different than 40 hours a week – i.e., full time is measured by a specific amount of course load, credit hours, or teaching time – then the employer’s definition of full time will be the standard by which half time is measured.

- 2. What do we do with employees who work 4 months of the year? Are they impacted by the new criteria?**

An employee whom you expect to work only 4 months would not be eligible for PEBB medical insurance benefits unless he or she meets the definition of “seasonal employee” under WAC 182-12-115(3).

A “seasonal employee” is employed for 3-8 months for at least half time PER month with an understanding of continued employment season after season,

NOTE: Employees may be eligible for benefits if defined as any one of PEBB’s eligible employees. Remember, PEBB’s descriptions of employee categories do not necessarily match the job classifications of your specific agency. In other words, regardless of how an employer defines an employee for hiring purposes, PEBB will consider the employee’s eligibility depending on the definition the employee fits according to WAC.

Employees eligible for PEBB include:

1. Permanent employees
2. Nonpermanent employees
3. Seasonal employees
4. Career seasonal employees
5. Instructional year employees
6. Part time faculty
7. Part time academic employees
8. Appointed and elected officials
9. Judges

- 3. If employees are found to be eligible, do they have to take PEBB benefits - even if it ultimately costs the employees?**

Employers must give employees benefits if employees are eligible employees as defined by PEBB (see Question #2). Employees can waive medical if they have other coverage, but must accept dental coverage.

4. **Once an employer chooses to use one of the three optional methods of computing half-time, will that be the single standard for that employer? If an employee is aware of the other computation options and believes they are eligible per another method, must the employer run a computation with that other method? Which method would HCA use in the appeal process, the one chosen by the employer only?**

HCA has offered employers three options for determining eligibility. Employers may choose which one as the standard for their organization. Employees do not get to decide which method the employer must use. In any appeals that come to the HCA level, HCA will ask the employer which method they are using and use that in consideration of the appeal.

Post Script: We've received a number of other questions that we are still working on.