

Coverage Continuation Options Upon Retirement



This document outlines your coverage continuation options as a Ware County Schools retiree. Specific policy provisions and rules apply for continuation, but this is a general guideline for you. **Important: To continue coverage, you must take action, including completing elections and premium payments by the deadlines for each benefit plan below.**

State Health Benefit Plan (SHBP) Health Insurance

Your medical insurance under the State Health Benefit Plan (SHBP) will continue into retirement. The premium will be deducted from your TRS or PSERS retirement annuity provided your annuity is sufficient to cover the premium due. In instances where your retirement annuity is not sufficient to cover the premium due, you will be billed directly for the premium amount due to SHBP. It is essential to refer to the SHBP information for retirees found at: <https://shbp.georgia.gov/members/retirees>.

Additionally, carefully review all communications you receive from SHBP or their billing group, WEX, as you may be invoiced directly for your medical premium for a period after you retire. If you are placed on Direct Pay status and you fail to pay the Direct Pay premiums to SHBP, your coverage will be terminated with no right to reinstatement unless you return to work in a benefits eligible position with a SHBP Employing Entity.

Simple Dental & Vision

You can continue your dental and vision benefits as a Ware County Schools retiree. Upon retirement, notify Human Resources that you would like to continue your dental and vision benefits.

The dental benefits under the retiree premium and standard plan are slightly different from the actively working plans. The retiree vision benefits are the same in retirement as actively working.

Healthcare Flexible Spending Account (FSA)

The Healthcare Flexible Spending Account (FSA) is a COBRA-eligible benefit. You have the option to continue the FSA and retain access to your remaining account balance through the remainder of the calendar year following your retirement. Should you elect continuation of FSA coverage, continuation of account contributions is required. You will receive a COBRA election letter from Consolidated Admin Services. Questions? Contact (877)941-5956 or email info@consolidatedadmin.com.

Lincoln Financial Term Life Insurance with AD&D

If certain requirements are met, you may continue your basic life and voluntary term life insurance (if applicable) through portability or conversion. Both portability and conversion amend your coverage to an individual policy with direct premium billing, but there are differences between the two options and special policy rules apply.

What is portability? *Portability means amending your coverage to an individual term life policy. You cannot port coverage for anyone who has an injury or sickness which has a material effect on life expectancy. Your rate is the same as active group rates. Coverage continues until Social Security Normal Retirement Age as long as premiums continue to be remitted.*

What is conversion? *Conversion means amending your coverage to an individual whole life insurance policy. Conversion rates have higher rates than active or ported coverage. When your group coverage terminates, you can apply for any amount of life insurance up to, but not exceeding the amount you had under your group plan.*

You must complete an application and apply for these options within **31 days** of your coverage end date resulting from your retirement. Your group coverage end date is the end of the month following the month of your retirement date. To obtain an application, please contact Lincoln Financial at **(800) 423-2765**.

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Lincoln Financial Disability

Your disability plan under Lincoln will end on the last day of the month following the month of your retirement date with Ware County Schools. Short term disability and long-term disability are portable for up to 12 months if certain requirements are met. Contact Lincoln Financial at **(800) 423-2765**.

Lincoln Financial: Critical Illness

You may continue this coverage upon employment retirement by setting up direct premium payments. The premium is based on the portability rates in effect on the date you apply for coverage. You must elect portability and remit the first premium payment within 31 days of your active employee coverage end date. Contact Lincoln Financial at **(800) 423-2765** or visit www.lincolnfinancial.com for more information.

Lincoln Financial: Accident

You may continue this coverage upon retirement by setting up direct premium payments. The premium is based on the portability rates in effect on the date you apply for coverage. You must elect portability and remit the first premium payment within 31 days of your active employee coverage end date. Contact Lincoln Financial at **(800) 423-2765** or visit www.lincolnfinancial.com for more information.

Lincoln Financial: Hospital Indemnity

You may continue this coverage upon retirement by setting up direct premium payments. The premium is based on the portability rates in effect on the date you apply for coverage. You must elect portability and remit the first premium payment within 31 days of your active employee coverage end date. Contact Lincoln Financial at **(800) 423-2765** or visit www.lincolnfinancial.com for more information.

Teachers Retirement System (TRS) and Public School Employee Retirement System (PSERS)

You are eligible to retire 'penalty free' under TRS upon:

- Completion of 30 years of creditable service, regardless of age; or
- Completion of 10 years of creditable service and be age 60 or older.

You are eligible to retire 'penalty free' under PSERS upon:

- Completion of 10 years of creditable service and attainment of age 65.

For further details on each retirement system, please visit the respective system at the web address and phone number below:

- Teachers Retirement System (TRS) visit: <https://www.trsga.com> or call **(404) 352-6500**
- Public School Employees Retirement System (PSERS) visit: <https://www.ers.ga.gov> or call **(404) 350-6300**


**benefits
service center**

If you have questions or would like additional details regarding coverage continuation options, please contact the Ware County Schools Benefit Service Center at **(844) 703-1852** or via email at benefits@warecountyschoolsbenefits.com.