CITY OF HOUSTON
EXECUTIVE ORDER

SUBJECT	E. O. No.
EMPLOYEE HEALTH BENEFITS ADVISORY COMMITTEE AMENDMENT #6	1-4
	Effective Date 08/25/2005

1. PURPOSE

1.1 To encourage employees and retirees to participate in the review, evaluation, and proposal of recommendations to the City's health benefits programs for employees, retirees, and their dependents, by providing input on behalf of consumers of health benefits services.

2. OBJECTIVES

2.1 To provide a forum for participant input on communication, education of health benefit program issues, and local and national trends.

2.2 To participate in the evaluation of the City's health benefits programs and to recommend changes in plan design that are responsive to city goals and trends in the health benefits market, both locally and nationally.

2.3 To contribute to development of proposed changes to the City health benefits program. Such proposed changes should be consistent with the City's fiscal responsibility and its goal to make affordable health care available to city employees, retirees, and their dependents.

2.4 To provide City employee representation on any appeals committee for which the City, Human Resources Director, or the Health Maintenance Organization and/or contract administrators of the City's health benefits program are obliged to provide an appeals process for employees to appeal issues of coverage.

2.5 If another review procedure is not provided in the contract documents approved by City Council, to provide a forum for the review of the performance of City's health benefits vendors, including Health Maintenance Organizations and contract administrators of the City's health benefits programs.

2.6 To inform department employees of the Committee's work and report employees' concerns to the Committee. Such communication is not intended to serve as focus groups to make recommendations on which the Committee will act.

3. SCOPE

3.1 This policy directive is applicable to employees and retirees as it relates to their participation in the City's health benefits programs and to appointees to the Committee as representatives of all City employees.

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4. RESPONSIBILITIES

4.1 The Chair of the Health Benefits Advisory Committee is responsible for convening Committee members as often as necessary to carry out the Committee's objectives.

4.2 The Human Resources Department, Benefits Division, is responsible for providing staff support to the Health Benefits Advisory Committee and its Subcommittees, as necessary. This includes resources from the Human Resources Department, the Legal Department, the Finance and Administration Department, and other expert resources.

4.3 Committee members are responsible for conveying department employees' concerns to the Committee, as well as informing employees of the Committee's work and/or resolutions.

4.4 Committee members are responsible for attending all scheduled meetings, without missing more than three (3) meetings during their 2-year term or three (3) successive meetings during the term. The Chair will consider extenuating circumstances.

5. APPOINTMENT

5.1 Representatives from the following departments/organizations will be appointed by the Mayor to the Health Benefits Advisory Committee for a two - year term:

1. One Aviation Department employee
2. One Building Services Department employee
3. One City Council Member
4. The City Controller
5. One Health and Human Services Department employee
6. One Library Department employee
7. One Municipal Court Clerk's Office employee
8. One Parks and Recreation Department employee
9. One Public Works & Engineering Department employee
10. One Solid Waste Management Department employee
11. One representative from the private sector
12. One person who is a retired municipal employee of the Houston Municipal Employees' Pension System who is covered by city benefit plans
13. One person who is a retired firefighter of the Houston Firefighters' Relief and Retirement Fund who is covered by city benefit plans
14. One person who is a retired police officer of the Houston Police Officers' Pension System who is covered by city benefit plans
15. One HPD police officer who is a member of a labor organization that represents the interests of police officers, and who shall be recommended by the Police Chief in consultation with the Majority Bargaining Agent, if any, designated under state law
16. One HFD firefighter who is a member of a labor organization that represents the interests of firefighters, and who shall be recommended by the Fire Chief in consultation with the Exclusive Bargaining Agent, if any, designated under state law

17. One civilian City employee who is a member of a labor organization that represents the interests of municipal employees other than police officers and firefighters

In addition to the named retiree members, there shall be one appointed member from each of the following:

18. Houston Municipal Employees' Pension System
19. Houston Firefighters' Relief and Retirement Fund
20. Houston Police Officers' Pension System

who is a Board member or employee who is also a participant in that pension plan.

5.2 In addition to the appointed representatives on the Health Benefits Advisory Committee, the Director of the Human Resources Department shall be an ex-officio member and shall serve as the Chair. At the meetings convened by the Chair, the Health Benefits Advisory Committee may discuss and make recommendations on policy issues relating to the following:

(a) Benefits and services provided;
(b) Contribution levels;
(c) Employee educational and communication materials;
(d) Coordination and planning issues with the contract administrators of the benefits programs; and,
(e) Strategic goals relating to the provision of health benefits for employees and retirees.

5.3 The Chair will appoint an appeals Subcommittee composed of three members for a term of two years. Additionally, an alternate member shall be appointed to serve whenever one of the regular members is unavailable. One regular member shall be a member of a labor organization. Failure to attend any two successive meetings of the Subcommittee will result in replacement of the member on that Subcommittee. The Subcommittee shall meet as needed to consider appeals of any matter for which the City or the Human Resources Director is obliged to provide an appeals process.

5.4 The Chair shall appoint a Vendor Review Subcommittee of three members who will serve for a term of two years. The Subcommittee shall meet at least quarterly with City health benefits vendors and City benefits staff members to review vendor performance and make recommendations concerning the vendors' performance and compliance with their contractual obligations and performance objectives.

6. PRIOR ITERATION, EFFECTIVE DATE

6.1 This policy is effective on August 25, 2005. Upon the effective date of this policy, the prior iteration is superseded.