



EMPLOYEE BENEFITS OPEN ENROLLMENT



Important Tips for Making Benefits Elections Online (Even If You Want No Changes!)

Make your Open Enrollment elections in Employee Self-Service (ESS) by Friday, October 24, 2025, at 5 pm. Access the following ESS benefits resources anytime:

1. [Step-by-Step Self-Service Benefits Written Instructions.](#)
2. [Self-Service Benefits Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQs\)](#)

Here are some important ESS tips to keep in mind:

- **Don't know your ESS Single Sign-On credentials (user ID and password)?** Contact the IT Help Desk at 240-777-2828 (option 1) for login assistance.
- **Employee Self-Service (ESS) automatically saves every click.** You can make changes as many times as you like, up until 5 pm on October 24. Make sure that your desired plans and covered dependents are checked on your last login attempt before the deadline.
- **Enrolling new dependents?** Upload the [required dependent documentation](#) in ESS no later than 5 pm on October 24. Otherwise, your newly added dependents will not be included for the 2026 plan year.
- **Not making changes for 2026? Don't forget about FSAs.** If you take no action, most of your benefit elections from last year will carry over automatically, except for Flexible Spending Accounts (FSAs). FSA benefit elections do not automatically continue from year to year; you must re-elect to participate in the FSA every year.
- **Are you a recent new hire?** Your initial new hire elections were made for plan year 2025. If you want to make plan changes or participate in the Health Care or Child Care FSA programs for plan year 2026, you must re-enroll during Open Enrollment.
- **Download and save your 2026 Confirmation Statement, even if you are not making changes.** This statement is your proof of your 2026 Open Enrollment elections. If there is a discrepancy with your enrollment, you will need to provide a copy of your 2026 Confirmation Statement to OHR for corrections. Without a copy of your Confirmation Statement, corrections will not be permitted.

Limited Exceptions for Using Paper Enrollment

Employees should make every effort to make their changes for 2026 in Employee Self-Service (ESS). However, if one of the following scenarios applies to you, then you will not be able to make your changes via ESS. Instead, please contact the Health Insurance Team via MC311 at 240-777-0311 and place a service request so that OHR can assist you with your enrollment changes outside of ESS.

1. If you physically cannot access ESS because you do not have internet access or an electronic device (computer, smartphone, tablet).
2. If you have a dependent aging out between October 7 and December 31, 2025.
3. If you want to re-enroll an eligible dependent who was removed during the 2021 Bolton Dependent Recertification project due to lack of documentation.
4. If you are trying to enroll a spouse or child who is also a County employee or County retiree.