



IN THE KNOW with EMPO

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Insight Into HR News With EMPO! 4th Quarter Edition

In This Issue You'll Find:

- Prescription Drug Savings
- Immigration and Social Security Compliance Update
- Open Enrollment Is Here!
- Business Continuity Planning



Is there a subject that you would like to know more about in a future newsletter? Please feel free to send me an email and let me know at lgoold@empocorp.com

Minnesota RxConnect: Prescription Drug Savings is now a Click Away!

"Americans pay more for prescription medicine than the rest of the world. The price differential puts prescription medicine out of reach for too many people. The current situation is unfair and cannot continue." – Minnesota Governor, Tim Pawlenty

Thanks to Governor Tim Pawlenty's movement toward discovering ways to aid in reducing expenses related to prescription drugs, Minnesotans have access to Minnesota RxConnect, a web tool designed to assist in obtaining information about prescriptions. This free resource offers information on the most affordable methods to obtain prescriptions as well as education on the effectiveness and safety for commonly used drugs.

In addition, the website includes an A-Z list of prescription drugs, legal information and step-by-step instructions on ordering from Canada or the United Kingdom. Minnesota RxCompare, a feature within the website, also provides assistance in determining whether Canadian pharmacies are best for your situation, along with providing comparisons to aid in shopping for the best prices at local pharmacies.

For example, by utilizing this tool employees enrolled in a high deductible health plan paired with a Health Savings Account now have access to a resource to aid in the overall reduction of their out-of-pocket expenses. As a result, employees can make educated decisions which will benefit their overall health plan experience in the long run.

For more information on this free, valuable resource, please visit Minnesota RxConnect's website at <http://www.state.mn.us/portal/mn/jsp/home.do?agency=Rx>, or contact Minnesota RxConnect by email at Minnesota.RxconnectOnline@state.mn.us.

By: Amanda Froberg, Benefits Specialist
* Resource: Minnesota RxConnect's home page

Immigration And Social Security Compliance Update

Develop a loyalty to those you serve.

Be a team player and everybody benefits.

-Anonymous



Truth is the most valuable thing we have. Let us economize it.

-Mark Twain



When people inquire about what you can do for them, it means they're interested even before they hear your answer.

-Anonymous



There's a mighty big difference between good, sound reasons, and reasons that sound good.

-Burton Hills

The US Customs and Immigration Office have recently announced increased enforcement of immigration issues: this includes the Employment Eligibility Verification form (Form I-9). EMPO is taking the following steps to ensure 100% compliance with the increased enforcement. In an early September 2006 email to our clients, we informed you about one of the measures that we are taking: we will no longer accept I-9's that contain minor errors. With that email, we also included a set of detailed instructions and examples of correctly completed forms. As a result of this compliance initiative, some of you may have been contacted by our Administrative Assistant or another member of our staff asking you to complete or correct an I-9 form.

Effective January 1, 2007, we will require that we have a properly completed I-9 in our file prior to issuing the first payroll check to a new or rehired employee. We are giving you this three-month notice to help get the processes in place at your company (and at EMPO) to ensure that the I-9's are completed properly and within the timeframe provided for by law. Federal law requires that Section 1 of the I-9 be completed by any new employee on his or her first day of employment, and Section 2 be completed by the end of the third day of employment; any employee who fails to produce proper documentation by the end of the third day of employment is to be removed from your work site and from your active payroll. Your HR Consultant can work with you on your options if this should happen.

Also, to further ensure immigration law compliance, we will be verifying Social Security numbers for new hires. If a "no-match" letter is received from the Social Security Administration, we will notify the client and the employee to get the matter resolved. Our goal is to have zero "no-match" letters from the Social Security Administration at year end because a high number of flagged Social Security numbers is an audit trigger to the SSA; we would like to avoid that for our sake as well as yours.

Thank you for your continued cooperation with these efforts. If you have any questions, please contact your Account Manager or HR Consultant.

By Scott Andreassen, Sr. HR Consultant



Open Enrollment Is Here!

Exciting Benefits News!

Please note that the annual open enrollment period for benefits is just around the corner! The open enrollment period will be occurring 10/15/06 through 12/15/06 with all changes effective as of 01/01/07. You will be able to enroll, delete and make changes to the following benefits:

Dental (Clients with dental through EMPO only)

- Voluntary Life
- Voluntary long-term disability
- Short-term disability
- Cancer Insurance
- Accident Insurance
- Universal Dependent Life
- Hospital Confinement
- Health and Dependent Care Flexible Spending Accounts
- Vision Insurance
- Pre-Paid Legal Services
- Identity Theft Program

Further information will follow for you to distribute to your employees. In addition, your EMPO Benefits Specialist will be in contact with you to schedule your on-site enrollment meeting.

Nothing can bring you
peace but the triumph
of principles.
-Ralph Waldo Emerson



When you get right down
to the root of the
meaning of the word
"succeed," you find
that it simply means
to follow through.
-F. W. Nichol



Quality is never an
accident; it is always
the result of
intelligent effort.
-John Ruskin



Nothing is stronger than
habit.
-Ovid



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Business Continuity Planning

Second of three in a series on the Business Continuity Planning Process

The **second** series of business continuity planning involves providing for your employees' well-being and how to communicate with them before, during and after an incident.

1. Involve co-workers from all levels in emergency planning.
2. Use newsletters, intranets, staff meetings and other internal communications tools to communicate emergency plans and procedures.
3. Set up procedures to warn employees. Plan how you will communicate with people who are hearing-impaired or have other disabilities or who do not speak English.
4. Consider setting up a telephone call tree, password-protected page on company website, e-mail alert or call-in voice recording to communicate with employees in an emergency.
5. Designate an out-of-town phone number where employees can leave an "I'm okay" message in a catastrophic disaster. Remember to minimize your calls and keep them short so others can get through also.
6. Encourage employees to have alternate means and routes for getting to and from work, in case their normal mode of transportation is interrupted.
7. Keep a record of employee emergency contact information with other important documents in your emergency kit at an off-site location.
8. If you rent, lease or share space with other businesses, it is important to communicate, share and coordinate evacuation procedures and other emergency plans.

Practice the Plan With Co-Workers

Go beyond planning and frequently practice what you intend to do during a disaster. Just as your business changes day by day, so should your plan. **Drills and exercise will help you prepare.**

1. Conduct regularly scheduled education and training seminars to provide co-workers with information, identify needs and develop preparedness skills.
2. Include preparedness training in new employee orientation programs.
3. Do tabletop exercise with members of the emergency management team. Meet in a conference room setting to discuss individuals' responsibilities and how each would react to emergency scenarios.
4. Schedule walk-through drills where emergency management teams and response teams actually perform their designated emergency functions. This activity generally involves people and is more thorough than a tabletop exercise.
5. Practice evacuating and sheltering. Have a person walk the evacuation route to a designated area where procedures for accounting for all personnel are tested. Practice your "shelter-in-place" plan.
6. Evaluate and revise processes and procedures based on lessons learned in training and exercise.
7. Keep training records.

Promote Family and Individual Preparedness

Re-establishing routines, including getting back to work, is important to the well-being of people who have experienced disasters. If individuals and families are prepared, your company and your co-workers are better positioned in an emergency situation.

1. Encourage your employees and their families to prepare an emergency preparedness kit, make a plan and be informed.
2. Consider how workers will communicate with family members in case they are separated from one another or injured.

Write a Communication Plan to Use During and After a Disaster

1. **Employees:** Be prepared to provide employees with information on when, if and how to report to work following an emergency.
2. **Management:** Provide top company executives with all relevant information needed for the protection of employees, customers, vendors and nearby facilities.
3. **Public:** It may be important to update the general public with calm assurance that all resources are being used to protect workers and the community. Being able to communicate that plans are in place for recovery may be especially important.
4. **Customers:** Update your customers on whether and when products will be received and services rendered.
5. **Government:** Tell officials what your company is prepared to do to help in the recovery effort. Also communicate with local, state and federal authorities what emergency assistance is needed for you to continue essential business activity.
6. **Other Businesses/Immediate Neighbors:** You should be prepared to give competing and neighboring companies a prompt briefing on the nature of the emergency so they may be able to assess their own threat levels.