

LABOR CONNECTION

Spring 2024

Payment Integrity: Fighting the Rising Cost of Care



Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois ensures claims are paid correctly through a rigorous review process that consists of multiple layers of payment integrity reviews through the life cycle of a claim. Our program begins with our special investigations department that focuses on fraud, prevention, deterrence, detection and investigation.

These highly trained personnel have extensive backgrounds in medicine, health insurance and law enforcement. Many of our investigators are former FBI and state law enforcement officials. The department's mission is to identify and stop fraudulent or abusive claims activity, recover funds paid on fraudulent claims and work with law enforcement to pursue criminal charges.

Team members work closely with our legal division to recover overpayments from providers and return the recovered dollars to the respective groups. They also provide fraud awareness and detection training to both our employees and participants.

A new approach to payment integrity

Beyond our standard payment integrity reviews that are performed within our standard adjudication process, we offer an additional layer of claim review for our self-insured clients through our Advanced Payment Review (APR) program. The APR program consists of both post-service, prepayment and post-payment reviews that provide an additional level of claim-review scrutiny.

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Payment Integrity: Fighting the Rising Cost of Care (CONTINUED)

The APR program places a larger emphasis on prepayment reviews that utilize advanced AI technology to better identify anomalous billing trends. Additionally, the new APR platform allows for continuous advancement of prepayment automated claim editing and manual forensic reviews of complex hospital bills. Clients have full transparency of the program through a suite of reports provided monthly.

Our advantage

As a payer, our goal is to leverage payment innovation and best-in-class vendors to improve the system. We can influence and improve health care delivery compared to competitors who are focused on solving one element or part of the problem. Our holistic approach to claims and the way we partner internally across a multidisciplinary field of experts positions us to lead in the payment innovation space.

Contact your Labor Account Executive to learn more.

Someone You Should Know



Meet Melody Neyland, Fund Administrator, Administrative District Council 1 Welfare Fund

As a Fund Administrator for the past 18 years, **Melody Neyland** cites what she believes is her guiding principle: “Without members, I don’t have a job.”

The principle is not a testament to job security, but to the importance of being a good steward to those she serves.

Melody is Fund Administrator at Administrative District Council 1 (ADC 1) Welfare Fund. Comprised mostly of bricklayers, plasterers and marble setters, the Fund boasts 1,500 active members working throughout the greater Chicago area.

A long, winding career

Melody’s career in labor began shortly after graduating from Argo Community High School in 1998. While at a picnic that year – wondering what to do with her life – a family friend mentioned an open position at Teamsters Local 744 (later Local 703). Melody applied and at 18 years old, was hired as a Customer Service Representative.

Melody worked for Laurel Scotti, who took her under her wing, teaching her everything. In 2006, Laurel left Local 744 to become Administrator with the ADC 1. Laurel suggested her protegee, Melody, make the move with her – and she did.

A new chapter

Melody, who began at the ADC 1 as Pension and Annuity Processor, was promoted to manager six years later. When Laurel retired, Milan Diklich became the new Fund Administrator and continued to mentor Melody. When Milan retired in July 2023, Melody assumed the position as ADC 1 Welfare Fund’s Administrator.

Melody says she believes excellent customer service is her top priority. She’s passionate about making sure every member has a great customer experience and is always treated with respect. Union members receive excellent benefit plans. As a longtime member herself and the mother of a 15-year-old daughter, Melody appreciates that unions provide a decent living for families.

As fund administrator, Melody is focused on communications. A recent seminar stressed the need for messages to be repeated often – 10 times in 10 different ways – to capture audience attention. ADC 1 promptly upgraded its phone system to include text messages. Melody is testing the strategy with the Fund’s members.

An active home life

Melody is engaged to her fiancé of four years. Together, they have three dogs and enjoy taking road trips on motorcycles. Melody’s fiancé rides a Harley and Melody rides a three-wheeled Can Am motorcycle. Last summer the two of them traveled to Tennessee – their first long-distance trip.

Melody remains a resident of Bridgeview, where two sisters live nearby. Melody’s daughter is a freshman at Argo Community High School and plays on the school’s basketball team. Known as “The Basketball Mom,” Melody enjoys attending all of her daughter’s games.



Apprentice Program: **International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, Local 9**

If you have driven on Interstate 57 by University Park, you may have puzzled over a 100-acre site that contains what appears to be a private city unto itself. It has a Chicago Transit Authority elevated track station, a CTA ground station, a fully functioning railroad crossing and multiple street intersections with working lights.

What it doesn't have are the cars, pedestrians and commuter trains typical of most cities. Its 'inhabitants' are the journeymen and tradesmen of the IBEW Local 9. The union built the city with infrastructure that would provide its apprentice program applicants with real-world experience on keeping cities running.

Raising the bar on training excellence

This unique training center is overseen by Local 9's Training Director **Jeff Johnson**. Traffic construction is the Fund's core business. So much so that Local 9 maintains 4,000 intersections throughout Chicago. That number grows to 10,000 intersections when considering the greater metropolitan area.

Local 9 was formed in 1892 just as the first industrial revolution was beginning to remake America. As one of the oldest locals in the nation, the Fund's workforce performs outside electrical work in cable television and telephone, communications technology, government, line clearance tree trimming, road sensors, outside construction including transmission, distribution and utilities. Contracts include the Chicago Park District, Chicago Transit Authority, City of Chicago, City of Naperville, Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago, Village of Elmwood Park and Village of Oak Park, to name a few.

The union has a tight relationship with its contractors and journeymen. In fact, the teams average up to 60 hours per week with each other. The Fund has doubled in size over the last eight years, growing today to 3,600 members, with 350 members currently in its four-year apprentice program.

All about growth

According to Jeff, if a prospective member can pass the aptitude test, growth has been so strong that the applicant will be accepted into the apprentice program. Local 9 admitted every applicant who passed the aptitude test from this year's list. The Fund currently accepts one new apprentice class per year. But, with the local's growth, Jeff may add a second class each year once the federal administration's infrastructure funds kick in.

Opportunities for the young

Jeff says social media is a great recruitment tool. The Fund also promotes its program within the inner city to teach young people the benefits trades can offer. College is not their only option. Local 9 apprentices are going to career fairs and letting students know that the trades can provide a solid career.

The apprentice program is equivalent to a free \$100,000, four-year education with no student debt. In addition, they get free health care and a pension on day one.

Well-rounded training

Apprentices ply their trade in the field daily, while spending two nights a week in classes. Every training session starts with one hour in the classroom and then it focuses on hands-on training. Students could be splicing fiber-optics, operating a 20- or 30-ton crane, running underground wire or welding. Once on the job site, the Fund's linemen perform every kind of job, from start to finish. Safety is always the No. 1 priority and stressed in every class and training session.

This and That

Congratulations to these new employees and a recent retirement.

Reagan Dorrian

Originally from Kansas City, Mo., Reagan graduated from the University of Missouri in May 2023 with a B.S. in Business Administration and a minor in entrepreneurship and a certificate in sales. Following graduation, Reagan relocated to Chicago and joined the New Grad program at BCBSIL. To learn the ropes, she shadowed Pamela Bland, a recently retired account executive. Reagan recently started as an account executive on the Shared Claim Processing Team.

Chris Tauscher

Christopher recently joined BCBSIL as a Labor Account Executive in September 2023. Chris has more than 20 years' experience in the benefits industry, focusing on back-office operations, project management and client relations. He was previously an account executive with a brokerage firm where he managed a large book of business and every aspect of

client relationship. Chris takes over multiple accounts within our group and will be able to make an immediate impact to our clients.

Pam Bland

Congratulations to Pam Bland on her retirement after 30 years of service. Pam has been a friend and colleague to many in the labor community and throughout BCBSIL. We wish Pam nothing but happiness as she enters her next chapter in life!



The Labor Team at BCBSIL celebrated St. Patrick's Day at Plumbers Local 130 Hall with friends and Labor Community partners. From left to right, BCS Financial partner Nadia Nelson, new team members Chris Tauscher and Reagan Dorrian, BCS Financial partner Katie Russo and retired team member Pam Bland.



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To Your Good Health



Reward Members with Discounted Wellness Products

It makes sense that Funds encourage members to seek lifestyle habits such as proper diet and exercise that promote health. But isn't it also important to reward them with health-related discounts to further their journey to wellbeing?

Welcome to **Blue365**[®], a program that offers exclusive discounts across multiple wellness categories and purpose-driven educational content. Members and covered dependents will have access to everything from footwear,

fitness and weight-loss solutions to dental solutions, eyewear products and services and nutrition.

There are no claims to file, no referrals or preauthorizations. Once members sign up for Blue365, they will receive weekly "Featured Deals" by email. These deals offer special savings for a short period of time.

Learn more at www.blue365deals.com/BCBSIL. Or call your Labor Account executive to see how to get started.

The relationship between these vendors and Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois is that of independent contractors. BCBSIL makes no endorsement, representations or warranties regarding any products or services offered by the above-mentioned vendors.

Blue365 is a discount program only for BCBSIL members. This is NOT insurance. Some of the services offered through this program may be covered under the health plan you choose to offer. Employees should check their benefit booklet or call the Customer Service number on the back of their ID card for specific benefit facts. Use of Blue365 does not change monthly payments, nor do costs of the services or products count toward any maximums and/or plan deductibles. Discounts are only given through vendors that take part in this program BCBSIL does not guarantee or make any claims or recommendations about the program's services or products. Members should consult their doctor before using these services and products. BCBSIL reserves the right to stop or change this program at any time without notice.



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