

Important Telephone Numbers

Anthem Blue Cross/Blue Shield
RIPEA Group Health Plan
1-866-649-2041

Anthem Medicare Advantage Plan
Current members: 1-833-848-8730
More information: 1-833-848-8729

AMBA
Dental/Vision/Long Term Care/Cancer/Whole Life/
Medical Air Service Association
1-800-258-7041

HEAR in America
Hearing Plan
1-800-286-6149

INPRS/PERF
Retirement Checks & Benefits
1-844-464-6777

Genworth
Long Term Care
1-765-265-5606

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RIPEA

Retired Indiana Public Employees Association

**Working for Your
Retirement Today**

February 2021



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A Message from the Executive Director

The new year has brought with it much hope and healing.

With the arrival of 2021, COVID-19 vaccines from Pfizer, Moderna and others offer great hope to turn the tide of the pandemic and provide even more protection to those most vulnerable.

As of the printing of this newsletter, the Indiana State Department of Health has opened up COVID-19 vaccinations to people 65 years plus and will continue to expand eligibility as they receive more doses.

With the closure of 2020, our hearts are still processing the passing of a man who dedicated his life to public service. John Ruby was a true gentleman and a RIPEA member who advocated for all PERF retirees. A Hoosier who constantly put others before himself. I want to extend my most sincere condolences to his family and friends. He will be greatly missed.

Though much of 2020 remains on our minds here at RIPEA we move forward with optimism for a better tomorrow, and hope to encourage you all to do the same.

Be well my friends.

Sincerely,

Bill Murphy

Bill Murphy, Executive Director



Remembering John A. Ruby

John Ruby passed away peacefully on December 5, 2020 at age 85. He spent the early part of his career serving in the Indiana State Legislature representing Rush and Shelby Counties. He continued his career in State government, serving as the Executive Secretary of the Public Employees Retirement Fund and later as the Deputy State Treasurer of Indiana.

John found great pleasure in serving as spokesman, advocate and an active member of RIPEA’s Central Indiana Chapter throughout the years.

Singing and performing were also an integral part of John’s life and where he found so much joy. Members who’ve attended past RIPEA Annual Conventions had the honor and pleasure of hearing him sing our country’s National Anthem.

Our deepest condolences go out to John’s family and those who loved him.

Your Legislative Corner

2021 Legislative Session Outlook

In RIPEA’s November 2020 newsletter there was an article reviewing the provision of SEA 373 passed in 2018 and it explained the impact it had on the decision of your RIPEA Board of Directors in determining the Legislative Proposal for 2021.

After numerous discussions and several meetings, the Board decided to ask the Legislature for a 13th check one-time payment based on your years of service under PERF and increase the 13th check by \$50.00. The table on the right details the amount of the 13th check if it passes without any amendments.

This Legislative session will obviously be a difficult one due to COVID-19, which has a major impact on state revenue.

We are asking all RIPEA members to contact their state Senator and Representative to encourage them to pass this bill. If you don’t know the name of your state senator or state representative please visit www.iga.in.gov. Click on “find your legislator” and enter your address. Or, call your county clerk. Reminder: The bill number is H.B. 1227.

Years of Service	13 th Check
5-10 years — Disability	\$200
10-20 years	\$325
20-30 years	\$425
30+ years	\$500

Hobbies You Can Start at Home

Most people have a few things they have always wanted to try, so make this the year you do it! A new hobby can relieve stress and promote happiness too. Here’s a list hobbies you can start at home today.

- Try out new recipes weekly
- Pick up needlework
- Express yourself through painting
- Take care of house plants
- Foster an animal
- Join or start a book club
- Give jigsaw puzzles a go
- Learn to play a musical instrument



As if Taxes Weren't Confusing Enough

You may receive tax statements for various investments about this time each year. And, you may be wondering why you received these statements and what do they all mean. Or, why did you get statements for some investments, but not others?

The answer depends on two things: The account type and the investment.

IRAs/401ks and Other "Qualified" Pension Accounts

These accounts are granted special tax standing and the money grows on a tax-deferred basis. This means that you will not receive any tax statements requiring you to include transactions in income – with one exception. If you take money out, you will receive a 1099 statement showing the amount taken out and this will be added to your "ordinary" income for the year. Otherwise, even purchases and sales of the investments in the accounts are tax-deferred and not reported to you annually. Even dividends aren't reported as income.

Stocks and Bonds

If you own stocks and/or bonds outside of IRAs/401ks and other "qualified" pension accounts (even inside a brokerage account such as with Schwab or Fidelity) whenever you sell a stock or bond, if the sale price was higher than the purchase price you will receive a 1099 showing the difference as taxable income. Depending on how long you held the investment they may be long-term or short-term gains. Dividends are also reported on the 1099 you receive.

No one likes to pay taxes, but if you are getting 1099 statements showing taxable income, be happy! You made money last year.

Tom Faulconer, JD, CFP®
tom@transitionsfinancialindiana.com

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Mutual Funds

This is the one that confuses most people. Even if you did absolutely nothing with a mutual fund (or the newer exchange traded funds or ETFs) you will get a 1099 because it's highly likely the mutual fund manager bought or sold some of the investments in the mutual fund. When this occurs you are charged with a fraction of that transaction. In other words, if you own .001% of the shares in the fund and the manager sells a stock at a gain, you must pay tax on .001% of that gain. This is then reported on the 1099, and shows your share of the transactions for the year. Dividends work the same way.

Central Indiana Chapter Update

The spring meeting of the Central Indiana Chapter is normally held in the month of April. Phil Conklin, Chapter President, has chosen to postpone the meeting to the middle of May.

All chapter members will be notified when the rescheduled date, location and program are determined. Thank you for your patience and understanding at this time.

Why You Should Re-evaluate Your Insurance Options

It's easy to assume that because you have certain types of insurance you, your family, and items you hold dear are protected.

Yes, that's true according to the policies you and your insurance agent(s) drafted and agreed upon. But when was the last time you revisited those policies?

The thing is, needs change, lifestyles change, finances change, laws change and so on...

It's important that your insurance reflects these changes and your current needs. That's why it's always a good idea to re-evaluate your insurance options every few years.

Even though it's not the most exciting task on your to-do list, it's one that serves you well. So, take the time to look them over, and don't forget about the many insurance benefits available to you through your RIPEA membership.

Visit RIPEA.org to search our affordable insurance plans and benefits which include Medical Supplement Insurance, Long Term Care Insurance, Hearing Insurance and much more!



BENEFITS STILL FIT?

Are you taking full advantage of the benefits & discounts available through **RIPEA Insurance Trust & AMBA**? Call now to schedule your free benefits checkup.

Learn more: **1-877-556-4582**

myambabenefits.info/ripea

Retired Indiana Public Employees Association



COVID-19 Vaccine: Frequently Asked Questions



Dr. Christopher Weaver, Senior Vice President for Clinical Effectiveness and the Executive for IU Health leading the vaccine planning and production, explains what you need to know about the COVID-19 vaccine, and answers some frequently asked questions.

Has the development of the COVID-19 vaccine been rushed? Is it safe?

As part of the federal project to accelerate vaccine development, the name of project Operation Warp Speed implies one thing: fast. The steps that were accelerated were on the manufacturing side. Instead of waiting for each step of the study or approval, companies produced millions of doses in parallel to studying, so the drug would be ready to deploy the moment it's approved.

The FDA did not skip or speed past the safety steps. This means they did not skip or rush the evaluation and the studying of the drug. The FDA put the vaccine through the same hoops as it does for every approved drug, so that it's safe and effective before we start injecting anybody and before it's even shipped out.

Even beyond the FDA, there are several more layers of review. Once a vaccine is approved by the FDA, a vaccine advisory committee for the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) evaluates the data. Additionally, the Indiana State Department of Health has its own team of experts that do an independent evaluation. And IU Health does the same as well.

It's important to understand that the vaccine is safe, it's effective and it's going to make a big difference in protecting everyone and getting everything back to normal.

Should I worry about side effects of the COVID-19 vaccine?

Some people may experience mild side effects from the vaccine – headaches, aches, fever. It's important to understand those symptoms are not from the virus itself. Those symptoms are evidence the vaccine is working.

When your body is injected with the vaccine your body responds by creating antibodies to the virus, and prepares your immune system to protect you from the virus.

Can I get the virus from the COVID-19 vaccine?

No, these vaccines do not and cannot give you COVID-19. In fact, after you get the vaccine, you will test negative to COVID-19 if you were to take a test.

When can I get the vaccine?

The first vaccines IU Health received went to healthcare workers who care for or directly support the care of patients with COVID-19. Long-term care facility residents were in the next priority group as defined by the state.

As of February 1, the state of Indiana is allowing vaccine registration for general

members of the public age 65 and older.

As manufacturing and availability ramps up, vaccines will cascade through priority groups and ultimately become available to everyone, likely in late spring or early summer.

How much does it cost to get the vaccine?

The vaccine is free. Insurance information will be collected to charge the insurance company, but the patient will not pay.

What should I do now to stay safe?

Get the vaccine if you're eligible to receive one. There's hope on the horizon for the end of the pandemic, but folks should continue to be vigilant and practice recommended safety measures to protect themselves and others.

It will take months to get through vaccinating the population to a point where the virus stops spreading. Wear your mask, social distance and frequently wash your hands.

How can I learn more?

Visit IU Health's COVID-19 Resource Center at iuhealth.org/covid19 to learn more information about COVID-19.

This article is provided by IU Health.

**If you are age 65 or older,
you may register for the vaccine.**

Go online to www.ourshot.in.gov or call 211 to get help registering by phone.