



Employee Newsletter

APRIL 2020

Happy Easter!!!



APRIL BIRTHDAYS

Theresa Creasman	4
Timothy Kimbler	4
Elizabeth Fleming	5
Denise Cross	7
Steven Hertzog	8
Crystal Gadd	9
Jr. Chastain	11
Travis Hogsed	13
Sari Moore	13
Cody Williams	15
Lucky Jenkins	17
Kenton Ebersohl	18
Brandon Walls	18
Doug Vuick	19
Joshua Nichols	20
Jared Coleman	21
Cameron Killian	22
Marty White	25
Cheryl Hall	26
Malissa Reel	26
Mandy Rhodes	26
Trevor McGaha	30
Ages 19 to 74	

OPEN ENROLLMENT

It's that time again! Open enrollment will be on May 21st and 22nd (unless we are still under contact restrictions then) in the upstairs Courtroom (the old Courtroom) in the Court House. This is the only time of the year you may make changes to your medical, dental, cancer, vision, accident, flexible spending and Liberty pre-tax life insurance policies without having a qualifying event (death, birth, marriage, divorce, loss of other coverage, etc.). Because of the crammed court calendar this year, I was unable to find a day to do a make-up so these two days are all we have.

This is a mandatory meeting for all full-time employees. There will be representatives here from Crescent, AFLAC, Liberty National, 401(k), Sam's Club and the Credit Union. There will be four sessions during the day and a schedule will be distributed sometime late in April or early in May. Mark the date and I'll see you there. If these plans change, we will communicate that with you. It is possible we may need to handle this differently this year.

If you are currently enrolled in the FLEXIBLE spending plan, **you MUST RE-ENROLL** to be a member for the 2020-21 plan year. **This is the only benefit that requires you to enroll every year in order to maintain your benefit.** We currently have almost 60 employees who are taking advantage of this option. If you have known health, dental, vision or other qualified expenses, you are basically throwing money away if you aren't taking advantage of the Flex plan. It's convenient, easy to use and the only benefit that you for sure get back more than you put into it (if you spend all your allotment). The Flex plan can be used to pay for qualified medical, dental, and vision expenses for you, your spouse and any dependent children—even if you don't cover them on the County insurance plan, plus you are now allowed to carry over \$500 to the next year if you don't use all your funds. Find somebody who is participating and ask them if they like the Flex plan—I think you'll find that most everybody who is participating enjoys the convenience and savings it provides.

SOME GOOD NEWS

Since we are having very limited public contact at this point in time, we are being given permission to dress down as we normally do on Fridays until we return to normal operations. Keep in mind, this means JEANS that are suitable for the workplace. However, if you do have a meeting of some kind or a day that you would need to interact with the public, we ask that you dress in your business or business casual attire for those days. If we will just use good judgment with this, we should all be good to go.

Do you have a child turning 26?

If you have a child on your medical, dental, vision or life insurance and they are turning 26, you are supposed to come by human resources and drop that child from your insurance. Our health insurance periodically runs reports to help identify those, but not every month, and it is your responsibility to let us know that. Soooo, if this applies to you or you have a child that you know will turn 26 this year, you can go ahead and do the paperwork now and then when they reach that birthdate, I can cancel their coverage. Thank you so much!

Best Wishes to Tami Milet-Rayburn who is retiring from Social Services on April 1st. Tami has been a social worker for us for over 11.5 years. You will be missed!



Commissioners Board Meetings

April 6, 6:30 PM
April 20, 6:30 PM

Is there something you would like to see in the newsletter? Please email Melody at melody.johnson@cherokee-county-nc.gov with any suggestions.

STOP THE SPREAD OF GERMS

Help prevent the spread of respiratory diseases like COVID-19.

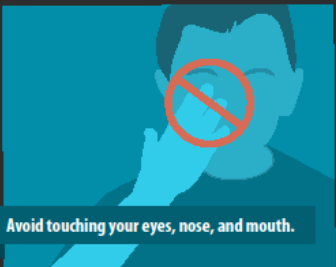
Avoid close contact with people who are sick.



Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.



Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.



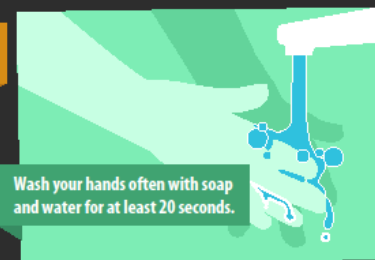
Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.



Stay home when you are sick, except to get medical care.



Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.



For more information: www.cdc.gov/COVID19

Links to information about COVID-19

With the ongoing concern with the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19) across the world and in our nation, here are some links to information to help you and your family prepare in the event of closures and other restrictions:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/home/cleaning-disinfection.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/index.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/index.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/protect/prepare.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/protect/what-to-do-if-sick.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/protect/prevent.html>

The information and guidance on this are changing daily and often more frequently than that as more knowledge becomes available. The CDC website is a good place to get information about what you need to know and do. I think the most important thing we can do is to not panic but be diligent about hand-washing and maintaining as clean an environment around us as possible. That means sanitizing surfaces and avoiding sick folks. In addition, we all need to do our part to protect those in high risk populations.

SYMPTOMS OF CORONAVIRUS DISEASE 2019

Patients with COVID-19 have experienced mild to severe respiratory illness.

Symptoms* can include

FEVER



COUGH



*Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure.

SHORTNESS OF BREATH



Seek medical advice if you develop symptoms, and have been in close contact with a person known to have COVID-19 or if you live in or have recently been in an area with ongoing spread of COVID-19.

Five seconds is the average time your eyes are off the road while texting. At 55mph, that's enough time to cover the length of a football field.





The Personal Retirement Information Resource for Active Members

ORBIT provides you with secure access to your personal retirement account information 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

What You Can Do With ORBIT

- View your creditable service history and contributions.
- Download personalized transaction forms.
- View your Annual Benefits Statements.
- View your beneficiary designations. For members with less than 10 years of service, add or edit your beneficiaries.
- Add or update your contact phone numbers and e-mail address.
- Access estimate calculators for service purchase, retirement benefit, or the NC 401(k)/NC 457 Plan Transfer Benefit.

How to Access and Register in ORBIT

- Go to www.MyNCRetirement.com and click on the "ORBIT" image.

If You Currently Have an ORBIT Account:

1. Login with *that user name and password*.
2. On the next screen answer your *current security question*, enter your email address, and set up three new security questions. Click Next.
3. After you click Next, you will receive an email with a security code you must enter on the Security Code screen to verify your identity.
4. Once you have entered the security code, you will be allowed to continue in ORBIT.

If You Do Not Currently Have an ORBIT Account:

1. Click on Register.
2. Enter your Social Security number, date of birth and click Next.
3. Enter your ZIP code and click Next.
4. Enter a username and password, and provide your email address. Select three security questions, provide the answers and click Next.
5. You will receive an email with a security code you must enter on the Security Code screen to verify your identity.
6. After you have entered the security code, you will be allowed to login with the username and password you selected in Step 4.

Want to Estimate Your Own Retirement Benefit?

1. After logging into ORBIT, click on Create Custom Benefit Estimate.
2. Enter your termination and retirement dates. Please note: Service Status is a required field. Enter the additional information requested.
3. You will need to enter a beneficiary name and date of birth, even if you are interested only in the maximum allowance. It is used for the benefit calculation.
4. Click on Calculate.

STAY CONNECTED!

MyNCRetirement.com
Facebook.com/MyNCRetirement

NC Ret. Systems Division • 877-NC SECURE
NC 401(k)/NC 457 Plans • 866-NC PLANS
and NC 403(b) Program



Dale R. Folwell, CPA
STATE TREASURER OF NORTH CAROLINA
DALE R. FOLWELL, CPA



NOTE FROM SONA PHARMACY

I just wanted to let you know about a temporary change to our pharmacy benefit. They have issued the following guidance about prescription refills: **"In response to COVID-19, Sona Benefits has adjusted the employee pharmacy benefit to allow members to refill non-control prescriptions up to one week earlier than previously allowed. This allows you to have a little extra medication on hand in case of an emergency. If you have questions about refilling your prescriptions, please contact Sona Benefits at 844-550-1984. Thank You!"**

Please keep this in mind in the coming days and weeks as we go through these uncharted waters with the ongoing pandemic situation in which we find ourselves.

Did you Know?

Did you know that you can find answers to many of your employment related questions on the Human Resources Page of the County's website at www.cherokeecounty-nc.gov. Our personnel policy and most other important documents are on the Employee Information Link. There are four different tabs with information: 1) policies and documents, 2) insurance and privacy, 3) employee newsletters and 4) tax and other forms. If you haven't taken the time to look at that page, please take a few minutes to familiarize yourself with what is out there. I'm always available to answer questions, but the answers to many of the questions I receive are on that page.

TELEMEDICINE BENEFIT

This is just a reminder that full time employees and anybody who lives in the household with them has access to a telemedicine benefit administered by AllyHealth. If you have a medical problem, please try them first so you limit your exposure to healthcare facilities if it is something that can be handled with a video or audio visit. The number to call them is 1-888-565-3303. Or you may set up an appointment online at www.member.allyhealth.net.

I urge you to take advantage of this benefit for yourself or anyone who lives with you. The members of your household do not need to be covered on the County's insurance in order to take advantage of this benefit.

I also want to remind you that if you have something that you do need to see a doctor for, our employees who are covered by our health insurance may see the doctor at our health department and the office visit co-pay is waived. If you wish to use this service, you need to call 837-7486 and schedule it. As you can imagine, they are pretty busy right now, but they are continuing to see patients as they are able.

REMINDER ABOUT EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE NETWORK

This is just another reminder about a benefit that is available to ALL county employees—both full-time and part-time. The county has an employee assistance program provided by the EAN. They are available to help during these stressful times. They may be reached at (800) 454-1477. They are providing video counseling to any employees who might need it and if it is necessary, in-person counseling.

Please be sure and check your email regularly. That is the primary way we are communicating with employees about things you need to know and if you aren't checking your email on a regular basis, you may miss something you need to know. With the current COVID-19 outbreak, things are changing daily and sometimes multiple times a day. If you don't check your email, don't say you didn't know about something. Also, this newsletter is also another tool we use to communicate with employees and keep you apprised of things you need to know. Thank you so much!



Q: What do you call a bunny with a large brain?

A: An egghead

Q: Why did the Easter bunny hide?

A: He was a little chicken.

Q: What do you call a duck who plays basketball?

A: A slam duck

Q: What's invisible and smells like carrots?

A: The ether bunny.

Q: Why did the rabbit cross the road?

A: Because it was the chicken's day off

Q: Why is there no such organization as Chocoholics Anonymous?

A: Because nobody wants to quit.