

City of Cincinnati

Fire Cancer Support Measures

Summary of Key Initiatives



Fire Cancer Specialty Health Plan

100% coverage for approved cancer claims; streamlined for families.



Cancer Concierge Program

Support for employees with cancer diagnoses via direct outreach and enrollment.



Preventive Screening Updates

Removal of barriers for firefighter cancer screenings.

These initiatives were implemented by the City in addition to the benefits negotiated in the 2023-2026 Collective Bargaining Agreement.

Fire Cancer Specialty Health Plan



Specialized Cancer Coverage

The plan covers 100% of cancer-related medical expenses for approved firefighter claims without having to pay upfront or request reimbursement.



Family Inclusion

Firefighter's family is included in the specialty plan if covered under a city health plan, ensuring unified coverage, same ID cards, all family members still on one plan.

Simplified Claims Process

The plan removes the need for workers' compensation receipts and streamlines claim management for families.

Pilot Program Success

Initial pilot with six firefighters had positive feedback from both participants and healthcare providers. There are now 12 actively treating firefighters enrolled.

Cancer Concierge Program Overview

Anthem Cancer Care Navigator (Cancer Concierge Program) For All City Health Plan Members



- Personalized support for members diagnosed with cancer to help them navigate their treatment journey and manage related challenges.
- Support from health educators and registered nurses help coordinate care, provide access to virtual second opinions, and connect members to Centers of Excellence and other resources, ensuring care is focused on the member's individual needs.
- Provides specialized oncology teams to guide members through their cancer journey with support and resources, helping them navigate treatment options and decisions, including matching members with clinical trials when appropriate to ensure timely access care.

Accessibility and Outreach for Firefighters Diagnosed with Cancer

In addition to direct outreach from the Cancer Care Navigator team to individual employees, direct contact information is included in all firefighter cancer claim approval letters to ensure employee awareness of the program.

Preventive Care Screening Updates & Additional Measures

Removal of Screening Barriers for all Firefighters

Effective 1/1/25, all Fire health plans removed age and risk factor barriers from cancer screening tests, enabling \$0 cancer screenings for all active firefighters.

Comprehensive Screening Initiative

The Fire Department aims to establish an in-house annual physical and cancer screening model for more accessible and thorough testing. RFP recommendations are in progress.

Automatic Approval of all Prostate and Thyroid Cancer Claims with Confirmed Diagnosis

Effective 12/1/23, all thyroid and prostate cancer claims are automatically approved for members under age 50 with a confirmed diagnosis. These 2 types of cancer represent 72% of all fire cancer claims filed.

Expansion of Injury with Pay Benefits

CBA Changes for Occupational Illness to be covered by IWP

Injury with Pay benefits were greatly expanded in the 2023-2026 Collective Bargaining Agreement. Members disabled due to a presumptive occupational cancer diagnosis, a presumptive cardiovascular disease diagnosis, or a presumptive pulmonary disease diagnosis, as defined by the Ohio Revised Code, are entitled to their salary in full for the period of disability for up to two years.

New payroll code tracks time off for accurate reporting.

CBA Changes for Occupational Illness to be covered by IWP

Introduction of IOC Payroll Code

The City introduced a new payroll code “IOC” to track disability due to occupational illnesses effectively under Ohio law.

Differentiating Absences

The IOC code distinguishes time off for occupational diseases from absences due to physical injuries.

Benefit and Record Accuracy

Firefighters receive Injury With Pay benefits while the City maintains precise records for reporting and analysis.

Retroactive Application

The IOC change is retroactive to September 16, 2024, coinciding with the latest Collective Bargaining Agreement ratification.

In Progress Initiative-Cancer Follow-Up Leave

Background

Recently, Local 48 brought up concerns regarding members utilizing their personal leave balances for follow-up appointments related to a prior occupational cancer diagnosis.

City's Proposal

To address the Union and members concerns, the City authored a comprehensive “Cancer Follow-Up Leave Policy” and a Memorandum of Understanding, which proposes a new contract Article titled “Cancer Follow-Up Leave.”

Additionally, to ensure that any members that have utilized their leave banks for follow-up cancer appointments tied to their approved occupational cancer claim since the CBA went into effect are made whole, the City is working with Local 48 to put together a comprehensive list of employees and the leave balances utilized since December 2023.

In Progress Initiative-Cancer Follow-Up Leave

City's Proposal

The MOU also proposes a minor modification to Article 37.2, which would allow the City to operate with three persons for a period of up to six hours while members attend their appointments.

The goal of the proposal is to ensure that the Fire Department's overtime spending is not exacerbated by the new policy/leave benefit, while balancing the need to ensure adequate time for members to attend and travel to cancer follow-up appointments.

Next Steps

The City and the Union have begun initial discussions on the proposed follow-up leave. The City shared the draft policy and MOU with the Union this past week, and the parties have a meeting scheduled for September 30th to discuss this issue further.

Questions?