

March on Milwaukee

Forty years ago, many Milwaukee residents marched for the right to live where they wanted - taking a stand for social justice and racial equality. Forty years later, the struggle continues. The March on Milwaukee project is commemorating the open housing movement to not only honor past efforts, but re-ignite discussions and refocus citizens' attention to problems that remain.

The March on Milwaukee events will take place from Thursday, September 27 - Sunday, September 30.

The events include a play, the opening of an exhibit, an all-day community conference at UWM on Saturday (free), and a gathering on the James E. Groppi Unity Bridge on Sunday afternoon.

Go to marchonmilwaukee.org for details including online registration.

MPS Bowling League

All MPS employees are welcome to join the co-ed MPS league for bowling at 4:30 p.m. on Wednesdays at Burnham Bowl, 61st and Burnham. New three-member teams will be accepted through September.

For details, call Don **Bo(w)l-**anowski at Pulaski High, 902-9055.

Critical Insurance Reminder!

If you did not add a dependent at the time of birth or marriage, you should apply for coverage during the September open enrollment period. (Even if you have family coverage, a new dependent is **not** automatically added to your health and dental coverage.)

You should check the dependent information on the second page of the "MPS Employee Benefits Application Form" which was mailed to your home this fall. If all of your dependents are not listed, you should add them to the form.

To add a child, you must provide MPS with a copy of the birth certificate. **To add a spouse**, you must send a copy of your marriage certificate to MPS. **If possible**, your documentation should be sent with your application.

Add Dependents by September 28

Your application must be received in Room 124 of the MPS central office by 5:00 p.m. on **Friday, September 28**.

Your added dependent's coverage will start on November 1.

Using Your Negotiated Paid Personal Days Off

The MBSD/MTEA Educational Assistant Contract provides for a paid personal day off for eligible assistants each school year. The provision is summarized below:

- ◆ If you have 10 to 19 school years of service within the educational assistant unit and satisfactory attendance, you are entitled to **one** personal day off with pay each school year.
 - ◆ With 20 or more years of service and satisfactory attendance, you receive **two** personal days each school year.
 - ◆ For the purpose of determining eligibility, satisfactory attendance means that you are not required to provide a doctor's excuse for every day you are absent.
 - ◆ Personal days off can be taken for any reason, but scheduling must be approved by your immediate supervisor in advance unless an unexpected emergency arises. In such cases, you should promptly notify your supervisor.
 - ◆ If you do not take your personal days off, you may choose to be paid for the day(s) at your normal daily rate on the last paycheck of the school year or have the day(s) added to your sick leave accumulation.
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Health Care Cost Tips

Most members realize that your union has negotiated excellent health insurance benefits: comprehensive coverage; Board-paid premium; minimal out-of-pocket costs. And there are ways to reduce your out-of-pocket costs!

Wait for a Bill

With both the Aetna PPO and UnitedHealthcare HMO plans, there is a \$10 "co-pay" for some doctor visits. But you should **not** pay the \$10 during the visit (unless the office staff insists).

The main reason not to pay right away is that some doctor visits will not require a \$10 co-pay. For some visits, there will be no charge to you at all. Others will require an out-of-pocket payment, but **not** the \$10 co-pay.

Ask your doctor to submit the claim to your health insurance plan, and let Aetna or UHC process it **first**. If and when you get a bill, you should review it and pay only if it's correct.

This is the same advice if you need emergency or urgent care. Unless the medical provider requires up-front payment at the time of service, you should **wait for a bill**.

Talk to Your Doctor

Aetna participants are responsible for paying a deductible of up to \$100 per person per year. (This is limited to a maximum of three family members each year.)

If the deductible is charged for a visit to a doctor, chiropractor, physical therapist, or other medical provider you see regularly, you should ask **not** to be billed for any deductible amount.

Many doctors understand the hardship a \$100 deductible may cause for your family. They also value you as a patient with excellent insurance - which pays them well. Your doctor may be willing to not bill you for the deductible amount to help you, and keep you as a patient.

Know Your Contract: Absence Due to a Relative's Death

There are contractual provisions for paid absences, **not** deducted from sick leave, which may be used in the event of the death of a relative.

First, you may be absent with pay for up to **three** full school days within seven consecutive days (starting with the day of death) for the death of the following relatives: spouse, parent, stepparent, parent-in-law, child, stepchild, brother, sister, or a relative residing in the same household.

Second, you may be absent with pay for **one** day within seven consecutive days (starting with the day of death) for the death of the following relatives: grandparent, grandchild, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, daughter-in-law, son-in-law, uncle, aunt, niece, nephew, or first cousin.

If More Days Are Needed...

If you have earned paid personal day(s) off, you may also use this day(s) for extra time off. (See the article on the front page.)

In addition, the "miscellaneous absence" provision of the contract allows up to two additional days with pay for an absence due to travel involved with funeral attendance. Miscellaneous absences are limited to a maximum of two days per school year, and the days are deducted from your sick leave accumulation.

The contractual provision for personal absence **without pay** may also be used - depending on the circumstances.

Proper Coding and Paperwork

Absences due to the death of a relative should be explicitly reported to your school so that the proper coding is made on the payroll report.

By contract, you are required to provide "bona fide proof of death and/or attendance at a funeral or memorial service."

Your Mailbox Rights

The contract provides that a mailbox be designated for each EA in every building for the distribution of MTEA materials and other communications.

The purpose of the mailbox provision is to give you a set place to receive Team-Mate and other items. A mailbox may range from an independent structure to file folders.

If your school does not already provide mailboxes to assistants, your MEAA Educational Assistant Chairperson should bring this contract provision to the principal's attention.

Do Not Transport Students in Your Car

You should not transport students in your car because of the risks. If an accident occurs, the primary coverage will be the responsibility of your personal auto insurance carrier.

The school board's liability insurance provides strictly "excess" coverage. As such, the board will not pay for any claims unless your auto insurance coverage limits are exhausted. The fact that you are on authorized school business - such as taking home students who missed their bus - does not relieve you of responsibility if an accident occurs.