

October
2024

NEWSLETTER OF THE
CITY OF TACOMA

HealthVine

2024-2025 Flu Season

Now is the time to start thinking about when, how and where you'll get immunized against the flu this year.

Flu season typically peaks between December and February, but you should plan on getting your flu shot early to protect yourself and those around you.

It is simple to get a flu shot at no cost from an in-network pharmacy or doctor's office.

[Learn more](#) about how you can get a flu shot for free and/or visit one of our onsite clinics.



Breast Cancer Awareness

Other than skin cancer, breast cancer is the most common cancer among American women.

There are different symptoms of breast cancer, and some people have no symptoms at all. Symptoms can include:

- Any change in size or shape of the breast
- Pain in any area of the breast
- A new lump in the breast or underarm

Mammograms are the best way to find breast cancer early, when it is easier to treat and before it is big enough to feel or cause symptoms. These are covered 100% by your benefits if you are 40 or older.

Prostate Cancer Awareness

Different people have different symptoms for prostate cancer. Most men do not have any symptoms at all.

If you have any of the following symptoms, be sure to see your doctor right away:

- Difficulty starting urination
- Weak or interrupted flow of urine
- Urinating often, especially at night
- Trouble emptying the bladder completely
- Pain or burning during urination
- Pain in the back, hips, or pelvis that doesn't go away

Considering that most men do not experience symptoms of prostate cancer, it is important to consider screening — looking for the cancer before it causes symptoms.

Source: [Center for Disease Control and Prevention](#)

2025 Wellness Incentive Appeals Process

Wellness incentive letters will be mailed to your home address in early November.

This letter will inform you whether you did or did not qualify for the 2025 Wellness incentive, according to Virgin Pulse's records. If you did not receive this letter or have questions about your qualification status, please contact [Wellness Coordinator](#).

Eligible members are entitled to submit an appeals form for their Wellness incentive determination. This form must be received by Dec. 15, 2024.

Please complete and submit your [appeal form](#) per the instructions. Be as detailed as possible in the explanation section of the form.

2026 Wellness Incentive Period is Here!

This wellness incentive period runs from October 1, 2024 — September 30, 2025.

The health and happiness of our employees is crucial to the success of our organization. We cannot have one without the other. By continuing our focus towards improving our wellbeing as an organization, we can collectively enrich our lives both personally and professionally.

The [ways to earn](#) and incentive goal are not changing this program year. You must earn **25,000 points** by Sept. 30, 2025 in order to qualify for the wellness incentive and save at least \$240 in 2026.

Financial Wellness: Pre-Retirement Seminars

It is never too early to start planning for retirement! City of Tacoma employees and their family members are invited to attend any of our retirement planning seminars. These presentations count towards your Virgin Pulse incentive requirements, so make sure to submit a [smart form](#) after each session.



TERS 101

When: October 15th from 12:00 to 1:00 p.m. ([register here](#)) and November 6th from 12:00 to 1:00 p.m. ([register here](#))

Description: Retirement Director Catherine Marx will give an introduction and overview of our Tacoma Employees' Retirement System (TERS).

City of Tacoma Retirement Resources

When: October 23rd from 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. ([register here](#))

Description: Retirement Director Catherine Marx will give an overview of retirement system benefits. She will demonstrate the online retirement benefits calculator tool, explore various options and show you how to better estimate your future benefit. Human Resources Specialist Monica Rutledge will provide an overview of the 457 deferred compensation and HRA VEBA plans. Monica will also discuss post-retirement health care options and eligibility requirements.

Medicare 101 (Regence BlueShield)

When: October 29th from 12:00 to 1:00 p.m. ([register here](#))

Description: Gain the knowledge needed to make informed decisions and pick a plan that works best for you when the time comes.

LEOFF II Retirement Resources (Fire, Police, PPSMA)

When: November 7th from 11:30 to 1:00 p.m. ([register here](#))

Description: HR Specialist Monica Rutledge will provide an overview of the post-retirement medical options and the 457 deferred compensation plans. A VEBA Consultant from Gallagher will cover the general rules and benefit options of the post-separation account-based health plan for eligible employees. DiMartino Associates will cover the Medical Expense Reimbursement Plan (MERP). All LEOFF II members are encouraged to [visit this site](#) to learn more about your retirement plan. Department of Retirement Systems (DRS) also has [recorded webinars](#) for you to explore.

Social Security 101

When: November 14th from 12:00 to 1:00 p.m. ([register here](#))

Description: Kirk Larson, a Washington public affairs representative for the Social Security Administration, will answer all of your Social Security questions.

MissionSquare Retirement offers a wide variety of [LIVE webinars](#) for you to attend. You do not need to be a MissionSquare participant in order to learn from these webinars. They also have [recorded webinars](#) for you to watch at your convenience.