Quick Start Guide for Employers

A brief overview of your role in administering the Concordia Plan Services benefits.

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CONCORDIA PLAN SERVICES

Welcome to Concordia Plan Services!

More than 60 years ago, members of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod made a commitment: to care for the well-being of our church workers. Today, the LCMS community – congregations, schools, universities, seminaries, care centers and other organizations – works with Concordia Plan Services to continue to fulfill that promise.

Because navigating worker benefits can be challenging, we've made every effort to make our materials and processes easy and intuitive. If at any point you get 'stuck,' we want you to know that we are here to help. This brief guide is an overview to help you get started. Complete information on administering the plans can be found in our **Benefits Administration Guide.**

Let's get started!

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What do I need to do?

As a new administrator, you are learning a lot of material. We've created the list below to outline your basic responsibilities. Please be sure to read the **Benefits Administration Guide** for a full list.

1. Inform all eligible workers about the benefits they will receive through Concordia Plan Services.
   > Share the **Total Benefits Guide** for members; it showcases all member benefits.
   > Encourage your workers to create a Member Portal account to see their personalized benefits.

2. Enroll **all eligible workers** for the plans your ministry offers within 60 days of their eligibility.
   > Complete the **New Worker Enrollment Form**.
   > See the "Who do I enroll?" section for more details on eligibility.

3. Initiate and maintain payroll deductions for workers' contributions if enrolled:
   > For the Concordia Health Plan: Reference the Member Cost report to determine what the full contribution amount is for each worker enrolled in the health plan. Calculate each worker's medical, dental and vision contributions after the employer cost-share has been applied and deduct the appropriate contribution amounts in your payroll system.
   > For Supplemental Life, Accidental Death and Dismemberment, Critical Illness Insurance, and Accidental Injury Insurance: Deduct the entire contribution amount for each worker in your payroll system.
   > For the Concordia Retirement Savings Plan 403(b), withhold worker contributions and remit them directly to Fidelity via 90 Degree Benefits.

4. Report worker changes including, but not limited to:
   > Terminations of employment, including retirement.
   > Changes to compensation as a result of updates to duties or hours worked per week.
   > Employee classification (rostered vs lay).

5. Instruct workers to make changes within 60 days of a change in status, including a change in family status (marriage, divorce, new child, etc.) and other benefit changes. Members have the option to initiate changes either on the Member Portal or by submitting a **Request for Membership Change form**.

6. Read the monthly employer newsletter, Connecting the Dots, to learn important action items, updates and information to share with your workers.
   > View the **Newsletter Archive**.

7. Share any notice or other communication that is intended for your workers.

8. Review all invoices received for accuracy and report discrepancies or concerns to our office within 30 days of the invoice.

9. Pay all invoices when received and due. CPS provides a 30-day grace period prior to charging a 1% finance charge per month (compounded monthly) on any contribution past due.

10. Report and tax workers' imputed income resulting from Group-Term Life Insurance. This represents the taxes due on a worker's life insurance benefits (if applicable).
    > Visit **ConcordiaPlans.org/GTL** for additional information and instructions.

11. Update the annual compensation for all workers employed more than 20 hours per week and expected to work more than five consecutive months. This includes annual raises or salary adjustments. Only changes due to an increase/decrease in hours or changes in duties should be reported during the year.
    - Visit **ConcordiaPlans.org/ACR** for FAQs and additional details.

Additional responsibilities under the Concordia Health Plan

1. Report and tax workers on the value of rewards redeemed through the Vitality Wellness Platform. Include the value of these rewards in the employee's gross income and treat as wages. These non-cash wages are subject to FICA/SECA taxes and applicable federal and state taxes, and should be included on the employee's Form W-2. Do not pay the employee the rewards because they were paid by Vitality.

Additional responsibilities regarding legal notices

1. Distribute the following legal notices to your workers as indicated below. These documents, additional resources, guides, plan documents and more can be found by visiting **ConcordiaPlans.org/Plans**.

As an employer, it's your obligation to provide the following notices and documents to your new workers:

For **all employees** regardless of Concordia Health Plan eligibility:

- Marketplace Notice – should be provided within 14 days of the worker's start date
    - **Version for employers who offer a health plan to some or all employees**
    - **Version for employers who do not offer a health plan**
- **Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) Model Notice**

The following notices should be given to **all new workers** who are eligible for the Concordia Health Plan:

- Summary(ies) of Benefits and Coverage (SBC) for the health plan option(s) you offer
- Dental/Vision At-a-Glance document(s)
- **Legal Notices Summary**
- **Women's Health and Cancer Rights Act Notice**
- **HIPAA Notice of Privacy Practices**

For **current workers** the following notices need to be provided:

- CHIP Notice
- Summary(ies) of Benefits and Coverage (SBC) for the health plan option(s) you offer
- Dental/Vision At-a-Glance document(s)
- **Legal Notices Summary**
- **Women's Health and Cancer Rights Act Notice**
- **HIPAA Notice of Privacy Practices**

Please note that Concordia Plan Services provides all these notices prior to open enrollment. You only need to provide these notices to current workers who increase their hours and become eligible for Concordia Health Plan coverage during the plan year outside of the open enrollment period.

Additional responsibilities for Personal Spending Accounts

PSAs include health savings accounts, flexible spending accounts and health reimbursement arrangements. These benefits are administered directly through the PSA provider.

- For general questions about PSAs and health plan options, call 888-927-7526.
- For ongoing support once your account is established, contact your PSA provider.
    - HealthEquity: 866-382-3510
    - Kaiser Permanente: 877-750-3399

For additional information on personal spending accounts, please reference our ***Employer Guide to Personal Spending Accounts****.*

Additional responsibilities for the Concordia Retirement Savings Plan 403(b)

Worker contributions to the 403(b) are not included in your monthly invoices. These contributions are sent by you directly to Fidelity via 90 Degree Benefits.

1. Inform newly hired workers of their eligibility to contribute to the 403(b) by directing them to **ConcordiaPlans.org/403b**.
2. Set up payroll deductions or communicate contribution information to your payroll services provider.
3. Send worker contributions to Fidelity through the **90 Degree Benefits Service Center**.
4. If your ministry has elected AutoSave, you will have additional notices that you will be required to distribute. Please reference the **Concordia Retirement Savings Plan 403(b) AutoSave Guide** for more information.
5. Questions for 90 Degree Benefits can be directed to 800-486-7664 ext. 2556 or email at **CRSPSupport.t7@90degreebenefits.com**

For additional information on 403(b) responsibilities, please read the ***Concordia Retirement Savings Plan 403(b) Administrative Guide****.*

Additional responsibilities for Supplemental Life Insurance, Accidental Death and Dismemberment Insurance, Accidental Injury Insurance and Critical Illness Insurance

Offering these voluntary benefits has no additional cost to the employer. Contributions for these benefits should be collected through payroll deduction and must be made post-tax in order to retain the benefits' non-taxable status. You can determine the amount you should collect from your workers by reviewing a Member Cost report.

Who do I enroll?

Enrollment in the Concordia Plans is based on eligibility criteria that vary by plan. The following sections define who is eligible to participate in each plan, helping employers determine when and how to enroll their workers.

Full-Time Status Explained

A worker is eligible for most of the Concordia Plans if he or she is considered full-time, which means he or she works more than 20 hours per week and is expected to work more than five consecutive months. A worker is viewed as working more than 20 hours per week if the worker is normally scheduled to work more than 20 hours per week. For example, if a worker is normally scheduled to work 18 hours per week but sometimes works an extra shift or fills in for vacation, this does not make the worker eligible. Employers are encouraged to identify benefits eligible workers and those not eligible and set appropriate expectations. A temporary reduction in hours or increase in hours does not change the intended classification. If the worker is expected to regularly work more than 20 hours per week, the worker must be enrolled. Likewise, if the worker's schedule changes to working 20 or fewer hours per week, the worker's eligibility is lost and the worker's benefit enrollment should be terminated.

The five consecutive month requirement is used to differentiate permanent workers from temporary workers. This is not a probationary period. For example, an individual hired for one semester or one summer would not be eligible because of the five-month rule. However, a worker hired for the school year would be eligible even if the worker does not actually work a full five months because of breaks or illness. The ministry should focus on the intent when hired to determine each worker's eligibility.

Pension and Disability Plan Eligibility Defined

Workers who are 21 years of age or older, work more than 20 hours per week and are expected to work more than five consecutive months must be enrolled in the Concordia Retirement Plan pension. Beginning with any worker hired on or after July 1, 2022, if the worker is under age 21, the worker is not eligible to be enrolled in the pension; however, they should be treated like any other worker regarding enrollment in all other applicable Plans. If the worker is enrolled in other applicable plans, he/she will automatically be enrolled in the pension effective the first month following or coinciding with his/her 21st birthday. *(Note: the age 21 requirement for the pension only does not apply to any worker hired prior to July 1, 2022. These workers should be enrolled without regard to age.)*

Full time

Each worker of an employer offering the pension and disability plan who is hired to work **more than 20 hours per week and more than five consecutive months**, is eligible to participate in the pension and disability plan.

Part time

Any worker hired to work **20 hours or less per week** is ineligible to participate in the pension and disability plan.

Temporary

Any worker hired to work five consecutive months or less is ineligible to participate in the pension and disability plan.

Concordia Health Plan

Employers who offer the Concordia Health Plan to their workers designate one of the following requirements for eligibility. Designations must be on file with CPS. Designations and any cost-sharing must be applied in a uniform and nondiscriminatory basis to all the employer's workers:

1. More than 20 hours per week and expected to work more than five consecutive months.
2. More than 25 hours per week and expected to work more than five consecutive months.
3. More than 30 hours per week and expected to work more than five consecutive months.
4. 30 or more hours per week and expected to work more than five consecutive months.

If a worker meets the full-time eligibility criteria your ministry has selected for the health plan, you must provide him or her with the option to enroll in the pension and disability plan (if your ministry offers it). If the worker declines coverage, he or she must provide a reason from the list of eligible opt-outs on the Member Portal or on the enrollment form.

403(b) Eligibility Defined

A worker may participate in the 403(b) if they meet the eligibility requirements for other Plans and their employer has enrolled in the 403(b). Employers interested in offering the 403(b) to their part-time workers should contact their Account Manager.

However, non-qualified church-controlled organizations as defined by the IRS (i.e., universities, colleges, and recognized service organizations) should also be aware of the IRS requirement to offer a 403(b) plan to workers working 1,000 hours or more annually. Refer to the **Concordia Retirement Savings Plan 403(b) Administrative Guide** or call the 403(b) Team for details.

If a worker works more than 20 hours and is expected to work more than five consecutive months, you must provide him or her with the option to enroll in and contribute to the 403(b). If your ministry has elected to provide the 403(b) for part-time workers, workers with 20 hours per week or less should also be given the option to enroll in and contribute to the 403(b).

Supplemental Life, Accidental Death and Dismemberment (AD&D), Critical Illness Insurance (CI) and Accidental Injury Insurance (AI)

If a worker works more than 20 hours and is expected to work more than five consecutive months, you must provide him or her with the option to enroll in Supplemental Life, AD&D, AI or CI (if your ministry offers any of these).

Special eligibility considerations for Students

- Vicars, student teachers and other student intern workers who are serving an employer and who will return to a college or seminary to complete their studies are not considered full-time workers and therefore are not eligible to enroll in the Concordia Plans or the AD&D as workers. However, those who have completed their formal coursework and are not returning to a seminary or college (e.g., deferred vicars) are eligible to be enrolled at the option of the employer. Contact CPS for more information on this scenario.
- New graduates of LCMS seminaries, universities and colleges who are assigned by the Synod's Board of Assignments for employment with your organization will normally be enrolled on the first day of the month after reporting for work. However, if the worker has completed all graduation requirements, the Plan provisions allow the employer to request that an assigned worker be enrolled prior to actually beginning employment. Deferred vicars are not eligible for early enrollment.

When are workers' benefits effective?

Eligible workers should be enrolled using their first day of work at your organization. Benefits are effective on the first day of the month coinciding with or next following their full-time start date. If a part-time or temporary employee later becomes a full-time worker, he or she becomes eligible for coverage and should be enrolled in the Plans as described above, treating the first day of full-time employment as his or her start date.

If you have a probationary period on file, the workers' eligibility date will be delayed by the length of the probationary period. The probationary period can be one, 30 or 60 days.

Example 1: Eligible worker is hired May 3.
Employer has no probationary period. Benefits become effective June 1.
Employer has 30-day probationary period. Benefits become effective July 1.

Example 2: Eligible worker is hired June 1.
Employer has no probationary period. Benefits become effective June 1.
Employer has 30-day probationary period. Benefits become effective July 1.

When are enrollment and termination deadlines?

Coverage under the Concordia Plans is not automatic, as the employer must enroll the worker or submit the termination.

- New, newly eligible (due to increased hours) and transferred workers must complete their enrollment within 60 days. Enrollments submitted after 60 days are subject to additional fees.
- Dependents must be added within 60 days of the qualifying life event that allowed them to be eligible for coverage.
- Terminations of coverage due to termination of employment, retirement or reduction in hours must be reported within 30 days of the termination. If reported after 30 days, you will be billed for the Concordia Health Plan for the worker through the end of the month we receive notification.
- Contributions to the 403(b) must be stopped through 90 Degree Benefits.

What are the rates for each plan and what is my ministry's obligation to pay?

How much your ministry pays is determined by each of the Plans. Rates for each Plan are shared annually in the Employer Renewal Notice. For some plans there are no costs to your ministry; however, you will need to collect your workers' costs through payroll deduction. Please contact your Account Manager with questions about your ministry's rates.

Concordia Retirement Plan pension

The employer pays the total cost for the pension. Rates may be requested by contacting your Account Manager.

Concordia Retirement Savings Plan 403(b)

There is no additional cost for offering the 403(b). However, employers have the option to make Employer Contributions (either a matching or fixed contribution) to workers' 403(b) accounts.

Concordia Health Plan

Rates for the health plan are determined on an annual basis and vary depending on the worker's coverage tier (self, self and spouse, etc.). The portion of the cost paid by the worker is defined by your ministry; however, your ministry must cover, at minimum, 50% of the cost of employee-only coverage. Employer contributions must be made on a uniform and nondiscriminatory basis and reported to our office.

Concordia Disability and Survivor Plan

The employer pays the total cost for the disability plan. Rates may be requested by contacting your Account Manager.

If your ministry is located in a state with Statutory State Mandates, please contact your Account Manager for your current rates.

Supplemental Life (Employee, Spouse and Child), AD&D, AI and CI

These voluntary benefits are offered at no cost to the employer; however, member contributions will be invoiced to you and payroll deducted from your workers.

When should I expect my invoice?

Concordia Plan Services benefits are invoiced for the current month. For example, you will receive an invoice in the month of June for benefits effective in June. Invoices are based on enrollment data, which is compiled in preparation of the monthly invoice on the first business day of the month. Any changes processed on or after this date will be included on the monthly invoice as an adjustment for any prior monthly billing periods.

Invoices will be mailed on or around the fifth business day of the month. Payment is due the last day of that same month.

If you are interested in online billing, please contact us.

What if I need help?

Wow – we've covered a lot of material in this guide, and this is just the beginning! We know it's complicated but remember, we are here for you.

Your first point of contact is your Account Manager. Visit **ConcordiaPlans.org/MinistryEngagement** to connect.

For additional assistance, you may also contact us at 888-927-7526 or **info@ConcordiaPlans.org** and we will be happy to help.

Reminder: Complete information on administering the Plans can be found in our **Benefits Administration Guide**.

For more information

CALL **888-927-7526**
7 a.m.–6 p.m. CT, Monday–Friday

EMAIL **info@ConcordiaPlans.org**

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