

Benefits Bulletin

March 20, 2015

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To: USGS Employees

From: Cathleen M. Smith
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Subject: Unsolicited Benefits Contacts, Updated Benefits Team Assignments, and Update on Anthem

Unsolicited Benefits Sales Calls and Mailings

It has come to our attention that some employees have received phone calls, emails or mailings from individuals asking to discuss Federal employee benefits. They ask for information or to discuss matters such as your retirement plans, annuities, health benefits and the Thrift Savings Plan. The representatives sometime use language in the conversation or communications that makes it seem like they are on the USGS Benefits Team or from an entity sponsored by the government. Some employees have reported receiving a survey titled “Annual Federal Benefits Evaluation” mailed to their home which includes information about their agency, position, and pay grade. It also asks the employee a series of questions about their age, years of service, work hours, etc.

This is a reminder to be alert if you receive unsolicited calls, emails, or mailings about your benefits. The USGS does not provide information to any companies. However, some information is considered public and is available from other sources (e.g. agency, position, pay grade).

Our Benefits Team members have access to your Official Personnel Records and do not need to ask for the information requested in these unsolicited contacts. The USGS Benefits Specialists may send a questionnaire using their USGS email account in response to an inquiry **you initiate** about your benefits. Before responding to any inquiry about your federal benefits, please verify that you are in fact working with a USGS Benefits Specialist.

You will find the name and phone number of your [Benefits Specialist on our Benefits website](#). We recently updated the listing with a new team member. Please contact your specialist if you have questions about your Federal Benefits.

Update on Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield and Possible Phishing Campaign

[Benefits Bulletin 15-02](#) alerted you to Anthem’s announcement that they had a security breach. The Office of Personnel Management has prepared a series of Questions and Answers you will find below:

How do I know if I was affected by the Anthem data breach?

Anthem will notify current and former members whose information may have been compromised. In coming weeks, Anthem will send individual letters by email and through the U. S. Postal Service.

If my information was compromised, what protection is Anthem offering me?

Anthem will provide credit monitoring and identity protection services. You will receive notice via email or the U. S. Postal Service advising you of the protections being offered.

Will Anthem continue to process my claims?

Yes, Anthem will continue to process claims and issue payments. You will continue to receive claims statements (Explanation of Benefits) for review to ensure accuracy in billing.

Where do I go for more information?

Anthem has created a dedicated website (www.AnthemFacts.com/) where members can access information such as frequently asked questions and answers.

Can I call a toll-free number for information?

Yes. Anthem has a dedicated toll-free number for current and former members to call for any questions related to this incident. The toll-free number is: 1-877-263-7995.

Is Anthem doing everything that can be done to protect my information from now on?

As soon as Anthem discovered the attack, it immediately began working to close the security vulnerability and contacted the FBI. Anthem has retained Mandiant – a highly regarded cybersecurity firm – and is working with the government to investigate the incident and strengthen the security of its systems.

The USGS website on Pay and Benefits provides multiples links and resources to all benefits, including all prior Benefits Bulletins. This information is now available on the internet so you may share with your family or view from home with ease:
<http://www.usgs.gov/humancapital/pb/paybenefitslinks.html>. Contact your Benefits Specialist if you have any questions.