

<b>POSITION TITLE:</b>	Benefits Assistant	<b>DEPT./DIV.</b>	Administration & Finance
<b>REPORTS TO:</b>	Director, Administration & Finance	<b>BRANCH:</b>	Benefits
<b>GRADE LEVEL:</b>	D	<b>LOCATION:</b>	Headquarters
<b>ASSOCIATION:</b>	Civilian	<b>DATE:</b>	Sep.30/04
		<b>HOURS OF WORK:</b>	35 hr/wk Mon-Fri Days

**GENERAL PURPOSE:**

To process benefit claims and perform related administrative duties associated with the Employee Benefit Programs.

**MAJOR RESPONSIBILITIES:**

Processes claims, reports enrollment changes, checks and balances monthly insurance billings and ensures claims are submitted to the insurance carrier. Processes benefit updates. Initiates paperwork to re-enrol all members when insurance carriers change by having applicable paperwork distributed and signed.

Responds to employee's questions about benefits, beneficiaries, including travel insurance issues. Advises employees what documentation is required to give notification of maternity and or parental leave; provides information about entitlement under the Employment Standards Act, contractual allowances and benefit coverage is in place, and forwards documentation to all parties involved. Maintains paperwork for payroll top-ups, invoices employees for the portion of premium owed and ensures payment is received. Calculates employer/employee split on dental premiums and cross-checks benefit service provider billings for accuracy.

Meets with new and retiring employees to explain employee benefits coverage such as life insurance, AD&D, extended health, dental and RRSP's for coverage enrollment. Using Notices of Employment forms sent by Human Resources, activates benefits for employees by adding information to templates on the computerized Regional Banner payroll system integrated with the police Finance Branch.

Invoices retired members and collects premium payments for dental coverage. Sends out updates on insurance information with each invoice to ensure communication is maintained by mailings throughout the year. Assists retirees to make status or information changes to OMERS. Maintains a separate address list of retirees and provides to Retired Members Association, and other areas within the service.

Provides updates and changes regarding benefits through information bulletins, newsletters and classroom presentations. Sends out mailings on a regular basis to retired members, who have no other access to such information.

Establishes and maintains changes in name, address, telephone numbers, marital status, and benefit deduction information in the Region of Waterloo Banner Payroll System templates pertaining to life insurance, AD&D, extended health, dental, and RRSP's.

Maintains the current insurance premium costs and makes necessary changes to templates. Receives address changes and notifies pertinent offices and the Association of any changes received.

Enrols members into RRSP or spousal RRSP with the insurance agency; adds contribution to individual's pay in the Banner system. Maintains and reports changes to member's coverage such as name, beneficiary, investment instructions, increase/decrease contribution amounts, lump sum payments, transfers from other carriers, and terminations. Keeps membership informed and maintains supplies of forms. Acts as liaison between employees and insuring agency by distributing material pertaining to RRSP's, enrollment forms, semi-annual statements, tax receipts, and monthly and quarterly reports on accounts.

Types budget summaries and revisions, and budget reports. Types costings for bargaining purposes. Prepares correspondence to insurance companies and the Region, inter-branch memos, benefit updates and correspondence for the Finance Manager.

Reads contractual agreement updates for accuracy and implements applicable changes with payroll and insurance agencies. Processes Permanent Disability applications.

Shares the sorting and delivery of inter-office and Region of Waterloo mail with co-workers. Maintains file systems; sends faxes; photocopies documents; and performs other administrative duties as required.

Provides occasional relief in the absence of the Accounts Assistant and Payroll Assistant within the Finance Branch.

Performs other related duties as assigned.

**RESPONSIBILITY FOR MATERIAL/FINANCIAL RESOURCES:**

Ensures a personal computer and adding machine used for own work is maintained in good working condition. Receives cheques from retirees.

**NATURE & IMPACT OF ERROR:**

Errors that may occur are usually the result of incorrect enrollment or the addition of dependents on employee's benefits or misinforming an employee about coverage entitlements.

**RESPONSIBILITY FOR SUPERVISION OF STAFF & OTHERS:**

The incumbent has no formal responsibilities for the supervision of staff and others. Provides explanations regarding benefit entitlement new employees, police service members, supervisors and retirees as outlined within the Employment Standards Act, Employment Insurance Act, three collective agreements, Letters of Understanding, Memorandums of Agreement, and the Job Sharing Program.

**CONTACTS & HUMAN RELATIONS:**

Internal:

Receives daily direction and guidance from the Director, Finance & Administration. Has daily contact with immediate co-workers within the branch. Has regular contact with staff from all areas of the police service in person, by phone, fax, Intranet, mobile data terminal and e-mail. Has contact with retirees on a regular basis to explain entitlement under collective agreements and to exchange information.

Has regular contact with Human Resources staff to exchange documentation and information in relation to new hires, leaves, resignations, retirees or other employee changes.

Has occasional contact with Computer Services staff in relation to the integration of Region of Waterloo software programs with WRPS Finance HRIS programs used to maintain data.

External:

Has daily contact with insurance/benefit carriers in relation to the coordination of employee benefits administration.

Has regular contact with staff from the Region of Waterloo Payroll Department in relation to employee benefit enrollments and changes and to resolve integrated computerized Banner reporting mechanisms.

Consults with RRSP carriers regarding employee deductions. Has contact with service vendors in relation to office equipment repairs and services in the absence of the Payroll Assistant and the Accounts Assistant.

Has contact with physiotherapists, psychologists, doctors, podiatrists and other medical/professional agencies to clarify benefit claims.

**EFFORT (Mental/Physical):**

Applies well-defined guidelines regarding entitlements under collective agreements, Letters of Understanding, Memorandums of Agreement, as well as insurance company policies and procedures and past WRPS policies and procedures to provide benefit entitlement information and perform data entry and job task functions.

Works independently, under the general direction and guidance of the Director, Finance & Administration. Resolves minor benefit coverage discrepancies where vague references exist in current group benefit contracts, and when cross coverage rules and parameters change the normal processing of claims, or refers to supervisor.

Work is completed to have documentation prepared and claims processed so that claims can be sent by courier to insurance carrier twice weekly. Works to unplanned reactive data entry and paper flow requirements such as maternity leaves, parental leaves, resignations, retirements and new hires.

Incumbent may be required to probe to elicit all details when responding to sensitive and vague inquiries regarding benefit claim allowances in unique situations such as recent separations, common law situations, where benefit claim outcomes could change depending on circumstances. In situations where collective agreements do not specifically address certain issues such as orthotics, consults with the Director, Finance & Administration.

Checks benefit claims submissions for accuracy and completion to make sure members have submitted requests for reimbursement for benefits as per prescribed collective agreements, and so they can be sent to the insurance carrier in a timely manner for employee reimbursement. Ensures beneficiary designations and other related changes are forwarded immediately after marital breakdowns.

Heavy visual and mental concentration, attention to detail, and manual dexterity are required when using a personal computer to enroll employee's insurance and when making changes to employee's coverage; when checking updates to claims benefit contracts for accuracy; when entering data and policy numbers into Banner and checking claims for submission; and when producing various statistical reports and information as requested. Lifts and carries boxes of pamphlets which need to be distributed to members.

**WORKING CONDITIONS:**

Work is performed in an open concept office, subject to continual interruptions from walk-in traffic. Due to location of desk, incumbent is exposed to background noises such as phone calls and distractions from people who walk into the office area to speak to the Finance Assistant and Payroll Assistant and/or the Director, Finance & Administration.

Employees are occasionally impatient and unreasonable, requiring the incumbent to be polite and tactful as well as informative. Incumbent has contact with employees who may become upset with benefit reimbursements. Incumbent exhibits diplomacy to ensure employee confidentiality when dealing with employee separations, common law situations or confidential medical-related issues.

Work is performed to meet deadlines to prepare and track dental invoices and receivables; to meet payroll deadlines every two weeks; to check and process monthly insurance billings; and to have benefit cards and forms checked and distributed.

**SKILL:**a) Knowledge:

Basic knowledge of reading, writing, mathematical and communication skills, normally acquired through the attainment of an Ontario Secondary School Diploma or equivalent as determined by the Ontario Ministry of Education.

Knowledge of the practices, principles and procedures related to employee and benefit administration, pension programs and other benefit administrative functions in a computerized payroll environment, normally acquired through completion of specific courses such as Fundamentals of Employee Benefits Programs through a professional Certified Benefits Professional program, or a combination of directly related on-the-job training and experience.

Knowledge of Region of Waterloo benefits administration policies and procedures, the Employment Standards Act, OMERS regulations, the Income Tax Act, WRPS collective agreements and benefit provider provisions for three separate collective agreements, including benefit and pension coverage issues relating to retirees reflective of the period in time of retirement.

Knowledge of standardized office procedures and processes, filing and file management, proficient keyboarding skills, data entry, and document organization, normally acquired through two years previous general secretarial experience, including experience in letter and memo composition.

Skill in the operation of a personal computer with knowledge of software packages such as Microsoft Word and Excel, Banner, the Records Management System e-mail system and Lotus Notes. Ability to operate a fax machine, photocopier, calculator, shredder, and other related office equipment.

Ability to reference procedures of the Waterloo Regional Police Service Return to Work practices and procedures; the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board Act, Pension Benefits Act, Police Services Act, OMERS Act, Employment Standards Act, including senior officer, uniform and civilian collective agreements, letters of understanding, group benefit entitlements, RRSP legislation, and benefit coverage issues, following clear instructions to provide information, process benefit claims and consistently perform data entry functions, complying with the Records Retention Schedule and the Municipal Freedom of Information & Protection of Privacy Act.

Knowledge of WRPS organizational structure, chain of command, branch functions and related paper flow processes.

Ability to identify, resolve and troubleshoot employee benefit, contractual and computerized related discrepancies and issues.

Communication, interpersonal and customer service skills to clearly and concisely provide explanations and information to police members and their family members in sensitive situations, by probing to obtain sufficient information to explain collective agreement benefit entitlements, while mindful of privacy and access issues; to provide assistance to others; to draft routine correspondence and faxes; and to represent the police service in a positive, professional manner.

Ability to travel within the Region to make bank deposits at financial institutions in the absence of the Accounts Assistant, or to pick up and deliver documentation from the Region of Waterloo Finance Department or Insurance Carrier.

Ability to meet police security clearance requirements and to maintain confidentiality.

Ability to participate as an effective team member and to support and project values compatible with the organization.

Ability to meet testing requirements for the position.

b) Language Communication (Written & Verbal):

Ability to verbally communicate with members of the police service, including retirees and estranged family members to explain and clarify collective agreement criteria in response to requests for benefit reimbursements; and, to answer questions in regards to unique situations.

Ability to draft routine correspondence in the format of information postings, bulletins, for the signature of the Director, Finance & Administration, for distribution to police service members regarding collective agreement benefits such as dental, RRSP, medical, health insurance and related documentation. Ability to draft routine faxes.

Reads Information Postings, Routine Orders, Policies & Standing Orders, collective agreements and memorandums of agreement, letters of understanding, including policies and procedures manuals to keep the Director, Finance & Administration informed of issues that may impact how benefits are administered by the Finance Branch. Ability to proof-read benefits booklets, bargaining proposals, and contracts to ensure clarity and accuracy.