

Northwestern | HUMAN RESOURCES

Employee Matters

December 2025

Message from HR Vice President and CHRO Lorraine Goffe



Dear Colleagues,

Thank you for your ongoing partnership. Wishing you all the best during this holiday season!

Sincerely,
Lorraine

Benefits Spotlight

2026 Insurance ID Cards

If you enrolled in a UHC medical plan for 2026, you'll receive your updated ID card in mid-December mailed to your home address. The UHC ID card is used for medical and prescription coverage. Cards for the PPO, HSA Plus, and HSA Essential plans will list the employee's name and up to four covered dependents. If you have more than four dependents, the ID card is still valid for those not listed.



HMO cards will be issued for each person enrolled and will list their assigned primary care provider (PCP). If you did not choose a primary care provider for the HMO, UHC will assign one. You may update your PCP after receiving your card by calling 855-828-7715.

Once you receive your card, you can register for the [UHC app](#) to view your coverage.

Delta Dental PPO members will receive new cards in mid-December. Guardian Dental HMO members will continue to use their current cards.

Enhanced UHC Customer Support

The enhanced UHC support model remains available to faculty and staff after Open Enrollment and through early 2026. You may contact UHC directly in three different ways:

1. For general questions about medical coverage, contact UHC at **833-314-1787 for PPO and HSA plans**, and **855-828-7715 for the HMO plan**.
2. For questions about complex medical needs or ongoing treatment, you can **schedule a one-on-one meeting** with UHC to discuss how your treatment

will be covered and transition of care questions. You may also email these questions to UHC directly at northwestern@uhc.com.

3. If your provider is not in-network, see the nomination tool on the UHC benefits [website](#) to request UHC invite them to join the network.

If you are unable to obtain information from UHC via the dedicated phone line, a 1:1 consultation, and from the UHC email address (after at least 2 business days) you can email benefits@northwestern.edu for additional support. General questions should be sent to the askHR Service Center at askHR@northwestern.edu or 847-491-4700.

Prior Authorizations for 2026

Prior authorization from 2025 may carry over temporarily. Contact UHC or CVS Caremark after January 1, 2026 to verify and understand next steps for ongoing authorization.

Prudent RxProgram: Select Specialty Medications

If you elect coverage under the PPO or HMO medical plan, the PrudentRx program can help you save money on certain Specialty Drugs prescribed by your provider. PrudentRx may reach out to you directly via mail and telephone if a qualifying medication is processed with CVS Specialty. Please note, if you elected coverage under the HSA Plus or HSA Essential medical plan, you are not eligible to use the PrudentRx program.

If you are eligible for the PrudentRx program and a specialty medication you've been prescribed is included on the [PrudentRx Drug list](#), you can receive your medications free of charge (\$0) when you fill your prescription through the PrudentRx program. Otherwise, you will be responsible for 30% of the cost of your specialty medications, which will count toward your deductible and out-of-pocket maximums. If you have any questions about the PrudentRx program, or how to enroll, call 800-578-4403.

Retirement Spotlight

Regulatory Update: Retirement Plans

There is an upcoming change to retirement plan rules that will apply to 403(b) plan participants who are age 50 or older in 2026 and with 2025 FICA wages exceeding \$150,000 (Form W-2 Box 3). If both criteria apply to you, please look for more information and reminders, including from Fidelity and TIAA and on the [Benefits website](#).

The new regulation is effective January 2026 and impacts catch-up contributions, which will be required to be Roth after-tax for those who meet the criteria. Current contribution elections will continue unless changed by you, and without any action on your part, any catch-up component of your contribution will be Roth after-tax starting in 2026. Changes to contribution amounts can be made at any time.

Well-being



January is Self-Love Month

Start off the new year by practicing self-care, embracing relaxation, and prioritizing your wellbeing. Explore wellness offerings from our [EAP SupportLinc](#) such as [Mindstream](#).

Join an upcoming Care Talks session through your Northwestern [Care.com account](#). All sessions take place at noon.

- 1/8 | Emotional wellness: Bounce back stronger in the new year
- 1/14 | Financial wellness: Budgeting basics
- 1/27 | Your healthy lifestyle: Creating an annual well-being plan.

Register for the Calm App

UHC members can access the Calm Health App at **no cost**. The Calm Health App provides programs and tools to support your mental health and well-being. [Learn more](#) about this benefit and download the app.

Explore OnePass Select

NU employees participating in UHC plans (and their eligible family members) can enroll in [OnePass Select](#) and choose a fitness membership tier for accessing nationwide network of gym brands and local fitness studios.

Caregiving

Visit the [Caregiving webpage](#) to find resources and programs to support your caregiving journey. Whether you need childcare, elder care assistance, or connection with other caregivers, the University is here to help.



'Tis the Season for Backup Childcare

Life happens but Northwestern's Backup care has got you covered! Backup care, also known as drop-in care, is short-term care you access when your regular childcare arrangements fall through. The program covers faculty, staff, graduate students and postdocs, learn more by [visiting the webpage](#).

On Your Radar



Updated Staff Handbook is Now Available

The Staff Handbook is reviewed annually to ensure we continually provide you with the most current information on Northwestern's policies and programs. [View the Staff Handbook online](#) to learn about this year's updates.

W-2 Consent

As a current Northwestern employee, you can access your W-2 as soon as it's available in myHR. Consider opting out of receiving a paper copy in the mail this year to reduce your carbon footprint. You can always opt back in. Just a few clicks is all it takes, [learn more!](#)

Office for Research Launches FAQs

The Office for Research has published a [Frequently Asked Questions webpage](#) related to the University's Agreement with the Federal Government to restore research funding. The webpage will be updated in real time, as needed, so visit often.

Engagement

Deadline for CatalystNU Approaching Soon

Strengthen your dialogue skills and learn to navigate hard conversations with confidence and empathy through the Office of Community Enrichment's [CatalystNU program](#).



Throughout six interactive workshops, participants will explore leadership, emotional awareness, self-regulation in complex situations, and the art of understanding. By the end of the program, you'll be equipped to turn challenging conversations into opportunities for growth, becoming an elite conversationalist. CatalystNU is offered at no cost. [Submit your application](#) by **Friday, December 19**.

Apply for Northwestern's ANCHOR Grants Program

Community-based organizations or Northwestern students, faculty, or staff are invited to submit a Letter of Interest by **January 26, 2026** for the [ANCHOR Grants](#) (Advancing Neighborhood & Community Health, Opportunity & Resilience) program. The ANCHOR Grants program offered by the University's Office of [Neighborhood and Community Relations](#) supports projects in Evanston and Chicago that address longstanding social, economic, and structural barriers through policy innovations, program development, or research-driven initiatives. To learn more, [view the on-demand Info Session](#) recording.

The Women's Center Turns 40 in 2026!

The [Women's Center](#) offers dynamic programming and events for faculty, staff, and students, across three spaces on both campuses. Stay updated on resources, events and their 40th anniversary celebration by [signing up](#) for their monthly newsletter.

Learn & Grow



Disconnect to Reconnect Stronger in the New Year

Winter recess is a wonderful time to recharge, but truly disconnecting can be harder than it sounds. Disconnecting helps you reduce stress, boost creativity, and come back refreshed in the New Year.

Need a little help? Check out LinkedIn Learning's video, [Taking Me Time](#) for a moment of Zen, and explore their [Chill Anywhere](#) series.

Inside HR



Happy Holidays and a joyous New Year from your Human Resources colleagues!

The mission of [Human Resources](#) is to promote an innovative and inclusive workplace where all individuals thrive and collaborate to advance our Northwestern directions.

Northwestern University



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