

Northwestern | HUMAN RESOURCES

Your Benefits in Focus

August 2026

Welcome to *Your Benefits in Focus*. We heard from many in the community the need for more benefits information. This new vehicle for benefits-eligible faculty and staff is designed to provide timely and practical information, educational resources, and upcoming events related to your health, retirement, caregiving and well-being benefits.

Don't have time to explore right now? No worries! We'll post this resource to the [Benefits Updates & Announcements webpage](#); bookmark the page so you can come back to it on your own time.

Thank you,

Dawn Kalamaras
Director of Benefits

Important Coverage Updates

Coming October 2026: Pharmacy Formulary Updates

Pharmacy formularies may be updated throughout the year to reflect new medications, new clinical evidence, or changes in pricing. The CVS Caremark formulary, reflecting changes effective October 1, 2026, is now available for you to [check your medications](#).



Key changes include GLP-1 weight-loss formulary updates. Zepbound will be added to the formulary as a preferred drug; Foundayo will be designated as a preferred drug. [Learn more about a Prescription Formulary](#). We will send you periodic reminders throughout the year to check for updates of the formulary.



Mark Your Calendars for Open Enrollment!

Open Enrollment begins on Monday, October 26 and closes on Friday, November 13. Stay tuned for communications coming in September.

Events

9/22 Virtual Well-being & Caregiving Overview

Join Well-being Program Manager Micaela Moran on September 22 at noon to learn about Northwestern's well-being and caregiving programs and resources. [Save your seat.](#)

9/29 Understanding Your HSA Investments Webinar

The Benefits team will co-host a webinar on September 29 at noon with our vendor partner Inspira Financial. Inspira administers the Health Savings Account (HSA) for Northwestern. Join this virtual session to learn about the HSA and how you can get started investing with as little as \$1,000. [Register for the webinar.](#)

Benefits Check-up: Review and Update Your Coverage

Check Your Retirement Contributions to Get Northwestern's Full Match



Employees eligible for the Retirement Plan who choose to contribute up to **5% will have their contributions matched dollar for dollar** by Northwestern during each pay period.

You can [access, review, and update your contribution amounts](#) at any time to ensure it matches what you intended.

In 2026, faculty and staff can contribute up to \$24,500 to Northwestern's 403(b) plans, and those age 50 and older are allowed additional catch-up contributions.

See the [Benefits website](#) for more information on the IRS annual dollar limits and Roth catch-up requirement for high earners. For those who want to reach the IRS limits in 2026, a [calculator is available](#) to help you determine what your contribution should be to the Voluntary Savings Plan to reach your annual limit.

Are Your Life Insurance Beneficiaries Up to Date?

Please take some time to review your current life insurance beneficiaries and other insurance enrollments and update as needed. **Beneficiaries can be updated at any time** during the year through [myHR](#) self service.

If you do not change this beneficiary designation, it will be noted that you have agreed this beneficiary designation is correct and that any other prior beneficiary designation, whether written or electronic, is revoked. Use this [guide](#) to review and update your life insurance beneficiaries.

Make the Most of Your UnitedHealthcare Benefits

Employees enrolled in the faculty and staff UHC plans (PPO, HSA Plus and Essential, and HMO) have several health and well-being benefits available and accessible through their account on the [myUHC website](#) or in the [UHC app](#).

- [Teladoc Health](#) for diabetes management & prevention and hypertension management at no cost.
- [Fertility Solutions](#) for guidance around benefits and resources.
- [Quit for Life](#)® smoking cessation program at no cost.
- [One Pass Select](#) Fitness Membership discounted access to thousands of gyms, digital fitness classes, and more.
- [Calm Health App](#) provides resources to support your mental health & well-being at no cost.

Employees enrolled in the faculty and staff UHC PPO, HSA Plus and HSA Essential plans also have access to the:

- [Hinge Health app](#) for joint and muscle pain support at no cost.
- [Maven Maternity](#) virtual healthcare provider for access to 24/7 provider support for maternity and postpartum needs at no cost.

In Case You Missed It!

Considering Tuition Benefits?

Review the [tuition benefits overview](#) to learn about eligibility, application deadlines, and what happens after you submit your application. Learn more on the [Tuition Benefits webpage](#).

Your Benefits Explained

We've been publishing a monthly column in *Employee Matters* which takes a deeper dive into common benefits-related questions. Check out the first three topics to help you make the most of your benefits.

- [Preventive Exams 101](#)
- [Understanding Your Prescription Drug Formulary](#)
- [Understanding Benefit Change Requests after a Qualifying Life Event](#)

In Need of Childcare and Caregiving Benefits?



Support for Childcare and Caregiving

Northwestern provides a broad range of resources and support to help faculty and staff with childcare and caregiving needs, partnering with a variety of childcare centers and private schools. Learn about tuition discounts for Northwestern full-time benefits eligible staff and faculty that listed on the [Finding childcare webpage](#).

Explore the [Caregiving Resources website](#) for an overview, or click the links below to learn about a specific resource.

[Paying for
Childcare](#)

[Childcare Fee
Assistance](#)

[Adoption
Assistance](#)

[Lactation
Support](#)

[Parenting
Networks](#)

Don't forget about the [Northwestern Sitters and Tutors Network](#) for students, faculty, and staff looking for sitting and tutoring services within the NU community.

Senior & Adult Caregiving Resources to Support You

Explore Resources for Your Caregiving Needs

Northwestern offers resources to help support faculty, staff, and postdocs caring for senior and adult loved ones.



- Northwestern Senior Care Planning benefit provides free phone consultations with Senior & Adult Care Advisors to provide in-depth consultations, comprehensive actions plans, and referrals to vetted providers across the U.S. (e.g., at home care services, elder law attorneys, transportation, etc.).
- Senior Care Advisors host a monthly caregiver support group for Northwestern on a variety of topics.
- Northwestern provides up to 10 subsidized backup care days per year through Care.com, for a combination of child and/or adult care needs.

Visit the [Senior & Adult Care webpage](#) to learn more about these resources.

Well-Being Resources to Rest & Reset



August is Wellness Month!

[Wellness Month](#) serves as a reminder that your well-being is a priority, today, this month, and throughout the year. Review the benefit resources available to support you and your family and carve out time for self-care and wellness practices in preparation for the new academic year.

Don't Forget About the Virtual Well-being & Caregiving Overview

Join Well-being Program Manager Micaela Moran on **September 22 at noon** to learn about Northwestern's well-being and caregiving programs and resources. [Save your seat.](#)

Employee Assistance Program is Here When You Need it

Northwestern benefits-eligible faculty, staff, and their household members have access to a variety of services via the Employee Assistance Program. Visit the [EAP benefits webpage](#) for an overview. Check out our EAP's provider Supportline's upcoming webinars curated specifically for Northwestern, all happening at noon CDT.

- September 2: [The Benefits of Mindfulness](#)
- September 15: [Self-Care Strategies for Emotional Well-being](#)
- September 24: [Practical Strategies to Help Deal with Financial Stress](#)

Tell Us About Your 2026 Benefits Experience

We continue collecting feedback on your experiences with NU's medical, prescription drug (Rx), and dental plans in 2026. Your feedback helps us understand your experience and identify opportunities for greater communication and support. Send your comments to benefits@northwestern.edu. Please note, this email should only be used to submit feedback.

Have a benefits-related question?
Connect with askHR at askHR@northwestern.edu or 847-491-4700 for support.

Northwestern University



Northwestern University | Human Resources | 1800 Sherman Ave | Evanston, IL 60201 US

[Unsubscribe](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)



Try email marketing for free today!