IPBC
Intergovernmental
Personnel Benefit
Cooperative

The premier health benefit option for Illinois local governments

Communication Guidelines

I. Purpose

The IPBC values good communication with its membership and believes it is a critical element in creating a successful organization. Communication encompasses both "official" communication (announcements, newsletters, memos etc.) and "unofficial" communication that occurs between IPBC members, IPBC staff and the IPBC Service Team Member.

These guidelines outline the IPBC communication framework, and the roles of IPBC members, IPBC staff and the IPBC Service Team Member in establishing effective communications within the IPBC.

II. Objective

The IPBC has the objective of enhancing and streamlining communications to its membership. This involves ensuring that information is disseminated to the membership is relevant, easy to access, accurate and appropriate in both content and quantity. The IPBC will continue to develop and trial new communication platforms, channels, and tools to improve information sharing with its membership.

III. Communication Channels

a. IPBC Newsletter – the IPBC will publish a monthly newsletter to update the membership on activities related to the IPBC. Topics will include items such as IPBC meeting updates, carrier updates, and benefits administration provider updates. The creation of the newsletter will be a joint effort between IPBC staff and the IPBC Service Team Member. It will be distributed to the IPBC membership via e-mail and placed on the IPBC website by IPBC staff.

b. IPBC Committee/Board Meetings – Governance decisions for the IPBC are made at the Executive Board and Board of Director meetings. Recommendations for action are made by the Committees. All of the meetings are open to the general membership. Meetings include, but are not limited to: Board of Directors, Executive Board, Finance Committee, Operations Committee, and Membership Development Committee.

c. IPBC All Member Meetings – All member updates meetings are held for the membership to discuss the activities of the IPBC. All of the meetings are open to the general membership.

d. IPBC Website – the IPBC Website contains items such as: meeting calendar and packets, news and announcements, financial reports, and training information. The website is updated on an as needed basis and is maintained by IPBC staff.

e. PlanSource Platform – this site is used by IPBC members for benefits eligibility and for billing.

f. Secure Emails – Secure emails to maintain HIPAA compliance. It allows information sharing between each individual IPBC member and the IPBC Service Team Member.

g. IPBC Membership E-mails – Topics that require a more urgent distribution will be sent via e-mail to all IPBC Delegates and Alternates. In order to not overwhelm the membership with e-mails, IPBC staff and the IPBC Service Team Member will try to limit these communications to items that cannot wait for the distribution of the monthly newsletter.

h. IPBC Distribution List E-mails – IPBC staff maintains distribution lists. IPBC staff and the IPBC Service Team Member may send e-mails to those distribution lists on an as needed basis.

i. Individual Member E-mails – IPBC staff and the IPBC Service Team Member may send e-mails to individual members on an as needed basis.

j. IPBC Membership Surveys – IPBC staff and the IPBC Service Team Member may occasionally develop membership surveys in order to gather information about member's practices or gauge the membership's opinion on different topics. Surveys will be developed on an as-needed basis by IPBC staff and the IPBC Service Team Member and sent to the appropriate distribution list(s).

IV. Distribution Lists

IPBC staff will maintain the following distribution lists:

a. IPBC Board of Directors – All Delegates and Alternates of IPBC Members.

b. All IPBC Contacts – All designated contacts of IPBC members.

c. IPBC Committees – All members of IPBC Committees (currently: Membership, Finance Committee, Operations Committee and Executive Board).

V. Expectations & Responsibilities

a. IPBC Membership

As an IPBC Member, you can expect to be and should:

i. Provided with relevant information and kept informed of relevant developments in a timely manner;
ii. Given the opportunity to raise questions or issues of concern relevant to your membership within the IPBC. Your questions should be treated seriously and respectfully and should be answered within a reasonable time period.
iii. Read relevant IPBC correspondence including e-mails, notices etc.;
iv. Attend applicable meetings (sub-pool, Board of Director, member-wide);
v. Respond to surveys and general membership questions in a timely manner.

b. IPBC Staff Should:

i. Maintain IPBC E-mail distribution lists;
ii. Develop the monthly newsletter and distribute to the IPBC membership;
iii. Maintain the IPBC website;
iv. Develop annual meeting schedule;
v. Prepare meeting packets and distribute to applicable distribution lists;
vi. Respond to all membership questions in a timely manner.

c. IPBC Service Team Member Should:

i. Provide content for the monthly newsletter in a timely manner;
ii. Provide content for the IPBC website;
iii. Attend all applicable meetings;
iv. Provide content for the meeting packets in a timely manner;
v. Respond to all membership questions in a timely manner

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Communication Guidelines Matrix

Channel	Purpose	Audience	Intended Result	Frequency
Newsletter	To inform the membership on topics/issues related to the IPBC	All IPBC members contacts	To keep members up to date on IPBC information	Monthly/as needed
IPBC Committee/Board Meetings	To make governing decisions for the IPBC. Committees make recommendations for approval by the Executive Board or Board of Directors	Members of the various committees and overall IPBC membership	To effectively govern the IPBC	Annual Meeting schedule
IPBC All Member Meetings	To review and discuss IPBC activities	IPBC membership	To keep membership informed of IPBC activities	As needed (at least 2x/year)
Website	To provide a resource for members to gather the information they need related to their membership within the IPBC	Staff of IPBC members that have a login for the IPBC website	To keep members up to date on IPBC information	Updated on an as-needed basis (usually weekly)
Benefit Eligibility and Billing - PlanSource	To manage employee benefit eligibility and for IPBC billing	IPBC membership, IPBC Staff and Service Team	To maintain eligibility and billing	As needed
Secure Emails	HIPAA compliance	IPBC members and Service Team Member	To allow HIPAA compliant information sharing	As needed basis

Channel	Purpose	Audience	Intended Result	Frequency
All Member E-mails	To inform the membership on topics and issues related to the IPBC that cannot wait until the distribution of the next monthly newsletter	All Delegates and Alternates of all IPBC members	To keep members up to date on important IPBC information	As needed basis
Distribution List E-mails	To inform members of that particular distribution list on topics/issues related to the IPBC (i.e., meeting packets, meeting topics)	Decided by needed list	To inform the members of the particular distribution list on items related to that group	As needed basis
Individual E-mails	To discuss topics/issues with individual members (that do not relate to the entire IPBC membership)	Appropriate member staff	To discuss issues related to that particular IPBC member	As needed basis
Surveys	To gather information about IPBC member practices or to gather the membership's opinion on a certain topic	All Delegates and Alternates of all IPBC members	To gather information needed for policy development or direction for the IPBC committees	As needed basis