

October - December 2020



COUNTY OF VENTURA HUMAN RESOURCES

Special Announcements & Resources



OPEN ENROLLMENT IS JUST AROUND THE CORNER!

NOVEMBER 1 - 30, 2020

While health care costs continue to rise each year, the County is dedicated to maintaining comprehensive, yet reasonably priced full-family health plan choices and coverage for employees and their families. We are pleased to announce the plan offerings for Plan Year 2021.

- **Ventura County Health Care Plan** will continue to be offered, with no changes to plan design or co-payments.
- **Blue Shield** plans (Access+ HMO, Trio ACO HMO, and High-Deductible PPO) will continue to be offered with no changes to plan design or co-payments.
- **MetLife Dental** will be increasing the in-network maximum annual benefit to \$2,500.00.
- **MES Vision** plan will continue to be offered and will have no plan design or copayment changes.
- **Flexible Spending Accounts (FSAs)** will continue to be administered by Chard Snyder. All current and new participants who wish to elect an FSA for Plan Year 2021 **must make a new enrollment election**. The annual maximum contribution limit for a Health Care FSA is increasing to \$2,749.92 (\$114.58 semi-monthly) and the annual maximum for Dependent Care FSA will remain at \$4,999.92 (\$208.33 semi-monthly) with 24 contribution periods.
- **Health Savings Accounts (HSAs)** will continue to be administered by HealthEquity. Only employees who are enrolled in the Blue Shield High-Deductible PPO are eligible for these accounts. The annual maximum contribution limits for HSAs will be \$3,600.00 (\$150.00 semi-monthly) for self-only coverage and \$7,200.00 (\$300.00 semi-monthly) for family coverage. For employees 55 years and older, the annual maximum contribution limits increase to \$4,599.84 (\$191.66 semi-monthly) for self-only coverage and \$8,199.84 (\$341.66 semi-monthly) for family coverage.

OPEN ENROLLMENT RESOURCES

Open enrollment is your annual opportunity to review, enroll, or make changes to your medical, dental, and vision insurance plans, as well as flexible spending and health savings accounts, and to add or drop coverage for eligible dependents. Below are some resources to assist you in making these decisions.

- Review your **Personal Enrollment Worksheet** and **Benefits Bulletin**. These items will be mailed to you in late October.
- Review the updated **Benefits Plan Handbook**. The online handbook will be available in mid-October on the [County Employee Benefits website](#).



Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Corner

The Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI) Task Force has exciting changes! The Task Force recently adopted the word Equity in its title because of the word's significance to its mission. Equity ensures that everyone has access to the same opportunities and information. It also



recognizes that advantages and barriers exist that can make it harder for everyone to start from the same place. Making a commitment to address the imbalance is critical to the vision of the Task Force.

Here is a summary of how the DE&I Task Force is expanding its membership and scope to meet its mission.

- We have grown in membership! In the last few months the membership has grown 40% to be 20 members.
- Agencies will all soon have their own unique DEI Liaison to help support DEI initiatives in each agency. More information will be coming on the selection process for this role in each Agency.
- A new Advisory Council has been created to advise the Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Task Force and the County Diversity and Inclusion Officer on issues related to fostering and promoting equity, diversity, inclusion and equality. It will have representation across all levels of the organization. The Council will identify areas of interest for exploration and study including the technical, organizational, social, economic, and environmental aspects of matters being addressed by the Task Force. The Advisory Council will consist of 20 members, not including the Chair and Vice Chair who are Task Force Members. More information will be coming on the selection process for this Council.
- A new subcommittee has been formed to closely examine issues of race, culture, and systemic racism. This work is integral to the mission of the larger Task Force in order to create awareness and programs in our County's commitment to inclusion. This subcommittee will be launching a 12-month learning program with quarterly topics and keynote speakers followed by smaller learning circles to deepen the discussions.
- Topic examples in this series include:
Unconscious/Implicit Bias, Systemic Racism, Privileges, and What Do We Do Now?

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Facilitate and provide safe and structured environments for honest, open, and transparent discussions around the issues of race, culture, systemic racism, diversity, and inclusion.
- Provide meaningful training and education regarding race, culture, racism, diversity, equity, and inclusion to all County employees.
- Examine County policies, practices, and systems to ensure they are free from the impacts of racism, bias, and discrimination.
- Consult with subject matter experts in the areas of decision-making, long-term strategic planning, and goal setting.
- Develop a county-wide plan for implementation in all departments. Review and evaluate the implementation based on the intended goals and confirm that the results embrace diversity, equity, and inclusion.

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

It's Been a Long Haul, EAP is Still Here for You!

We have been living in the COVID-19 era for over six months now. Even if at first we were able to rise to the occasion and figure out how to live in this new normal, many of us may now find our mental and physical strength waning.

It's a good time to check yourself for symptoms of depression, which can include: persistent feeling of sadness, loss of interest in pleasurable activities, changes in sleep, appetite, energy level, concentration, and decrease in self-esteem. It is easy to feel overwhelmed by the pandemic, even if you and your family are relatively healthy and financially stable, and even more so if you have experienced significant hardship during this time. And it's understandable if your coping strategies have slumped under the weight of illness or other stress. It is a lot to ask of ourselves to keep up the new home and work routines for this long.



It is easier than ever for County employees to access the [Employee Assistance Program](#) (EAP) services! EAP provides confidential counseling by licensed professionals for County employees and dependent family members. Sessions can be done by phone and video. There is some availability for in-person appointments. Please call **805-654-4327** for more information or to schedule an appointment.

Additionally, please check the [EAP website](#) for a library of meditation videos that were created to help you cope during COVID-19.

Helpful Tips for County Employees

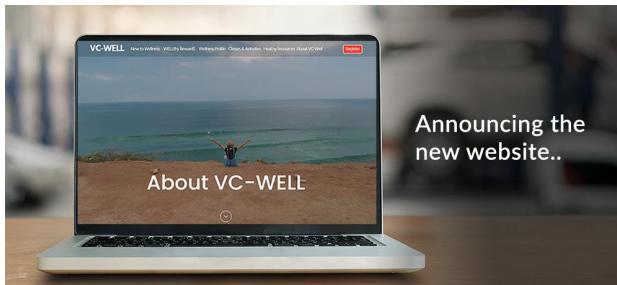
Have you ever seen protesters at the County



1. If the entrance is blocked, look for an alternate place to access the facility.
2. If you cannot locate an alternative entrance, contact security at **805-654-2931** for assistance.
3. During the COVID-19 pandemic, maintain social distancing if you encounter a group of protesters.
4. Do not engage in any physical interactions with protesters.
5. Do not engage protesters with words of encouragement, arguments, or attempts at verbal persuasion. Such engagement could exacerbate the situation and could be construed as engaging in political activity while on work time, a violation of County policy.

Government Center? The U.S. Constitution grants the right to peacefully protest and express opinions on social issues. County facilities are often common sites for people to gather and stage protests. As a County employee, you may need to access a County facility workplace during a protest. Please keep these things in mind if you encounter a protest at a County facility.

6. If assistance is needed, search out or call for security at **805-654-2931**.
7. Always be aware of your surroundings, and personal safety. Contact security at **805-654-2931** with questions or concerns about protesters at County facilities.
8. In accordance with the U.S. Constitution and County of Ventura values, the County will protect the right to peacefully protest. However, the work environment and employee safety are also important, and the County will make every effort to maintain safety at County facilities.
9. The County's security teams have plans for coping with sensitive issues while acknowledging freedom of expression. Visit the General Services Agency website for more information on the [County's security services and safety at work](#).



Announcing the new website...

VC-WELL Debuts New Website

Take a look at [VC-WELL's new website!](#)

VC-WELL, the County's wellness program for employees, recently went through a website remodel. The website was upgraded to be more informative, user friendly, and to provide more resources to our workforce. VC-WELL's registration web page and secured employee site will also be upgraded in early 2021, and include a discounted storefront for health-related merchandise.



24-Hour Employee Misconduct Hotline
1.800.684.6523

Complaint Resolution and Misconduct Hotline

We believe employees should be able to voice concerns about tough workplace issues like harassment, discrimination, or discourteous workplace behavior. Employees are encouraged to first discuss concerns with their supervisors, then the HR representative in your department/agency. If resolution is still not reached, more information and online reporting are available on the [County HR website](#).

Calls and online reporting can be anonymous so there is no fear of retaliation. Human Resources has made a commitment to compliance and your participation is essential.

Learning & Organizational Development

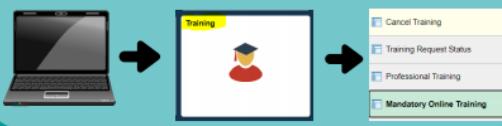
HOT OFF THE PRESS!



Launch your Mandatory Training from VCHRP Self-Service!

- Developing Cultural Competency & Inclusion
- Discrimination Prevention
- Workplace Security

VCHRP/Training/Mandatory Online Training



Let us know if you need assistance.
Training.Administration@ventura.org

HOT OFF THE PRESS!



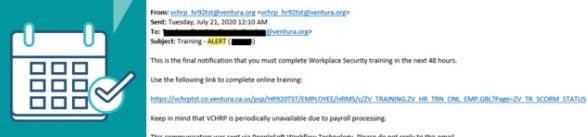
VCHRP will now remind you as you approach the due date for County of Ventura mandatory training!

VCHRP will send you email alerts 90, 60, 30, 14, and 2 days prior to your training due date with a link to take the training.

Benefits:

- Training is online in VCHRP
- Certificate generates in VCHRP
- Training record is updated in VCHRP

Sample of VCHRP email alert



Risk Management - Work Safe in the New Normal



OSHA'S COVID-19 TIP OF THE DAY

Did you know OSHA sends out a COVID-19 Tip of the Day email? This subscription is useful to keep abreast of COVID-19 related topics. Consider subscribing to [OSHA's COVID-19 Tip-of-the-Day](#). Previous Tip-of-the-Day topics include:

- [Remind workers of the importance of regular hand washing.](#)
- [Wear disposable gloves while disinfecting vehicle interiors.](#)
- [Train workers on safely wearing cloth face coverings.](#)
- [Move workstations farther apart.](#)
- [Increase the distance between work spaces.](#)
- [Remind employees to self-evaluate for COVID-19 signs/symptoms before coming to work.](#)
- [Find answers to your top COVID-19 questions.](#)

These topics can be incorporated into weekly check-in meetings or monthly staff meetings. Think about using one of the topics as an icebreaker to engage your co-workers or use it as an opportunity to initiate valid discussions among your employees.

Deferred Compensation - Your Workplace Savings

VENTURA COUNTY
401(K) SHARED SAVINGS
& SECTION 457 PLANS



Help With Managing Life's Uncertainties

There's no debating - this is a challenging time.

With COVID-19 reshaping everything from how we live to how we work, you may be looking for help with how to make informed decisions.

Visit [Fidelity's COVID-19 Well Being website](#) for tips on how to manage your savings in the volatile market, ideas to keep your budget on track, and thoughts on how to remain calm during these changing times.

Fidelity continues to support you with information, tools and resources to manage your retirement savings. Let us know how we can help.

Ayuda para gestionar las incertidumbres de la vida

No hay debate, este es un momento desafiante.

Con COVID-19 remodelando todo, desde cómo vivimos hasta cómo trabajamos, es posible que esté buscando ayuda para tomar decisiones informadas.

Visite el [sitio web de Fidelity de COVID-19](#) para obtener consejos sobre cómo administrar el mercado volátil, ideas para mantener su presupuesto en marcha y pensamientos sobre cómo mantener la calma durante estos tiempos cambiantes.

Fidelity continúa apoyándolo con información, herramientas y recursos para administrar sus ahorros de jubilación. Háganos saber cómo le podemos ayudar.



Investing involves risk, including risk of loss.
Invertir implica riesgo, incluido el riesgo de pérdida
Fidelity Brokerage Services LLC, Member NYSE, [SIPC](#), 900 Salem Street, Smithfield, RI 02917
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Total Rewards



Total Reward 2019

Total Compensation Statement on Demand

Each year, you receive a personalized Total Compensation Statement that details the value of the compensation and benefits that you receive as a County employee. This statement highlights not only your cash compensation, but also the County's contributions to your benefits including healthcare benefits, retirement, 401(k) matching contributions, and paid time off.

Now you can view and print your Total Compensation statement any time you need through VCHRP by selecting the Total



"Retirement 101: What You Need to Know" Workshop Goes Virtual

Current restrictions due to COVID-19, have suspended the in-person quarterly comprehensive pre-retirement workshop. This workshop provides an overview of retirement topics and resources available, such as:

- 401(k) and 457 Plan options
- Retirement income planning
- County medical, dental, and vision plan options after you leave County service
- An explanation of the benefits available through VCERA
- The mental and emotional aspects of retirement that should be

Rewards tile on the employee self-service screen. **Beginning with your 2019 statement, these statements will be archived so you can compare your annual total compensation to prior years.** Be sure to check out this convenient way to access a valuable summary of the benefits you receive and your total compensation.

considered

The content normally offered through the in-person retirement workshop has been moved to a recorded webinar format. The on-demand access to this important information will be available for viewing in early October. Watch your County e-mail for the announcement and link. Questions or comments can be directed to the [Deferred Compensation Program](#) or by calling 805/654-2620.

VC-WELL (Wellness Program)

WELLthy Reward\$ 2020

The 2020 WELLthy Reward\$ incentive program ended on August 31, 2020, with 800+ employees earning cash awards ranging from \$100 - \$300. That's a 12% increase in participation from last year!

Did you earn your cash award? If you missed out, VC-WELL plans to renew the program again in January 2021. Visit our web page to learn more about the [WELLthy Reward\\$](#) program.



Jump start your WELLthy Reward\$ points total for 2021 by completing the **“FALLtober” WELLtrek Challenge** from 10/19/20 – 12/13/20. Everyone who achieves 280,000 steps will earn 20 points!

If you have a WELLtrek (Walker Tracker) account, you will automatically be registered. Click [HERE](#) to create an account and get started on the FALLtober challenge!

VC-WELL EVENT UPDATES

Due to COVID-19, our annual fall softball tournament was canceled.

Given the uncertainty of the pandemic, it is yet to be determined if the **employee bowling tournament**, scheduled in February, will still take place. We will send out a registration email if the tournament proceeds.



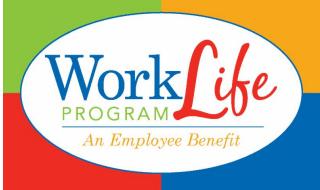
VC-WELL Has Gone Virtual!

Even before COVID-19, VC-WELL began offering programs virtually in 2019 to increase access to our programs for our entire workforce. In addition to our WELLtrek virtual physical activity tracking platform, we've added live online meditation sessions, yoga video sessions, virtual health coaching sessions, and Weight Watchers digital



program via reimbursement. We've been piloting multiple vendor apps with various group physical activity content, and hope to provide a virtual group physical activity option later this year or early 2021.

Keeping Your Balance with WorkLife



The WorkLife Program provides resources to help you care for the most important people in your life! Visit the [WorkLife webpage](#) to access resources on child care discounts, positive parenting, lactation accommodation, elder care support group, housing benefits, and new baby resources.

County of Ventura • CEO/Human Resources • WorkLife Program

Child Care/Preschool Discount Program



Child Care/Preschool Discount List

Over 70 licensed child care/preschool programs in Ventura County offer discounts to County employees. Click above on the list cover to view.



Get kids to **LISTEN** without Nagging, Reminding, or **YELLING**.

You knew parenting wouldn't be easy, but no one told you it would be like this! If you are tired of the exhausting power struggles, the meltdowns, the fights and the guilt, now is the time to make a change! Learn how to break the cycle and be the parent you have always wanted to be!

Watch a [free 60-minute webinar](#), exclusive for County employees, that gives you some tools to reduce the yelling and nagging. You will discover an exciting benefit (available to regular County employees) that will help you feel more confident and successful as a parent.



Elder Care Support Group

Caring for an elderly or sick relative can be stressful, whether your loved one lives with you, is across town, or out-of-state. It is important for caregivers to nourish their spirit, and take care of their physical and mental health. Join us for support and resources at the [Elder Care Support Group](#) on the last Wednesday of each month (January-October).

October 28 ~ Noon - 1:00 pm

Support Group meeting will take place by Zoom. Email the [WorkLife Program](#) to request a Zoom reservation. A limited number of reservations are available.



Your Path to Home Ownership!

Thinking about Buying a Home?
Coastal Housing Partnership
Can Help Get You Started!

Don't let lack of information about the home buying process be an obstacle to home ownership. Attend one of our monthly 60-minute webinars to get you started on your path to home ownership! You'll learn about:

- Becoming a more informed buyer
- Navigating the home buying and lending process
- Buying a home with less than a 20% down payment
- Selecting members of your home buying team
- Saving money on your closing costs

These webinars are free for employees of Coastal Housing Partnership member employers.

Webinar dates for the remainder of 2020 are:

- **October 6 Noon-1:00 pm**
- **October 14 6:00-7:00 pm**
- **November 17 Noon-1:00 pm**

Click [**HERE**](#) to register for an upcoming webinar.

If you can't attend one of the webinars, you are encouraged to view our [**Step-by-Step Home Buying Education**](#) to get the information you need to take your next step toward home ownership.

The Coastal Housing Partnership's online home buying education tools are designed to take the confusion out of the process for you – and help you take it one step at a time.