

Office of Human Resources, Benefits Department



HDHP 101

Can a High Deductible Health Plan (HDHP) work for you?

Presented by the Benefits Department

3/17/2026 Noon – 1 p.m.

**Please be aware that the benefits outlined in these presentations are subject to change. The information provided is accurate as of the date of this presentation and is intended for general guidance only. Any future modifications or updates to benefits will be communicated as they occur. Staff, Faculty, and Librarians under Collective Bargaining Agreements are governed according to the terms of the agreements.*

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For Benefits Customer Support following the presentation:

[Submit a question or comment](#)

Phone: 833-852-2210 (Phone Hours: Monday - Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.)

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UPMC Health Plan






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UPMC Health Plan

Medical Coverage - Plan Design

UPMC Health Plan · Plan Year July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2026

	Panther Basic Qualified High-Deductible Health Plan (QHDHP) HSA Eligible
Plan Type	HDHP
Network	UPMC Health Plan Network (in & out of network)
PCP Required?	Not Required
Out-of-Network Coverage	Out-of-network coverage available (higher cost-share)
Preventative Care	Covered at 100% (In-network) <i>Deductible applies if done out-of-network</i>
Cost Structure	Deductible + coinsurance apply (no copays)
Deductible	Higher in-network & out-of-network deductibles — must be met before most benefits pay
Health Savings Account (HSA)	 Eligible – limits vary pending employment role type. 55+ can contribute an extra \$1,000
Specialist Referral	Not required
Prescription Drugs	Copayments apply only after deductible is met
Virtual Care	24/7 Virtual Visits: Coinsurance Applies after deductible
Chiropractic	Covered — 25 visit limit/ plan year
 Ideal For:	Employees who use fewer medical services, who want lower premiums and want to save pre-tax dollars in an HSA
	 Rx copays only apply after deductible is met

Plan details are updated annual for July 1

Medical Coverage - Plan Comparison

UPMC Health Plan · Plan Year July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2026

Plan designs (including HSA limits) and premiums vary based on union status and CBA. To find your information, please visit our website and review the plans based on your role type.

hr.pitt.edu/current-employees/benefits/health-and-wellness

UNION OF PITT FACULTY	>
NON-REPRESENTED EMPLOYEES & REPRESENTED EMPLOYEES WITH A CURRENT CONTRACT	>
UNION-REPRESENTED EMPLOYEES IN ACTIVE CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS (COVERED UNDER STATUS QUO)	>



- Plans available to you:

- Medical
- Dental
- Vision
- Life Insurance and AD&D
- Flexible Spending Accounts
 - Health Care
 - Dependent Care
 - Qualified Commuter Expense
- COBRA Coverage
- Domestic Partner Benefits

Medical Plan Rates and Descriptions

[View the current year's plan details and rates](#) (July 1, 2025 - June 30, 2026)

Plan details are updated annual for July 1

High-deductible health plan (HDHP)

What is a high-deductible health plan (HDHP)?

- A high-deductible health plan offers lower monthly premiums and gives you access to a Health Savings Account (HSA) – a tax-advantaged way to save money on healthcare expenses.
- With an HDHP, you pay less each month for coverage, which can reduce your overall yearly premium costs.
- You'll pay more *only when you need care* – which can mean significant savings for many individuals.



How does a high-deductible health plan (HDHP) work?

A high-deductible health plan (HDHP) is designed to lower your monthly premium costs, keeping more money in your paycheck, while giving you the flexibility to save for and manage your health care spending on your own terms with the use of a Health Savings Account (HSA).

Network considerations

- Premium Network
- Both in and out of network coverage
- Extended network coverage outside of our service area available

Other considerations

- No referrals needed; you can schedule appointments with specialists directly
- With an HDHP, you will receive instructions on how to set up and manage your Health Savings Account (HSA)

What are the costs & benefits of a high-deductible health plan (HDHP)?

Cost considerations and opportunities for savings

- A cost-effective plan ***with significantly lower premiums*** than other plan options
- Higher deductible and out-of-pocket costs, but ***potential for meaningful annual savings***
- While out-of-pocket costs could be higher, many preventive services covered at no cost and ***you could save money if you typically use fewer medical services***
- No copays

You can have a Health Savings Account (HSA)

- HDHP is the only plan type where you can have the tax-advantaged savings of an HSA
- With an HSA, you can save on health care costs now as well as invest your HSA funds to earn tax-free interest for eligible medical expenses in retirement
- An HSA offers significant benefits including:
 - “Triple” tax advantages
 - Portable funds
 - Investment option

Is a high-deductible health plan (HDHP) right for you?

An HDHP could be right for you if:

- You're generally in good health, seek preventive care, and typically don't utilize the plan for many high-cost services
- You want the lowest monthly premiums
- You can comfortably manage out-of-pocket costs in case of medical emergencies
- You want tax-advantaged savings of an HSA



If I have dependents that I'm covering on my policy, or if I have chronic conditions and/or am not generally healthy, could an HDHP still work for me?

- If you can anticipate and comfortably manage your out-of-pocket costs, you could reallocate monthly premium savings to your care
- You'll also then have the tax-advantaged savings of an HSA to save on long-term health care needs

Health Savings Account (HSA)

What is a Health Savings Account (HSA)?

- “A **health savings account (HSA)** is a tax-advantaged account that can be used to pay for out-of-pocket health care expenses
 - You can use HSA funds now for eligible medical expenses
 - You can invest your funds once you reach a certain limit
 - Pre-tax HSA contributions can be deducted from your paycheck
 - HSA funds can be used for:
 - Deductibles and coinsurance
 - Prescriptions
 - Out-of-pocket dental and vision expenses
 - Eligible over-the-counter expenses
 - Future Medicare expenses (such as Medicare A,B, & D premiums)
- HSAs can only be linked with a high-deductible health plan (HDHP)
- HSAs offer **triple tax savings**:
 - Contributions to your HSA reduce your taxable income
 - Income earned on HSA investment funds is tax-free
 - Distributions for eligible medical expenses is tax free



What are the advantages of a Health Savings Account (HSA)

Having an HSA as part of the HDHP option has a number of benefits to you:



- Contributions you make to the HSA are pre-tax (reducing taxable income)
 - Distributions for eligible medical expenses are tax-free
- Post-tax HSA contributions (outside of payroll) reduce your taxable income



Easily pay for qualified expenses with a debit card (you do not need to upload a verification receipt; receipts should be kept in case of audit).



- HSA funds do not expire and are portable; they carry over from year to year
- The funds remain in your account even if you change employers



- HSA funds can be invested once you reach a certain level of savings
- Invested funds earn tax-free interest.

How does a Health Savings Account (HSA) work?

How do I set up my HSA account?

- Prior to the plan year beginning, you'll receive a letter with your debit card and account opening instructions.

How do I make contributions, request distributions, and invest funds?

- Contributions* can be made by payroll deduction, check or bank transfer
- Distributions/reimbursements can be made online through the UPMC Consumer *Advantage* portal
- Once you reach the amount necessary limit, you can set-up your investment account through the Consumer *Advantage* portal.

How can I manage my account?

- You have 24/7 access to manage your account through the UPMC Consumer *Advantage* portal (link from the member site)
- Review account information, access funds, review your investments, and more.
- Your HSA funds roll-over so you have access year after year to manage your funds

*Visit the University of Pittsburgh's Office of Human Resource's website (<https://www.hr.pitt.edu/current-employees/benefits/health-and-wellness>) for contribution limits.

What is a sample health care experience with an HSA?

You go to your health care provider for a visit (no copay at time of service for HDHP/HSA)



After the visit, the provider submits expenses to UPMC Health Plan



UPMC Health Plan processes the claim



You receive a bill for the service and an EOB showing the amount you



You have a number of payment options

1. Pay the bill directly with your HSA debit card

2. Pay the bill out-of-pocket and reimburse yourself with HSA funds

3. Pay the bill out-of-pocket (for example, if you chose to invest your HSA funds)



Is a Health Savings Account (HSA) right for you?

A Health Savings Account (HSA) could be right for you if:

- You've decided that the high-deductible health plan (HDHP) discussed meets your health care needs
- You're generally in good health and don't go to the doctor often or are comfortable managing out-of-pocket costs.
- You want tax-advantaged HSA contributions to use for your eligible out-of-pocket health care expenses.
- You're interested in tax-advantaged long-term retirement savings for health care expenses



When You Can Change Benefits

Qualified Status Change

Open Enrollment

Change In Employment Impacting Eligibility

When Can You Change Your Benefits?

Qualifying Status Change (QSC)

- Marriage or divorce
- Birth or adoption
- Loss of other coverage
- Gain of other coverage
- Change in dependent status (i.e. turning 26 and losing coverage under your parents)

60 – Day window to make changes

Open Enrollment (OE)

- Annual window to review all elections and make any changes
- No QSC required
- Changes take effect July 1
- Watch for Open Enrollment communications

Once a Year – Don't miss it!

Other Triggers

- Change in employment impacting eligibility
- Retirement
- Termination of employment
- Loss of eligibility
- COBRA continuation options

Contact the Benefits Department for questions



Key Rule: Outside of these windows, benefit elections are locked for the plan year. When in doubt, contact the Benefits team right away — timing matters.

Open Enrollment Reminders

 **Tip: Gather Dependent Documentation now.**

If you are planning on adding a spouse/partner or child to your benefits you will need copies of dependent documentation (i.e. marriage certificate, birth certificates etc.)



Watch for Communications

Check your University email and openenroll.hr.pitt.edu for announcements, guides, and deadlines.



Review Your Current Elections

Take a moment to review what you currently have enrolled. Assess whether your needs have changed.



Passive Enrollment

Although enrollment is passive, it is strongly encouraged that you review your benefit elections each year to ensure you are aware of any updates to plan options, costs, or design.



Save Your Confirmation

Once you submit your elections, print or save your confirmation email. This is your proof of enrollment.

How to change your HSA

Contact the Benefits Department

Call our team at 833-852-2210 or by submitting a case online

Submit Form with New Election

Complete the HSA Election/Change/Termination Form via your open case

Effective Date

Changes will be made effective first of the month following the approved submission

Note: Changes can be made at any time throughout the plan year, no Qualified Status Change required. External contributions can also be made directly with UPMC via their form.

Please consult a tax professional for any questions.

Q&A

- Post-live session summary of questions employees submitted via the Q&A feature

Q: Why does it say July 1, 2025-June 30, 2026?

A: This is how the plan year runs for the University. This means starting July 1, your plan resets every year.

Q: Is this information for the upcoming insurance roll-out??

A: The information being presented today is for the **current benefit Plan Year** that runs July 1, 2025 - June 30, 2026.

Information regarding coverage for the **next plan year** starting July 1, 2026 - June 30, 2027, will be communicated closer to the Open Enrollment Period.

Q: Does the out-of-network include out of state plans as well ?

A: Out-of-network services would refer to any services obtained outside of UPMC's network, whether out-of-network in PA, or out-of-network outside of the state of PA. Employees or spouses/domestic partners enrolled in a PPO plan and living outside of the UPMC service area, or any member traveling outside the UPMC service area in need of Urgent Care. [Learn more about the extended network and how to access providers.](#)

Q: What if someone switches from HDHP to PPO, does the HSA balance stay or it's lost? If it does, for how long?

A: If you switch from the HDHP to another PPO or even HMO, you can use the funds you currently have in your HSA but you can no longer contribute to it. You can continue to use the HSA funds you already have in your account until they are exhausted.

Q: What happens to my HSA funds if the employee passes? Can my spouse continue to use those funds, and would the balance then be transferrable to my children?

A: You are able to setup beneficiaries with the HSA. In this scenario, whoever you set as your beneficiary would be able to take the money out of the account. It cannot be transferred to a spouse/children though.

Q: Is it possible to see a sample bill under the HDHP plan? I know there is a way to see estimated costs with UPMC's cost estimate calculator for our current plan, but I'd like to see a sample for the other plans too.

A: The best way to see an estimate of what your costs would be on the HDHP would be looking at your current explanation of benefits for your services and view the total amount the insurance paid. You would be responsible for those amounts in full until your deductible is met on the HDHP.

Q: Does chiropractic care include physical therapy? Is it covered after the deductible is met?

A: Chiropractic care is separate from physical therapy. It may be covered after the deductible is met but it depends on the reason for this care.

Q: Once you have enough funds that you are eligible to invest, are these funds only available for qualifying medical expenses? i.e. even after retirement or employment change they can only be accessed for co-pays, deductible, etc. and not to buy a car, for example?

A: Correct, the funds would still only be eligible to use for medical, pharmacy, dental or vision expenses.

Resources Referenced During Q&A

hr.pitt.edu/current-employees/benefits/health-and-wellness

For more detailed information on HSAs and taxes, visit the U.S. Department of Treasury website at ustreas.gov or talk with your tax advisor.

- IRS Resources for Eligible HSA Accounts: [IRS Publication 959](#)
- IRS Resources for Eligible FSA Expenses: [IRS Publication 502](#)

[Health Savings Account \(HSA\)](#); Learn more about HSAs in the [“Health Expense and Savings Account”](#) section of [this UPMC FAQ](#).

Bridging Benefits Resources:

- Benefits 101: Your Health & Wellness Toolkit
 - [view recording](#)
 - [Presentation slide deck](#)
- Kickstart Your Year: Wellness and You (navigating the UPMC MyHealth Online portal)
 - [view recording](#)
 - [Presentation slide deck](#)



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Contact us at 833-852-2210 or online at hr.pitt.edu/contact-ohr