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**HOUSE BILL 2481**

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**State of Washington**

**68th Legislature**

**2024 Regular Session**

**By** Representatives Volz, Bergquist, Robertson, and Macri

Read first time 01/25/24. Referred to Committee on Appropriations.

1 AN ACT Relating to waiving health benefit premiums in the public  
2 employees' benefits board; and reenacting and amending RCW 41.05.080.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

4 **Sec. 1.** RCW 41.05.080 and 2023 c 312 s 1 and 2023 c 13 s 5 are  
5 each reenacted and amended to read as follows:

6 (1) Under the qualifications, terms, conditions, and benefits set  
7 by the public employees' benefits board:

8 (a)(i) Retired or disabled state employees, retired or disabled  
9 school employees, or retired or disabled employees of employer groups  
10 covered by this chapter may continue their participation in insurance  
11 plans and contracts after retirement or disablement.

12 (ii) The retired or disabled employees of employer groups whose  
13 contractual agreement with the authority terminates may continue  
14 their participation in insurance plans and contracts after the  
15 contractual agreement is terminated. The retired or disabled  
16 employees of employer groups whose contractual agreement with the  
17 authority terminates are not eligible for any subsidy provided under  
18 RCW 41.05.085;

19 (b) Separated employees may continue their participation in  
20 insurance plans and contracts if participation is selected  
21 immediately upon separation from employment;

1 (c) Surviving spouses, surviving state registered domestic  
2 partners, and dependent children of emergency service personnel  
3 killed in the line of duty may participate in insurance plans and  
4 contracts.

5 (2) Rates charged surviving spouses and surviving state  
6 registered domestic partners of emergency service personnel killed in  
7 the line of duty, retired or disabled employees, separated employees,  
8 spouses, or dependent children who are not eligible for parts A and B  
9 of medicare shall be based on the experience of the community-rated  
10 risk pool established under RCW 41.05.022.

11 (3) Rates charged to surviving spouses and surviving state  
12 registered domestic partners of emergency service personnel killed in  
13 the line of duty, retired or disabled employees, separated employees,  
14 spouses, or children who are eligible for parts A and B of medicare  
15 shall be calculated from a separate experience risk pool comprised  
16 only of individuals eligible for parts A and B of medicare; however,  
17 the premiums charged to medicare-eligible retirees and disabled  
18 employees shall be reduced by the amount of the subsidy provided  
19 under RCW 41.05.085, except as provided in subsection (1)(a)(ii) of  
20 this section.

21 (4) Surviving spouses, surviving state registered domestic  
22 partners, and dependent children of emergency service personnel  
23 killed in the line of duty and retired or disabled and separated  
24 employees shall be responsible for payment of premium rates developed  
25 by the authority which shall include the cost to the authority of  
26 providing insurance coverage including any amounts necessary for  
27 reserves and administration in accordance with this chapter. These  
28 self pay rates will be established based on a separate rate for the  
29 employee, the spouse, state registered domestic partners, and the  
30 children.

31 (5) When a person described in subsection (1)(a)(i), (b), or (c)  
32 of this section dies, the authority shall waive the payment of the  
33 decedent's premiums and any applicable premium surcharges for the  
34 medical, dental, or vision plan for the month in which the death  
35 occurred. The authority shall enroll any eligible surviving  
36 dependents in the same medical, dental, or vision plan that they had  
37 been enrolled in, which shall be made effective on the first day of  
38 the month in which the death occurred, and the eligible surviving  
39 dependent shall be responsible for the payment of premiums and any

1 applicable premium surcharges for themselves and any other eligible  
2 dependents.

3     (6) The term "retired state employees" for the purpose of this  
4 section shall include but not be limited to members of the  
5 legislature whether voluntarily or involuntarily leaving state  
6 office.

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