

Through the WIRE

JULY 2024

LOCAL 26 IBEW-NECA JOINT TRUST FUNDS

YOUR
HEALTH CARE PLAN

protecting your family



It's July—the Happy Birthday America month, poolside with a popsicle month, sunshine days and starry nights month. July is simply summer and summer never lasts long enough! The Fund Office hopes you are making the most of these summer days and making memories with family and friends. While you focus on enjoying your summer, the staff at the Fund Office is working on helping you achieve the good health and financial security you deserve. So, go ahead and enjoy another popsicle because we have you covered!

SCAN this QR code to access all of the valuable links mentioned in this issue of *Through the Wire*.



Sun's Out, Shades On

Eye protection off the job is just as important as eye protection on the job.

Skin can burn in less than 15 minutes in the sun and, similarly, the eyes can be seriously damaged by UV rays too. UV light can easily penetrate eye tissue and put you at risk for many eye conditions, including cataract, cancer of the eyelid, and age-related macular degeneration, to name a few. The best eye protection you can use on those sunny days off the job is sunglasses. But, are you remembering to use eye protection with your children?

Just like adults, children are prone to sun damage too, especially in their eyes which have not matured enough to effectively filter out harmful UV rays. We don't let our kids outside to play without sunscreen on their precious skin; consider sunglasses to be like sunscreen for the eyes. If you make sunglasses as routine as sunblock, our little ones won't want to leave home without a pair of shades!

When choosing a pair of sunglasses for your child, make sure they conform to the American National Standards Institute's guideline ANSI Z80.3 which specifies UV protection and impact protection. Effective sunglasses should block 99%-100% of both UVA and UVB rays. Wraparound sunglasses are especially effective at protecting the whole eye. If your child wears prescription glasses, order their prescription glasses with light reactive lenses that become darker, like sunglasses, in the sunlight and revert to clear lenses inside.



EWTF Health Plan's vision benefit is provided by **VSP** and **covers one vision exam annually, new eyeglass frames every two years and new prescription lenses every two years, or annually if needed due to a change in prescription, all at 100%.**

Light reactive lenses are a covered lens upgrade by the VSP vision benefit and also covered at 100%. Coverage for services and eyewear provided by a non-VSP provider are only covered up to the allowable charges payable to VSP providers. You are responsible for all remaining charges.

Go to <https://www.vsp.com> to learn more.



Visit Virta at <https://www.virta-health.com>

It's a Good Day for Ice Cream

I scream, you scream, we all scream for HEALTHY ice cream! Looking for a summertime treat that's not only fun to eat but fun to make? Kids and kids-at-heart will love making this vanilla ice cream that's **Virta** approved!

Ingredients:

- * 1 cup heavy whipping cream
- * 2 tbsp allulose sweetener or Virta-friendly sweetener of choice
- * 1 ½ tsp vanilla extract (more or less to taste)
- * 1/8 tsp of sea salt

Directions:

Combine all ingredients in a 16 oz. wide-mouth mason jar. Seal it tightly and shake for approximately 3-4 minutes. Mixture should be thick and have doubled in volume. **TIP: Do not shake it too much or it will become whipped cream or butter.**

Freeze for at least 4-6 hours or until consistency is between a soft and hard ice cream.

Serve it plain or add your choice of Virta-friendly toppings such as berries, chopped nuts, seeds or whipped cream.

Retired? Need Money?

Hey, you've earned it! It's just three easy (but mandatory!) steps if you are retired and need to access your **Individual Account Plan** (IAP) benefit.

1 Contact a retirement services advisor at the Fund Office (301-731-1050) for a **Distribution Application** or download a Distribution Application from the My Benefits Center member portal.

2 **Complete and submit** the Distribution Application to a retirement services advisor.

3 The Fund Office will work with Fidelity to **release your money** based on the distribution option you select.



To learn more about your Individual Account Plan, go to <https://www.ewtf.org/individual-account-plan/plan-overview/>

Withdraw funds in 3 easy steps.

The IAP Gives You Option\$

The **Individual Account Plan (IAP)** provides that extra retirement savings safety net that not only gives our members financial peace of mind but also the flexibility to choose how they want to receive their IAP benefit and the ability to access that benefit early, if necessary, under certain circumstances.

The IAP may be distributed upon:

Traditional retirement—You are 50 years of age or older and have permanently left employment covered by the Plan.

Severance from covered employment—You are separated from employment covered by the Plan for 6 full calendar months and you have not returned to employment covered by the Plan prior to receiving a distribution from the IAP.

Disability—You are totally and permanently disabled as determined by the Social Security Administration or Electrical Workers Local 26 Pension Trust Fund.



You can elect to receive your IAP benefits in one of 9 different payment options:

- ✿ 50% Joint and Survivor Annuity
- ✿ 75% Joint and Survivor Annuity
- ✿ Single Lump Sum
- ✿ Partial Lump Sum
- ✿ Fixed Periodic Amount
- ✿ Partial Lump Sum with Fixed Periodic Amount
- ✿ Fixed Time Frame
- ✿ Fixed Percent
- ✿ Life Expectancy

Learn about the different payment options at <https://www.ewtf.org/through-the-wire/your-individual-account-plan/the-iap-gives-you-options/>.



The IAP provides that extra retirement safety net.



KIDS' CORNER

SUNSHINE

Did you know that over 100 words can be made using the letters in the word **SUNSHINE**? Can you make ten words from the word **SUNSHINE**?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____



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YOUR INDIVIDUAL
 ACCOUNT PLAN

growing your assets

Covering Hardship Withdrawals

Sometimes life takes an unexpected turn. The **Individual Account Plan (IAP)** has you covered should you need to take a hardship withdrawal for “an immediate and heavy financial need” as defined by the IRS. The IRS has set guidelines on qualifying situations and allows retirement plans the discretion to select which qualifying situations to include. Before planning to take a hardship withdrawal, confirm that your need is covered under the guidelines of our IAP.



To learn more about your Individual Account Plan, go to <https://www.ewtf.org/individual-account-plan/plan-overview/>

Reason for taking a hardship withdrawal	Allowed by the IRS	Allowed by the IAP
Medical expenses for the employee, the employee’s spouse, dependents or beneficiary	✓	✓
Costs directly related to the purchase of an employee’s principal residence	✓	
Tuition, related educational fees and room and board expenses for the next 12 months of postsecondary education for the employee or the employee’s spouse, children, dependents or beneficiary	✓	
Payments necessary to prevent the eviction of the employee’s principal residence or foreclosure on the mortgage on the residence	✓	✓
Funeral expenses for the employee, the employee’s spouse, children, dependents or beneficiary	✓	
Certain expenses to repair damage to the employee’s principal residence	✓	