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Sec. 3309.69. (A) As used in this section, "ineligible individual" means all of the following:

(1) A former member receiving benefits pursuant to section 3309.34, 3309.35, 3309.36, 3309.38, or 3309.381 of the Revised Code for whom eligibility is established more than five years after June 13, 1981, and who,

at the time of establishing eligibility, has accrued less than ten years of service credit, exclusive of credit obtained after January 29, 1981, pursuant to sections 3309.021, 3309.301, 3309.31, and 3309.33 of the Revised Code;

(2) The spouse of the former member;

(3) The beneficiary of the former member receiving benefits pursuant to section 3309.46 of the Revised Code.

(B) The school employees retirement board may enter into an agreement with insurance companies, ~~medical or health care~~ INSURING corporations, ~~health maintenance organizations~~, or government agencies authorized to do business in the state for issuance of a policy or contract of health, medical, hospital, or surgical benefits, or any combination thereof, for those individuals receiving service retirement or a disability or survivor benefit subscribing to the plan and their eligible dependents.

If all or any portion of the policy or contract premium is to be paid by any individual receiving service retirement or a disability or survivor benefit, the person shall, by written authorization, instruct the board to deduct the premiums agreed to be paid by the individual to the companies, corporations, or agencies.

The board may contract for coverage on the basis of part or all of the cost of the coverage to be paid from appropriate funds of the school employees retirement system. The cost paid from the funds of the system shall be included in the employer's contribution rate provided by sections 3309.49 and 3309.491 of the Revised Code. The board shall not pay or reimburse the cost for health care under this section or section 3309.375 of the Revised Code for any ineligible individual.

The board may provide for self-insurance of risk or level of risk as set forth in the contract with the companies, corporations, or agencies, and may provide through the self-insurance method specific benefits as authorized by the rules of the board.

(C) If the board provides health, medical, hospital, or surgical benefits through any means other than a health ~~maintenance organization~~ INSURING CORPORATION, it shall offer to each individual eligible for the benefits the alternative of receiving benefits through enrollment in a health ~~maintenance organization~~ INSURING CORPORATION, if all of the following apply:

(1) The health ~~maintenance organization~~ INSURING CORPORATION provides HEALTH CARE services in the geographical area in which the individual lives;

(2) The eligible individual was receiving health care benefits through a health maintenance organization OR A HEALTH INSURING CORPORATION before retirement;

(3) The rate and coverage provided by the health ~~maintenance organization~~ INSURING CORPORATION to eligible individuals is comparable to that currently provided by the board under division (B) of this section. If the rate or coverage provided by the health ~~maintenance organization~~ INSURING CORPORATION is not comparable to that currently provided by the board under division (B) of this section, the board

may deduct the additional cost from the eligible individual's monthly benefit.

The health ~~maintenance organization~~ INSURING CORPORATION shall accept as an enrollee any eligible individual who requests enrollment.

The board shall permit each eligible individual to change from one plan to another at least once a year at a time determined by the board.

(D) The board shall, beginning the month following receipt of satisfactory evidence of the payment for coverage, make a monthly payment to each recipient of service retirement, or a disability or survivor benefit under the school employees retirement system who is eligible for insurance coverage under part B of "The Social Security Amendments of 1965," 79 Stat. 301, 42 U.S.C.A. 1395j, as amended, except that the board shall make no such payment to any ineligible individual. The amount of the payment shall be the lesser of an amount equal to the basic premium for such coverage, or an amount equal to the basic premium in effect on January 1, 1988.

(E) The board shall establish by rule requirements for the coordination of any coverage, payment, or benefit provided under this section or section 3309.375 of the Revised Code with any similar coverage, payment, or benefit made available to the same individual by the public employees retirement system, police and firemen's disability and pension fund, state teachers retirement system, or state highway patrol retirement system.

(F) The board shall make all other necessary rules pursuant to the purpose and intent of this section.

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