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Sec. 5505.28. (A) The state highway patrol 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 persons receiving pensions and subscribing to the plan. Notwithstanding any other provision of this chapter, the policy or contract may also include coverage for any eligible individual's spouse and dependent children and for any of the individual's sponsored dependents as the board considers appropriate.

If all or any portion of the policy or contract premium is to be paid by any individual receiving a service, disability, or survivor pension or benefit, the individual shall, by written authorization, instruct the board to deduct from the individual's pension or benefit the premium agreed to be paid by the individual to the company, corporation, or agency.

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 state highway patrol retirement system. The cost paid from the funds of the system shall be included in the employer's contribution rate as provided by section 5505.15 of the Revised Code.

(B) 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 (A) 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 (A) 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.

(C) The board shall, beginning the month following receipt of satisfactory evidence of the payment for coverage, pay monthly to each recipient of a pension under the state highway patrol retirement system who is eligible for medical insurance coverage under part B of "The Social Security Amendments of 1965." 79 Stat. 301, 42 U.S.C.A. 1395j, as amended, the lesser of an amount equal to the basic premium for such coverage or an amount equal to the basic premium for such coverage in effect on January 1, 1994.

(D) The board shall establish by rule requirements for the coordination of any coverage, payment, or benefit provided under this section 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 school employees retirement system.

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