



# The Torch

The official newsletter for Indiana state employees



The savvy state of Indiana member's action guide

## Maximize state health care benefits with these smart tips

Sometimes the simplest actions can make the biggest difference.

Here are a few easy action steps you can take to maximize your benefits and save more of your money in 2010. You can find additional information by visiting [www.anthem.com](http://www.anthem.com)

1. Avoid emergency rooms (ER) for non-threatening life conditions. ER services cost considerably more than services provided in your family physician's office. The ER should not be used for non-life threatening conditions such as minor cuts and sprains, ear infections, urinary tract infections and bronchitis. For non-life threatening services you can also call Anthem's 24/7 Nurseline at 1-888-279-5449 to speak with a live, registered nurse.
2. Comparison shop with Anthem Care Comparison. The Anthem Care Comparison tool gives you complete hospital-specific cost estimates – so you'll have a better idea of your medical care costs before you receive services. The tool is available for more than 40 procedures.
3. Ask about lower level settings for certain procedures. Since hospitals have higher overhead costs than other providers of care, they're typically paid higher rates for their services. Services performed in a physician's office, surgery center or other free-standing facility could mean less out-of-pocket costs for you.

Register today at MyAnthem.com:

- Go to [www.anthem.com](http://www.anthem.com)
- Select "member" at the top left corner of the page
- Choose your state from the drop down menu at the center of the page
- Select "enter"
- Click on "register now" under MyAnthem at the top left corner of the page
- Answer brief set of questions

Now you have access to a wealth of health tools and information.

## Use emergency rooms for emergencies only

Today's economy being what it is, most of us are looking for ways to make our money



go further. Now that we have signed up for our health care benefits for 2010, what can we do to make the best use of our health care dollars?

Maybe you do not often go to the doctor, so you have never found reason to have a primary care physician. Instead, you just go to the local emergency room (ER) when you need medical treatment, thinking that the visit will save you some money. Wrong!

A survey performed by the Medical Expenditure Panel Survey discovered that emergency room services in 2003 were five times greater than those performed in a doctor's office. The median expenditures for an emergency room visit in 2003 was \$299, whereas the same treatment performed in a

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Submit your story ideas in an e-mail to:  
[spdcommunications@spd.in.gov](mailto:spdcommunications@spd.in.gov)



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## Anthem health assessments

### How healthy are you for 2010?

Need help deciding on a New Year's resolution?

Take a health assessment and learn where you have opportunities for improvement.



a few lifestyle changes for health improvement. Here's how to get started:

- Go to [www.anthem.com](http://www.anthem.com)
- Select "Member" (upper left side of page)
- Select your state from the drop down menu and click "enter"
- Click "Health Information" from the top navigation bar
- Click on "Health Extras"
- Click on "MyHealth Assessment"
- Log in (or register) and complete the questionnaire

In about 15 minutes, you can learn more about your current health status by completing the online MyHealth Assessment tool at [www.anthem.com](http://www.anthem.com)

There's no extra cost and your answers are confidential. Your answers will be computed right away and a report will tell you how you're stacking up, health-wise. It will even suggest

Re-visit the online health assessment to input any health status changes as they may happen, especially as you meet your health goals.

## PeopleSoft®

### Keep your information current

With the advent of a new year, take the opportunity to log onto PeopleSoft® and make sure your information is complete and current. You can actually make changes to your personal information by logging onto the software program at: <https://hr.gmis.in.gov/psp/hrprd/?cmd=login>

From there, on the left side of the page, select "Self Service," then "Personal Information." You can then make changes to your address, phone numbers (adding your home phone and/or cell phone numbers), your emergency contacts and e-mail addresses (home and/or work). It is important to keep your information current in PeopleSoft®.

### Attend the MLK, Jr. Day Indiana holiday celebration on Jan. 14

All employees are invited to attend the 19th annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Indiana holiday celebration on **Thursday, January 14.**

The event will be held in the Statehouse Rotunda from 12:30 to 1:30 p.m.. The keynote speaker will be Mayor James Young of Philadelphia, Mississippi.

The event is presented by Gov. Daniels and the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Indiana Holiday Commission.



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### Use emergency rooms for emergencies only

physician's office cost \$63.

In 2008, the state of Indiana paid an average of \$770 per ER visit, whereas the cost for a visit to a doctor's office was \$117. The state paid more than 6½ times more for ER visits by state employees and/or their insured family members than for those same services performed in a doctor's office.

For 2008, the cost by state employees was \$100 more per visit to the emergency room than Anthem's benchmark. Anthem's benchmark for office visits was \$135. These benchmarks reflect the cost experience of all Anthem's insured customers.

Remember the fable of Chicken Little, the chick who went around crying, "The sky is falling!" The sky is falling!" because an acorn fell on his head? The sky wasn't falling.

Similarly, a scrape or cut or fever doesn't always mean a trip to the emergency room. If you do not have a primary care physician, now would be the time to look for one -- before you need one, before you run to the emergency room. Before making that non-emergency visit to ER, try calling the 24/7 NurseLine for assistance. That toll-free number is 1-888-279-5449.

It is highly unlikely that costs will decrease in 2010, so it is even more prudent to use the emergency room only for emergencies. Having a physician will help control costs for you and your family and the state. You will also be establishing a doctor-patient relationship that will go a long way toward better monitoring of your health. And in the long run, that will allow for a healthier you.

## Tobacco-free incentive

### Keep your promise or risk losing your job

If you signed up during open enrollment promising not to use tobacco products during 2010, then this is your reminder that your promise applies from Jan. 1 through Dec. 31. Your failure to keep that promise places your employment status at risk.

Everyone agrees that quitting smoking (or other use of tobacco) is one of the most difficult things to do. If you have tried to quit, but are unsuccessful at this point and you signed the tobacco incentive, you need to rescind your agreement. Contact the State Personnel Department Benefits Division immediately to rescind your agreement through PeopleSoft®. Contact a Benefits representative at 317-232-1167 or toll-free at 877-248-0007.

If you successfully rescind your agreement, your health care insurance

premium will increase by \$10 bi-weekly, but your job will be secure. The names of every employee who signed the agreement have been placed in a pool for random selection to be tested for tobacco throughout this calendar year. Testing dates and locations will not be identified in advance and anyone testing positive will be subject to dismissal from employment.

Employees are also subject to testing under reasonable suspicion if the state receives a report that an employee who has signed the agreement is using tobacco products.

For assistance in becoming tobacco-free, call the Indiana Tobacco Quitline at 1-800-Quit-Now. This free service is available to all Hoosiers seven days a week from 8 a.m. until midnight.

## Customer Service Training

### Learn to serve your customers better

What would your customers say about the service they receive from you? Did you know that satisfied customers will tell three people and dissatisfied customers will tell ten or eleven other people? If you are interested in providing excellent customer service to your internal and external customers, why not consider taking the Professional Customer Service class offered by State Personnel?

You will learn:

- How poor customer service impacts agency and personal performance.
- What customers expect.
- How to deliver quality customer service.
- How to serve customers with special needs.

The class will be offered Jan. 13 and Jan. 27, from 9 a.m. to noon in IGC-South Room 16.

## Safety first

### Safety doesn't stop with the holidays

The holiday season may be behind us for another year, but that doesn't mean we should stop practicing safety with our vehicles.

The Indiana State Police Capitol Police section reminds state employees to continue to lock their vehicles and keep valuable articles out of sight throughout the year. Vigilance in maintaining simple measures to deter crime is a benefit year round.

Items such as iPods, cell phones, wallets, cameras, purses, laptop computers and other items of value, easily seen through a car window, are tempting to those with sticky fingers.

Winter work hours increase the likelihood that state employees will be arriving and leaving with

less daylight available. With this in mind, try to park in well-lit areas. If possible, walk out with a fellow employee, rather than walk alone after dark.

And for those behind the wheel, keep pedestrian traffic safety in mind. Be certain to wait for the pedestrian crosswalk sign to indicate a "Walk" or "No Walk" signal. Adhering to these signals will cut down on both potential physical injuries from result of a collision with a vehicle and increase proper pedestrian and traffic flow.

Likewise, drivers should also yield to the pedestrian crossing signal, especially when it is permissible to turn right on a red. The pedestrians who receive the signal to walk have the right of way, not the right-turning traffic.



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[cbymaste@idem.in.gov](mailto:cbymaste@idem.in.gov)

Or

Call 317-232-8356

## Financial aid

# Time to start thinking about financial aid for college

Each year, the state of Indiana awards more than \$250 million in need-based financial aid to eligible Indiana residents attending eligible Indiana colleges and universities. The State Student Assistance Commission of Indiana (SSACI) oversees the program. Learn more about state financial aid programs, including the Frank O'Bannon Higher Education Award and the Twenty-first Century Scholars Program, at [www.ssaci.in.gov](http://www.ssaci.in.gov)

If you have a child attending college next fall, or plan to return to school yourself, you must file a Free Application for Federal Student Aid ([www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov)) by March 10, to be considered for any of the Indiana financial assistance programs. Most colleges and universities also use the FAFSA to award institutional financial aid and federal financial aid, including student loans. For more information about financial aid, check with your school's financial aid office.

It is important that the FAFSA contain a valid e-mail address (for student, and parent if the student is dependent). SSACI will communicate beginning in mid-February to students using e-mail addresses to alert them of issues with their FAFSA. Issues must be resolved by May 1. E-mail will also be used for notification in June of their state grant eligibility.

Of equal importance is that students periodically review their 2010-2011 state aid status at [www.ssaci.in.gov/estudent](http://www.ssaci.in.gov/estudent) beginning in mid-February following the instructions provided on the Web site. As an example, students should check on eStudent what was listed as their first college choice on their FAFSA. It is a critical component in calculating an accurate state grant award and the ability of that college to claim the funds on the student's behalf. If the student believes another college should be listed first, instructions are provided to correct the FAFSA and their state grant information.

If you need assistance completing your FAFSA, consider attending College Goal Sunday. This free event brings financial aid professionals from colleges and universities across the state together to assist families in completing their FAFSA. This year's event will be held Feb. 21 at 37 sites across Indiana. Visit [www.collegegoalsunday.org](http://www.collegegoalsunday.org) to learn more.

There is no age limit for this event, but students 23 years of age or younger should attend with their parent(s) or guardian(s). Be sure to bring both students and their parents' completed 2009 IRS 1040 tax return, W-2 forms or other 2009 income, assets and benefits information.

Anyone completing and submitting an FAFSA at a College Goal Sunday session, must bring with them their U.S. Department of Education personal identification numbers (PIN). You can obtain that now at [www.jp.in.gov](http://www.jp.in.gov). Both students and parents will need a PIN to file the FAFSA electronically. The College Goal Sunday Web site provides a list of those sites offering Spanish interpreters.

College Goal Sunday is organized by the Indiana Student Financial Aid Association, State Student Assistance Commission of Indiana, Learn More and the YMCA of Greater Indianapolis.

## Online training

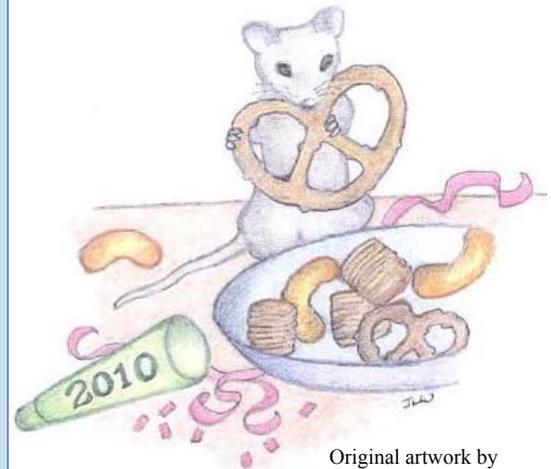
### Train yourself on the Web

State Personnel training offerings are available with a few clicks of the mouse. View what SPD training has to offer online through the PeopleSoft® Enterprise Learning Management System. There you'll see what employee development opportunities are offered in 2010. Once you've enrolled online, requests will be routed to supervisors for approval.

To plan your developmental objectives for 2010 follow these easy instructions:

1. Use Internet Explorer and navigate to <http://myshare.in.gov>
2. Click on the PeopleSoft® Employee Training icon
3. Enter your user id and password
4. Click on Self Service
5. Click on Browse Catalog
6. Click on State Personnel Department
7. Click "next" to view each page of course titles
8. When you find a course of interest, click on the course title to view the course description
9. Click the view details link to access additional information
10. To view the session time, click the schedule link
11. Click the yellow enroll button to enroll in the desired session.

Questions regarding the new online enrollment process may be directed to [ps\\_training@spd.in.gov](mailto:ps_training@spd.in.gov) or 317-232-0200.



Original artwork by  
Jerry Williams

### Thank you troops!

Lt. Governor Becky Skillman's Christmas card drive recently sent a whopping 35,629 cards to members of the Indiana National Guard and the U.S. Naval Reserve. Thanks to the efforts of state employees and fellow Hoosiers, this year's campaign bested last year's by more than 15,000 cards.

Now in its fourth year, the "Hoosier Cheer for Our Heroes" campaign has sent more than 92,000 cards from nearly every Indiana county to Indiana troops overseas.

### Kudos go to...

**Audra Butts**, grants director for INDOT, was awarded the Meritorious Service From An Individual award at the 26th Annual Indiana Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Conference held in Lafayette. This award is intended to acknowledge appreciation of a state or federal employee who has provided exceptional assistance and support to the MPO agencies and transportation planning. *(Special thanks to Inside INDOT)*

**Debra Manning**, clerical assistant with BMV, who sent more than 200 Christmas cards to veterans at the Indiana Veteran's Hospital in Indianapolis. Manning, who volunteers at the VA, collected signatures from coworkers for the cards in non-working hours. She told us to thank all her co-workers who helped out.

### Wanna get away this winter?

Indiana State Park Inns 2-for-1 limited time special. Guests can stay two consecutive nights for the price of one. The offer is valid Sunday through Thursday, through Feb. 25, 2010, subject to availability and cannot be combined with other discounts. For reservations, contact 1-877-LODGES1 or [IndianaInns.com](http://IndianaInns.com)

### INDOT Roadeo decided by slim decision

Only one-eighth of an inch determined the winner of INDOT's 9th Annual Safety Truck Roadeo at Stout Field in Indianapolis. Both the winner, **Allan Schmitt** of the Vincennes District, and the runner-up, **Tony Hicks** of the Fort Wayne District, scored 2,220 out of the 2,700 points available. The tie-breaking factor that determined Schmitt as this year's champion was that he came one-eighth of an inch closer than Hicks on the Alley Backing test.

The Safety Truck Roadeo that combined safety competition with snow and ice training, is not new to Schmitt. He held the state title in 2003 and 2004. Schmitt works in the Jasper Unit and has been employed with INDOT for 13 years.

The course is made up of nine



*Paoli Sub District Operations Manager Randy Weikert (left), joins the 2009 State Safety Truck Roadeo Winner Allan Schmitt (center), while Vincennes District Deputy Commissioner Troy Woodruff proudly holds the Safety Truck Roadeo trophy. The Vincennes District retains the trophy for the second year in a row.*

individual driving and maneuvering tests including the serpentine course, inside curves, straight line bucket control and the mailbox curve. A vehicle inspection also is part of the test. All drivers start with the maximum amount of points on each test and points are deducted as cones are bumped, barrels are nudged or tennis balls are hit or missed, depending on the test.

The Safety Truck Roadeo tests the aptitude of drivers and trains INDOT snowplow drivers on snow removal skills in a controlled environment. The driving skills training during the Safety Truck Roadeo sessions prepare the snowplow drivers to clear INDOT's roadways of snow and ice while reducing the potential of injury to the employee, injury to the traveling public and property damage.

*(Special thanks to Inside INDOT)*



*Governor Daniels visited with Cub Scout Pack #10 from Indianapolis, winners of the Scouts in Action Outreach award.*



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