


<p>Office of Employee Benefits</p> <p>Administrative Manual</p> 	<b>OFFICE OF EMPLOYEE BENEFITS ADMINISTRATION</b>	<b>120</b>
	<b>EFFECTIVE DATE: SEPT. 2002</b>	
	<b>REVISION DATE: SEPT. 2005; SEPT. 2008</b>	
	<b>PURPOSE: To explain the objectives and responsibilities of the Office of Employee Benefits and System Wide Insurance Advisory Committee</b>	
	<b>SCOPE: OEB staff and SWIAC representatives</b>	
	<b>STATUTORY AND ADMINISTRATIVE REFERENCES: Texas Insurance Code, Chapter 1601</b>	

**1.0 BACKGROUND**

In compliance with the Texas Constitution of 1876, the 17<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislature established The University of Texas in 1881. Today, The University of Texas System (System) includes the following 15 higher education institutions plus System Administration:

LOCATION	INSTITUTION
Austin	The University of Texas at Austin The University of Texas System Administration
Brownsville	The University of Texas at Brownsville
Dallas/Fort Worth	The University of Texas at Arlington The University of Texas at Dallas The University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center
Edinburg	The University of Texas – Pan American
El Paso	The University of Texas at El Paso
Galveston	The University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston
Houston	The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston The University of Texas M.D. Anderson Cancer Center
Odessa	The University of Texas of the Permian Basin
San Antonio	The University of Texas at San Antonio The University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio
Tyler	The University of Texas at Tyler The University of Texas Health Science Center at Tyler

In September 1977, the 65th Texas Legislature passed the Texas State College and University Employees Uniform Insurance Benefits Act (Act) authorizing the establishment of a uniform group insurance program for the System. The System Board of Regents created the Office of Employee Benefits (OEB), known as the Office of Employee Group Insurance (EGI) prior to September 1, 2005, to administer its uniform group insurance program, known as the Employee Group Insurance Program (Program), for all U.T. System Employees and Retired Employees. The Program began on September 1, 1978. Today, more than 160,000 Employees, Retired Employees and Dependents are covered under this Program.

## **2.0 OBJECTIVES OF EMPLOYEE GROUP INSURANCE PROGRAM (PROGRAM)**

In accordance with the intent of the Act, it is the objective of the Program to:

- (a) Provide eligible Employees, Retired Employees and their Dependents access to uniform basic group health and life along with other benefits at the most efficient cost to the System and its Employees and Retired Employees;
- (b) Design benefit plans that are comparable with the private industry, the State of Texas, and other higher education institutions; and
- (c) Enable System institutions to attract and retain highly skilled and qualified faculty and staff in order to accomplish the System's mission and the missions of the institutions.

## **3.0 RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE OFFICE OF EMPLOYEE BENEFITS (OEB)**

OEB was established by the System to administer the Employee Group Insurance Program (Program). Its primary responsibilities include:

- (a) Administration of an actuarially sound uniform group insurance program for the benefit of the System;
- (b) Maximization of the quality group insurance benefits and services offered to Program Participants for each dollar available for the Program;
- (c) Monitoring Program activities to ensure that Program benefits are provided in compliance with applicable state and federal law, System policies and contractual requirements;
- (d) Procurement, selection and administration of contractual relationships with carriers and other vendors providing services to and on behalf of the Program;
- (e) Oversight of the administrative functions performed by System institution benefit managers and staff on behalf of the Program;
- (f) Creation and oversight of the Program enrollment process and maintenance of the eligibility database for all Program Participants;
- (g) Processing and reconciliation of Program financial transactions including plan premium payments from System institutions to carriers and third party administrators;
- (h) Provision of training to System institution benefit managers and staff concerning the Program;
- (i) Assistance to Participants in the resolution of member complaints; and
- (j) Communication of Program information to institutions and plan participants.

## **4.0 SYSTEM WIDE INSURANCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

In accordance with the Act, the System Wide Insurance Advisory Committee (SWIAC) is established to represent System Employees and Retired Employees in advising OEB staff and management regarding the development, implementation, coordination, and administration of the group insurance programs. The SWIAC serves as a channel for the open communication of ideas and suggestions regarding coverages, eligibility, claims, procedures, bidding, administration and other aspects of group insurance benefits for Employees and Retired Employees.

### **4.1 Qualifications and Terms**

Each System institution has two representatives on the SWIAC: one elected from among the institution's Employees and one appointed by the institution's administration. Each institution is responsible for establishing guidelines for selecting its representatives to the SWIAC.

Elected members and appointed members of the SWIAC serve a term of two years.

Officers are elected on an annual basis from the SWIAC membership.

### **4.2 Subcommittees**

The SWIAC members serve on several standing subcommittees that conduct ongoing research in specific areas including, but not limited to plan design, administrative, communications, and retired employee issues. The results of their research and any recommendations are forwarded to the full SWIAC for action, if appropriate.