

HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY HEALTH INSURANCE STIPEND INFORMATION FORM

Effective January 1, 2001

Hillsborough County Health Insurance Stipend:

The Board of County Commissioners has adopted a Retiree Health Insurance Stipend for employees of Hillsborough County Government (including Constitutional Officers offices, Boards, Commissions and Agencies funded by the Board of County Commissioners) and former City of Tampa employees who remain in the City of Tampa Pension Plan working for Hillsborough County. This stipend is designed to assist retired Hillsborough County employees with the payment of insurance premiums.

Eligibility:

This insurance stipend applies to those employees that are terminating employment from active service for the purpose of receiving a monthly retirement benefit, and retirees who are terminating from the Deferred Retirement Option Program (DROP). The retiree must be within one of the following age groups to be eligible for the Health Insurance Stipend:

Regular Class retirees: 62 years of age
Sr. Management retirees: 62 years of age
Special Risk retirees: 55 years of age

The retiree must be participating in a health insurance program (not limited to the Hillsborough County Group Health Plan) and receiving the Florida Retirement System (FRS) Health Insurance Subsidy. The City of Tampa retirees must show proof of health insurance in lieu of the FRS Health Insurance Subsidy application. The retiree must complete the Hillsborough County Health Insurance Stipend Enrollment Form. Board of County Commissioners In-Line-of-Duty disabled retirees who are at least 62 years old may be eligible for **either** this Health Insurance Stipend **or** the In-Line-of-Duty Disabled Retiree Health Insurance Subsidy. There is a one-time election opportunity at the time of retirement.

Note: An employee may retire at any age after he/she is vested with FRS, but will not be eligible to apply for the Hillsborough County Health Insurance Stipend until they reach the eligibility age. It is the retiree's responsibility to contact their agency when they reach eligibility age.

Who Is Not Eligible?

Employees terminating employment with Hillsborough County and deferring retirement benefits until a later date will not be eligible for this program. Spouses and/or dependents of deceased retirees are not eligible for the Health Insurance Stipend, unless the retiree was receiving the Health Insurance Stipend at the time of death, in which case, the surviving spouse is eligible to receive the Health Insurance Stipend for the duration of time the retiree would have been eligible to receive the benefit.

Employees covered by a collective bargaining agreement, unless the collective bargaining agreement provides for this benefit. If the collective bargaining unit has provided for this benefit, eligibility will be based on the effective date of the contract between Hillsborough County and the collective bargaining unit.

Stipend Payments:

The monthly health insurance stipend is determined by multiplying the stipend amount (\$7.50) by the number of full years employed by Hillsborough County Government, up to a total of 30 years of service (\$225.00). The stipend will be paid by check, which is mailed to the retiree. The Health Insurance stipend is taxable as "other income" and must be reported on your annual income tax return. **This stipend is contingent upon continued funding by the Board of County Commissioners.**

Retroactive Payments:

A retroactive payment is provided for Health Insurance Stipend forms received and verified within six (6) months of the eligibility date. Health Insurance Stipend forms received after six (6) months will receive a maximum of six months' retroactive payment.

Stipend Expiration:

The stipend will cease when the retiree becomes eligible for Medicare or its successor, or the month the City of Tampa retiree turns age 65, or in the event the retiree deceases.