

## **Bannock County Benefits Summary**

**As part of Bannock County's compensation package, Bannock County makes available the following benefits for its full-time benefit eligible employees:**

### **Health Benefits**

Administered by the GEMPLAN – Government Employees Medical Plan. For more information and/or to contact the GEMPLAN, call **237-9696** in Pocatello, **(800) 632-0905** or visit the Blue Cross Web Site at [www.bcidaho.com](http://www.bcidaho.com).

- To view the list of Preferred Provider Organization (PPO) members – Blue Cross of Idaho visit the Blue Cross Web Site at [www.bcidaho.com](http://www.bcidaho.com) for medical and dental providers.
- To view the list of VSP Vision network doctors call (800) 877-7195 or visit the VSP Web Site at [www.vsp.com](http://www.vsp.com). Bannock County has the Blue Cross of Idaho Plan CIII with VSP.
- BPA Nurseline call the toll-free, 24-hour nurseline to speak to a Registered Nurse or receive health advice and information: 1-866-220-3138. [www.bpahealth.com](http://www.bpahealth.com)
- GemPlan Group Life Insurance Plan - Basic Life Insurance, Accidental Death and Dismemberment (AD&D) Insurance for employees enrolled in the GemPlan for medical coverage. Amount of Life Insurance \$10,000 and Full Amount of AD&D Insurance \$10,000. Benefits reduce on or after your 65<sup>th</sup> birthday.

### **Employee Assistance Program**

Your Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is a service provided by Bannock County with no out-of-pocket expense, as a benefit to you. It is designed to offer you and your immediate family members short-term, counseling services, in a safe, confidential, environment, with professional therapists who hold a master or above in psychology, counseling, social work or other directly related fields of study; and who are trained to assist with personal or work related issues.

Most people experience personal or family related challenges in the course of their everyday lives. A variety of problems that create difficulties and hardships at home and at work can be resolved through your EAP. Seeking assistance early will help to reduce the potential of the problem escalating and requiring possibly expensive services. Issues that can be resolved through the EAP include emotional problems, work related issues, alcohol, substance abuse, family, anxiety, personal issues, eating disorders, crisis, stress, etc.

Bannock County has recognized that most difficulties can be resolved successfully if identified in the early stages, and appropriate assistance is offered and received.

Utilization of the EAP is purely voluntary, and is available to you, and your immediate family dependents to access the EAP. All that is required is that you call one of the numbers listed to schedule an appointment; individuals within your family may also call for themselves, or other family members. Remember, it is confidential. Your family, employer or co-workers will not have knowledge of your request for assistance.

Provided by Bannock County at no cost to the employee and administered by Rocky Mountain EAP at (208) 227-0152 or (866) 260-9490 [www.rmeap.com](http://www.rmeap.com).

Also, provided by Bannock County at no cost to the employee and administered by Standard Insurance Company telephone consultation and online access to EAP services are always available by calling (888) 293-6948 or logon to [www.horizoneap.com](http://www.horizoneap.com). Bannock County's program with Horizon Care includes up to three face-to-face assessment and counseling sessions that they will schedule according to your needs.

### **PERSI Retirement Plan**

You become a PERSI member when you go to work in an eligible position with a PERSI employer. When you earn 60 months of service credit you will be vested to receive a lifetime benefit at retirement. The 60-month vesting period (5 months for elected and some appointed officials) does not have to be with the same PERSI employer. So unless you leave public employment altogether, changing jobs should not affect your PERSI membership.

#### **Base Plan Benefits**

Enrollment in the PERSI Base Plan (pension) is automatic. Both you and your employer make contributions to PERSI. Your contributions are credited to your personal account, while employer contributions are pooled in a trust to cover benefits. The actual value of your benefit exceeds your contributions. When you retire as a vested member, PERSI will pay you every month for as long as you live — and if you select a retirement option with survivor benefits, your Contingent Annuitant will receive a benefit for life after your death. Within the first 3 - 5 years of retirement most members have already received all the money they contributed while working. For example, if your contributions to PERSI during your career totaled \$60,000, and your monthly retirement benefit is \$1,500, you would receive your \$60,000 in approximately 3 years. Although you would have exhausted everything you contributed, PERSI would continue to pay you \$1,500 a month for the rest of your life, plus annual cost of living adjustments (COLAs). So if your retirement were to last another 30 years, you would receive \$540,000 in benefits from the PERSI trust.

#### **Disability Benefits**

In addition to your retirement benefit, your Base Plan contributions provide for disability coverage. As a vested PERSI member, if you should become totally and permanently disabled while an active member, you may be eligible for a disability benefit. Disability for retirement purposes is considered to be *a total and permanent physical or mental impairment that prevents you from earning a livelihood*. If you perform any work for compensation, you will not be considered to be disabled. PERSI members applying for disability benefits have a limited period of time to file an application. The law (effective July 1, 2006) requires inactive members applying for PERSI disability benefits to file their claim within *one year of the date of their last contribution* to PERSI. Members go from active to inactive status when they are no longer eligible to accrue service or make contributions.

#### **Death Benefits**

The PERSI Base Plan offers financial security for your beneficiaries after you die. Whether an active or inactive member, if you die after becoming vested and had named your spouse as your sole beneficiary, PERSI will offer your spouse the choice of a lump sum payment of your remaining contributions plus interest or a monthly allowance payable for life. The lump sum death benefit for vested members is two times your account balance with interest. If you die before becoming vested, your beneficiary will receive your account balance plus any interest accrued.

## **Portability of Funds**

Your Base Plan contributions are always yours. If you leave a PERSI employer, but keep your Base Plan money in PERSI and later work for another PERSI covered employer, you retain the service credit earned in your previous job. All service credit you earn while working for a PERSI employer is automatically combined into a single account for you. If you leave PERSI-covered employment, you may withdraw your Base Plan money, plus any interest earned — although tax penalties and withholdings may apply, or you may roll over your money and interest to an Individual Retirement Account (IRA) or other qualified retirement plan, including the PERSI Choice Plan 401(k) if you have an account.

## **Cost of Living Adjustments**

To help benefits keep pace with inflation, the Base Plan offers annual cost of living adjustments (COLAs) to all retirees. Without COLAs, inflation could dramatically reduce the value of your benefit over time.

## **Additional Benefits of the PERSI Base Plan**

- Contributions are secure and protected by state and federal law.
- Once earned, your lifetime benefit is guaranteed.
- PERSI is neither funded nor managed like Social Security.

It is not a “pay as you go” system. PERSI is designed so the future value of benefits is funded as benefits are earned.

## **Supplemental Retirement Plans**

Bannock County has **two options** from the State of Idaho that allow you to invest additional dollars pre-tax out of your paycheck for retirement. You can participate in one or both of the plans up to the maximum allowed for both plans. The Maximum for 2010 is \$16,500 if you are under age 50 and \$22,000 if you are over age 50. If you contribute to both plans the maximum is \$44,000. You can do as little as 1% of pay and you can also change the amount you are investing out of each paycheck anytime.

### **Option 1**

#### **The Choice Plan 401(k)**

The Choice Plan 401(k) is an optional defined contribution retirement savings plan available to active members. Unlike the Base Plan, participation in the Choice Plan 401(k) is completely voluntary. It allows you to contribute a portion of your salary on a tax-deferred basis via payroll deduction. This means your contributions come out of your paycheck before taxes, thereby reducing the amount of taxes you pay during the year. The Choice Plan 401(k) includes a loan provision where members may take a loan for any reason as long as they have a balance of \$2,000 or more in their account, excluding any gain sharing amounts. The Choice Plan 401(k) has 12 investment options. One of the most popular is the PERSI Total Return Fund (TRF), which mirrors the Base Plan investments. The TRF is the default investment fund. Your contributions are automatically invested in the TRF unless you elect otherwise. The TRF has no investment manager fee; however, fees are associated with the other 11 investment options. Unlike the Base Plan, you manage your Choice Plan 401(k) funds. In most cases, you may change deferral amounts and investments at any time. No fee is charged for making changes to your account. PERSI pays the record keeping fees for active members. Money from other qualified retirement plans, such as a 401(a), 457, pre-tax IRA, 403(a) or 403(b), or another 401(k) account, can be rolled over to the Choice Plan 401(k) at PERSI. *After-tax contributions cannot be rolled into the Choice Plan.*

### **For More Information**

To learn more about PERSI, or for more detailed information about your retirement options and benefits, visit the PERSI Web site at: [www.persi.idaho.gov](http://www.persi.idaho.gov). You may also contact the PERSI Answer Center Monday - Friday between 7:30 a.m. and 5:30 p.m. (Mountain Time) by calling (208) 334-3365 in the Boise area, or toll-free (800) 451-8228 from other parts of the state. Your human resources and/or payroll personnel will gladly assist you as well.

ACS HR Solutions are the record keeper of PERSI Choice 401 (k) Plan. Visit the PERSI Choice Web site at: [www.persi.idaho.gov/choice.htm](http://www.persi.idaho.gov/choice.htm). You may also contact the ACS HR Solutions answer center at 866-437-3774.

### **Option 2**

#### **State of Idaho 457 plan**

Bannock County participates in the State of Idaho 457 plan administered by Nationwide Retirement Solutions.

The State of Idaho 457 plan is Deferred Compensation retirement savings plan available only to public employees. It allows you to contribute a portion of your salary on a tax-deferred basis via payroll deduction. This means your contributions come out of your paycheck before taxes, thereby reducing the amount of taxes you pay during the year. The State of Idaho 457 plan includes a loan provision where participants may take a loan for any reason as long as they have a balance of \$2,000 or more in their account. The State of Idaho 457 plan has 34 Mutual Fund investment options including a Fixed Account for those participants that don't want to participate in stocks. You may change deferral amounts and investments at any time. No fee is charged for making changes to your account. There are no Administrative Fees in the State of Idaho 457 plan. Money from other qualified retirement plans, such as a 401(a), 457, pre-tax IRA, 403(a) or 403(b), or another 401(k) account, can be rolled over to the State of Idaho 457 plan.

Benefits:

- 1. The 457 plan has no early withdrawal penalties. You can access your account at anytime you terminate your employment with the County. You don't have to be age 59 ½ like 401k's and IRA's.**
- 2. If you have a financial hardship you can access your money while you are still working with no penalty.**
- 3. Payout options at retirement are flexible....you can access your money anytime and anyway you wish.**

For more information on the State of Idaho's 457 Deferred Compensation Program:

- visit [www.idahodc.com](http://www.idahodc.com),
- Call the Boise office: 800 627-1583 x3
- Contact Ryan Gillette, Retirement Specialist, Nationwide Retirement Solutions by calling (208) 681-5655, (800) 627-1583 x 3, fax (208)345-7120, email [gilletr1@nationwide.com](mailto:gilletr1@nationwide.com)

## **Voluntary Group Decreasing Term Life Insurance**

Idaho NCPERS Group Decreasing Term Life Insurance underwritten by The Prudential Insurance Company of America and administered by Gallagher Byerly, Inc. allows you to purchase additional group decreasing term life insurance at a group rate that does not increase with age. This coverage pays your beneficiary a maximum benefit amount in your younger years and a gradually decreasing benefit amount in your older years. Includes coverage on or off the job, total disability protection, accelerated benefit option, dependent coverage, and accidental death & dismemberment benefits. Open enrollment is every September through November.

## **Life Insurance**

Bannock County provides Standard Insurance Company's Life and Accidental Death & Dismemberment insurance coverage for our employees along with \$1,500 for spouse and \$1,000 for dependent children. Enrollment is required to participate.

All participants in Bannock County's Group Life insurance plan through Standard Insurance are automatically covered by MEDEX Travel Assist. MEDEX Travel Assist offers the following services: pre-trip assistance, medical assistance, legal assistance, emergency transportation and personal security services. Family members, including your spouse or domestic partner, and dependent children, are covered as well. In the United States, Canada, Puerto Rico, U.S. Virgin Islands and Bermuda call toll-free 800-527-0218 or in other locations worldwide call collect +1-410-453-6330.

[www.operations@medexassist.com](mailto:www.operations@medexassist.com)

## **Base Long Term Disability Plan**

Bannock County provides Standard Insurance Company's Base Long Term Disability Plan that is designed to help protect your income in the event you are unable to work due to a covered disability. Your LTD coverage under the Base LTD Plan will go into effect on the day after you serve your 90 day eligibility waiting period, provided you meet the active work requirement. The monthly LTD benefit amount is determined by multiplying your insured pre-disability earnings by the specified benefit percentage (40%). This amount is then reduced by other income you receive or are eligible to receive while LTD benefits are payable. The maximum benefit period is based on a two-year age-graded table.

## **Enhanced Long Term Disability Plan**

Bannock County allows you to enroll in Standard Insurance Company's Enhanced Long Term Disability Plan that is designed to help protect your income in the event you are unable to work due to a covered disability. Your LTD coverage under the Enhanced LTD Plan will go into effect on the day after you serve your 90 day eligibility waiting period, provided you meet the active work requirement. The monthly LTD benefit amount is determined by multiplying your insured pre-disability earnings by the specified benefit percentage (60%). This amount is then reduced by other income you receive or are eligible to receive while LTD benefits are payable. The maximum benefit period is based on an age-graded table to age 65. If you become disabled before age 62, LTD benefits may continue during disability until you reach age 65. If you become disabled at age 62 or older, the benefit duration is determined by your age when disability begins.

## **AFLAC**

Through payroll deduction, employees have the opportunity to participate in AFLAC Supplemental Benefit Plans – Personal Accident Indemnity Plan, Personal Cancer Indemnity Plan, Hospital Protection, Specified Health Event Protector, and Hospital Intensive Care Protector. An example of some of the benefits paid depends on the coverage elected, but could include: hospitalization, surgery, radiation & chemo for cancer, ambulance ground & air, physical therapy, diagnostic & wellness exams, travel & lodging and hospice/home health. AFLAC Supplemental Benefits are portable. They can be continued and paid personally or deducted from your PERSI Retirement at the same price. Please contact AFLAC at (208) 237-3088, fax (208) 237-3087 or [www.aflac.com](http://www.aflac.com).

## **Direct Deposit**

At no cost to you, your paycheck can be wire-transferred into your bank, credit union, or savings and loan. This places your paycheck into your account automatically each pay period.