

AT&T Ameritech /SBC Retirees - We are AASBCR®

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BLUE BULLETIN

VOL 17, NO 016
October 2022

Surviving Dependent Coverage

In our October 2022, *Blue Bulletin, Vol 17, No 15* we provided some information regarding the type of coverage a spouse or dependent would have on the death of the retiree. In that document we referenced the Surviving Dependent Coverage section beginning on Page 28 of the AT&T Group Medicare Advantage Plan SPD.

That section discusses “Company Extended Coverage” or CEC and states that: “If you are enrolled in the Program as of your date of death, medical coverage for your enrolled dependents will continue through the end of the month and continued coverage under Company Extended Coverage (CEC) will be available after that, under the same terms that would have applied if you remained alive, subject to their continued eligibility and payment of required contributions.”

Since the publication of that Bulletin, we have heard from some members that they have received conflicting information regarding how medical benefits will be provided to spouses and dependents of a deceased retiree. In light of that confusion, we contacted AT&T HR and asked for a clarification. Their response echoed the verbiage found in the SPD. They said:

“As long as the spouse/dependent is under medical coverage as of the date of death of the retiree, their coverage will expire the end of that month and then can be continued under company extended coverage – for as long as any contributions continue to be paid and as long as the plan is offered to retirees.

If the spouse/dependent drops/declines coverage or stops making contributions, they will NOT be permitted to get back on the plan at a later date. The survivor rate is \$88.13 for 2023 and will drop to \$50 in 2024.

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They went on to say that if the surviving spouse is in a plan on the exchange for 2023, they can transition to the AT&T Group Medicare Advantage plan in 2024.

In addition:

- AT&T advised that this transition to CEC should occur automatically for the surviving spouse/dependent.
- All conditions described above apply to grandfathered retirees as well.