

NOVEMBER 2024



## CALIFORNIA SCHOOLS VEBA (VEBA) MEMBERS

### Open Enrollment is Here!

#### NEW: Your Open Enrollment Guide

Open Enrollment is your opportunity to secure the coverage that best supports your needs. We're excited to launch some new resources to help you ensure you have the information needed to make the best choices for your health care coverage in the year ahead.

#### Where do you start?

Before diving into plan options, take a moment to reflect on your healthcare needs for the coming year. Knowing what coverage matters most to you—like access to specialists or out-of-pocket costs—can help narrow down the best choices.

Our [Open Enrollment Guide](#) is your go-to resource, with clear examples and practical tips to help you evaluate available plans. It covers everything from choosing the right health plan to understanding coverage and assessing plan networks. Check out the guide to confidently navigate your options.

Looking for more insights? Visit our [blog](#) for additional tips and areas to consider when selecting your next plan.

**Questions about your coverage?** Your Benefits Administrator is a great resource. The VEBA Advocacy Team is also here to help you navigate the healthcare system—whether it's accessing care, issues with referrals and prior authorizations, or getting the most from your VEBA benefits for you and your family. Call [888-276-0250](tel:888-276-0250) or visit [vebaonline.com/contact](http://vebaonline.com/contact) to contact the VEBA Advocacy Team.

#### Review Your Health Plan

Easily review your current health plan information on the [MyVEBA online portal](#) from your desktop browser.

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#### Download Your Digital ID Card

Let's get digital! The rumors are true, VEBA plan carriers are no longer providing physical ID cards (unless you request them). Learn how to download your ID card [here](#).

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## Healthy Gut, Happy Holidays

The holiday season can impact both your gut and your mood. With nearly 90% of your body's serotonin—a key mood-regulating neurotransmitter—produced in the gut, supporting your gut health is a powerful way to care for your mental well-being, too.

Visit the California Schools VEBA Cooking & Nutrition Hub to download your **Gut Check: Essential Starter Kit** and get tips on nurturing your gut health with nutritious recipes like No-Bake Chocolate Peanut Butter Truffles and Loaded Miso Soup.

Inside, you'll learn how to:

- Improve gut health for better overall wellness.
- Identify food sensitivities and reset your gut.
- Incorporate easy, gut-friendly habits and recipes.
- Make this season a healthier one—start your journey today!

### [Download the Toolkit](#)

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## NEW: Coping Through the Holidays

The holiday season can bring joy—but also stress, anxiety, and loneliness. This year, give yourself the gift of emotional well-being with California Schools VEBA's **Coping Through the Holidays** virtual support group. Led by licensed therapist Crystal Powers, MA, LMFT, this three-week workshop provides a safe space to explore your feelings and learn practical coping tools.

Sign up to discover how to:

- Manage holiday stressors with emotional awareness and resilience.
- Set healthy boundaries with family and work.
- Create a personalized self-care routine to stay grounded.

### [Register Now](#)

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## Mental Well-Being Benefits & Programs

For general benefits eligibility and enrollment questions or help finding a mental health professional in your health plan benefit network, contact the VEBA Advocacy Team at [vebaonline.com/contact](http://vebaonline.com/contact) or call [888-276-0250](tel:888-276-0250).

### Optum Emotional Wellbeing Solutions (EWS)

In partnership with Optum Emotional Wellbeing Solutions (EWS) (formerly Optum EAP), Dedicated Consultants are available virtually and at the VEBA Resource Center (VRC) – Kearny Mesa.

Get support with issues like stress, relationship conflicts, work-life balance, communication strategies, and beyond. To learn more, [watch this video](#) or visit <https://bit.ly/optumvrc> to make an account and schedule an appointment.

*Available for VEBA members and their dependents age 18+.*

Visit [liveandworkwell.com](https://liveandworkwell.com) (access code: VEBA) for additional Optum EWS resources.

### Looking for a therapy appointment? Check out these options available:

- **VEBA Therapy:** Short-term support for mental health needs is also available through the VRC. A lifeline to you during moments of urgency, a licensed therapist at the VRC may serve as your bridge between the professional care you need now, and the care provided by your health plan benefits. Therapy appointments are available virtually and in-person at the VRC - Kearny Mesa location.
  - Schedule a consultation with a [VEBA Care Navigator](#)—a critical care and holistic Registered Nurse. To schedule a Care Navigation appointment, call [619-398-4220](tel:619-398-4220) or [book an appointment here](#). The Care Navigator will assist you with scheduling your therapy appointment.
- **Kaiser Members:** For care or treatment of a mental health concern, call Kaiser Permanente at [800-464-4000](tel:800-464-4000) (8 am to 5:30 pm, Monday – Friday). No referral needed.
- **UHC Members:** Sign in to your member account or call the number on your member ID card to determine eligibility for specific mental health care services.
- **Optum Members:** Request a telehealth individual or group therapy appointment through Mindpath Health (formerly Psychiatric Centers at San Diego). Here’s how to access this benefit:
  - Get an authorization code: Call Optum at [888-625-4809](tel:888-625-4809).
  - Schedule your appointment: Call [619-528-4600](tel:619-528-4600) with your authorization code.

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### VEBA Advocacy

If you’re having difficulty getting the care you need—whether it's trouble scheduling timely appointments with your provider or navigating your health plan’s options—the VEBA Advocacy Team is here to help. We work with you and your carrier to resolve delays and ensure you can see the right doctors at the right time.

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Our goal is to help you overcome barriers to care, so you can focus on your health and well-being.

Call the VEBA Advocacy team Monday-Friday from 8 am to 5 pm at [888-276-0250](tel:888-276-0250) or visit [vebaonline.com/contact](https://vebaonline.com/contact) to submit a request.

**Important note:** For urgent requests, please click the “Urgent” box located on the contact form. Inquiries typically receive a response within one business day of receipt.

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### Stay Connected on Social Media

Follow us on social media to stay connected with your VEBA community! Discover upcoming events, gain expert tips, and learn about the latest news. Share your experiences with VEBA resources or benefits by tagging us in your posts.

[Facebook](#)

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