

Frequently Asked Questions for HSAs (Health Savings Accounts)

HOW A HEALTH SAVINGS ACCOUNT (HSA) WORKS

Q: What is an HSA and how does it work?

A: A Health Savings Account allows you to pay for eligible medical, dental and vision expenses. If you elect the Harvard Pilgrim High-Deductible PPO Plan, the College provides a contribution to your HSA. You may also contribute to your HSA account by making pre-tax contributions.

Q: How much is the College contributing toward the HSA?

A: For 2026, the College contributes half of the In-Network annual deductible amount: \$1000 if you elect individual coverage and \$2,000 if you elect Individual + 1 or family coverage. The College's contributions are made within the first few business days after January 1, unless you enroll mid-year. Mid-year enrollments result in a pro-rated contribution from the College.

Q: Can I contribute to the HSA?

A: Yes. Any contributions you make are deducted from your paycheck on a pre-tax basis and deposited into your account. Your account balance (including the College contribution) can be used for any eligible health care expenses throughout the year – or in future years.

Q: How much can be contributed to the HSA?

A: Annual maximum contribution information is provided each year on the [High Deductible PPO with HSA webpage](#).

Q: What happens to unused money in my account?

A: Any unused HSA balance carries forward into future years – even if you leave Emerson College or retire. There is no “use it or lose” provision as there is under a Flexible Spending Account. However, special rules apply if you also contribute to a Healthcare Flexible Spending Account (see the “Participating in an HSA and an FSA” section below).

Q: When and how do I make my election if I want to contribute to the HSA?

A: You may elect a contribution amount as part of the Open Enrollment process. You can also elect, stop or change your contribution amount once per month. Changes made during the year will be effective as of the first of the month following the request. You may make your change on Workday. Make sure to submit a ticket to hr@emerson.edu for assistance.

Q: Where can I get more information about the HSA (before I enroll or once I have an account)?

A: There is information on the [High Deductible PPO with HSA webpage](#). In addition, you can contact the Health Equity Customer Service line at 1-844-341-6998 24 hours per day/7 days a week. You will be asked to provide the last four digits of your Social Security number but you can still speak to a representative if you do not have this information. Once you have enrolled and have an account, you can also log into www.my.healthyequity.com (make sure to log in as an “Employee”) to see additional information, manage your notifications, see your account balance and get reimbursed from your account.

Q: What information will I receive if I enroll in an HSA?

A: Our HSA provider, Health Equity, will send you the following information when you enroll:

- **An enrollment confirmation email** welcoming you to the HSA and providing login information
- **An HSA Quick Start Guide via mail** with helpful information about your HSA, and
- **A Health Equity Debit Card in a separate mailing** to use for HSA expenses.

Q: Am I eligible for the HP High-Deductible PPO Plan, including the Health Savings Account, if I am covered under Medicare?

A: If you have signed up for Medicare, you should not elect the HP High-Deductible PPO Plan as you will not be eligible to make contributions to a Health Savings Account (employer or employee contributions). If you are considering signing up for Medicare, you may want to contact HR for more information about the College medical options before you sign up for Medicare.

Note that you are automatically enrolled in Medicare Part A if you begin receiving Social Security retirement income.

ACCESSING MY HSA ACCOUNT

Q: How do I access my HSA funds?

A: Once you have eligible health care expenses, there are several ways to pay for the expense. You may access your HSA funds with the Health Equity debit card or through the following apps and features through the Health Equity website:

- Health Equity mobile app
- Pay Provider, or;
- Reimburse Me (to request a check or direct deposit)

Q: Do I need to submit bills and receipts to verify my HSA card expenses?

A: No. For the HSA, you do not need to submit documentation to Health Equity. However, it is important that you maintain your own records for future reference or in the event of an IRS inquiry. The IRS will impose an additional 20% tax on any part of the distributions that are not used for qualified medical expenses.

Note that you will need to submit documentation when requesting reimbursement.

Q: How will I receive statements for my HSA?

A: The Health Equity HSA default is for paper statements to be mailed. If you don't change this option, a monthly fee of \$1.50 will be deducted from your HSA. However, if you switch to electronic delivery there is no statement fee.

Q: Are there any other fees to participate in the HSA?

A: There is a custodial/administrative fee of \$2.00 per month for HSA participants that will be deducted from your HSA each month. This fee is waived if your account balance is over \$5000. There are no other fees while you are an employee at the College.

PARTICIPATING IN AN HSA AND AN FSA

Q: Can I participate in a Healthcare FSA and an HSA at the same time?

A: You may participate in an HSA and a **Limited Purpose Flexible** Spending Account, since you may not submit medical claims to an FSA account if you have an HSA. Eligible expenses under a Limited Purpose FSA are restricted to vision and dental care expenses.

Q: Why would someone have both an HSA *and* a Limited Purpose FSA?

A: There are several reasons you might want to contribute to both an HSA and Limited Purpose FSA:

- The Limited Purpose helps to save funds and future invest in the HSA sooner, by keeping dental and vision expenses separate from the HSA.
- If you participate in the Limited Purpose FSA, your full annual election amount is credited to your account in January (your contributions are deducted with each paycheck).

Q: If I choose to also enroll in a Limited Purpose FSA, will the HSA and the Limited Purpose FSA be on the same card?

A: Yes. If you participate in both, you will receive a "stacked" Health Equity Card which will be used for both the HSA and Limited Purpose FSA accounts. (Dental and vision expenses will be drawn from the Limited Purpose account and medical expenses from the HSA account; until the money in the Limited Purpose FSA account is used up).

Q: Do I need to submit bills and receipts to verify expenses for my Limited Purposes FSA (If I choose to have one in addition to my HSA)?

A: Yes. Per the IRS, all FSA transactions require submission of bills and/or receipts. Receipts will not be needed if a card transaction meets the following criteria:

- Match to a Recurring Transaction (You previously submitted a receipt for the same dollar value at the same merchant and it was approved)
- IRS-approved Inventory System (Prescriptions and FSA-eligible OTC items are confirmed eligible at the point of sale).

INVESTING MY HSA ACCOUNT

Q: May I invest the money in my HSA and receive investment earnings?

A: Yes. Once your HSA account balance reaches \$1,000, you may choose to invest in one or more investment funds. You have a choice of funds through Health Equity, and can also invest through the Charles Schwab brokerage account.

Q: Is there a minimum amount for each fund that I invest in?

A: No. The only minimum you need to be aware of is the \$1,000 amount noted above.

Q: Will I be taxed on my investment earnings?

A: No. You do not pay taxes on your investment earnings. You will, however, pay taxes – and a 20% penalty – if you use your HSA funds for ineligible expenses.

Q: What happens to my HSA balance if I terminate my employment with the College?

A: Your HSA balance is still available to pay for eligible health care expenses if you terminate your employment or retire from the College. You may also continue to use all of the Health Equity/WageWorks features (e.g., Customer Service via phone and access to your account). The only differences are:

- You will be responsible for an additional monthly account maintenance fee of \$3.95 (deducted directly from your HSA account balance)
- The College will not make any additional deposits to your account. You may still make contributions to your account on an after-tax basis if you are enrolled in a “high deductible medical plan.”

Q: What happens to my HSA balance if I should die?

A: Your beneficiary would be able to continue to use your HSA balance for eligible health care expenses.

Member options to Add Beneficiary:

- You can add your beneficiary online through the member portal
- You can submit a signed Beneficiary Designation Form
- A Member Services specialist can add the beneficiary after verifying your identity.
(Remember: only the account member can add a beneficiary)

When an account holder passes away, the beneficiary must contact Member Services to report the passing. They cannot continue to use the HSA because they are not the account holder (and the account holder is no longer living) regardless if they are eligible as a dependent.

If you have any questions about the HSA, please contact Health Equity at 844-341-6998.

