

SHORT TITLE: Oklahoma State Employees Benefits Act; exempting flexible benefits plan contracts from the Central Purchasing Act; allowing Oklahoma State Employees Benefits Council to establish rules relating to bidding and awarding of contracts; effective date.

STATE OF OKLAHOMA

1st Session of the 46th Legislature (1997)

SENATE BILL NO. 660

By: Monson

AS INTRODUCED

An Act relating to retirement benefits; amending Section 85.12, as last amended by Section 5, Chapter 316, O.S.L. 1996, Section 6, Chapter 400, O.S.L. 1992, as amended by Section 3, Chapter 183, O.S.L. 1996, and Section 11, Chapter 400, O.S.L. 1992, as last amended by Section 8, Chapter 288, O.S.L. 1996, and 74 O.S. 1991, (74 O.S. Supp. 1996, Sections 85.12, 1366 and 1371), which relate to flexible benefits plan and awarding of contracts; exempting flexible benefits plan contracts from the Central Purchasing Act; allowing Oklahoma State Employees Benefits Council to establish rules relating to bidding and awarding of contracts; and providing an effective date.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA:

SECTION 1. AMENDATORY 74 O.S. 1991, Section 85.12, as last amended by Section 5, Chapter 316, O.S.L. 1996 (74 O.S. Supp. 1996, Section 85.12), is amended to read as follows:

Section 85.12. A. The provisions of this section shall not be construed to affect any law relating to fiscal or accounting procedure except such as may be directly in conflict herewith; and

all claims, warrants and bonds shall be examined, inspected and approved as now provided by law.

B. The following acquisitions shall not be included within the purview of the Oklahoma Central Purchasing Act, Section 85.1 et seq. of this title:

1. Food and other products produced by state institutions and agencies;

2. Contracts for construction of new buildings and for the repair, maintenance or modernization of old buildings by state educational institutions included within The Oklahoma State System of Higher Education;

3. The printing or duplication of publications or forms of whatsoever kind or character by state agencies, which service is performed upon their own equipment, by their own employees;

4. Acquisitions by institutions of The Oklahoma State System of Higher Education, the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education, or the University Centers subject to the State Regents insofar as such acquisitions relate to textbooks, laboratory supplies, instructional materials and specialized laboratory equipment or acquisitions for the telecommunications network known as OneNet, whether said network is governed or operated by the State Regents or any other state entity assigned responsibility for OneNet;

5. Department of Transportation and Transportation Commission contractual services or right-of-way purchases. Contracts awarded pursuant to bids let by the Transportation Commission for the maintenance or construction of streets, roads, highways, bridges, or underpasses, or any other transportation facilities under the control of the Department of Transportation, the acquisitions of equipment or materials accruing to the Department of Transportation required in Federal-Aid contracts, and contracts for public service type announcements initiated by the Department of Transportation.

Contractual services as used herein shall not include advertising or public relations services;

6. Utility services where rates therefor are regulated by a state or federal regulatory commission, or by city ordinance or by an Indian Tribal Council for use by the Department of Corrections only;

7. Acquisition of products and services by the University Hospitals and the University Hospitals Authority. The Authority shall develop standards for the acquisition of products and services and may elect to utilize Central Purchasing when appropriate. Such standards shall foster economy, short response time, and shall include appropriate safeguards and written records to assure appropriate competition and economical and efficient purchasing and shall be approved by the Director of Central Purchasing;

8. Contracts for custom harvesting by the Department of Corrections for the Department or its institutions;

9. Contracts with private prison contractors which are subject to the contracting procedures of Section 561 of Title 57 of the Oklahoma Statutes;

10. Acquisitions of aircraft by agencies authorized by the Legislature to purchase aircraft;

11. Purchases by the Oklahoma Municipal Power Authority;

12. Grand River Dam Authority;

13. Purchases by rural water, sewer, gas or solid waste management districts created pursuant to Section 1324.1 et seq. of Title 82 of the Oklahoma Statutes;

14. Purchases by the Oklahoma Ordnance Works Authority or Midwestern Oklahoma Development Authority;

15. Contracts entered into by the Oklahoma Industrial Finance Authority for the services of an appraiser or for acquisition of insurance when it is determined by its Board of Directors that an

emergency exists and for the services of legal counsel when approved by the Attorney General;

16. Expenditure of monies appropriated to the State Board of Education for the purpose of Local, State-supported Programs and State-supported Programs except monies appropriated for the Administrative and Support Functions of the State Department of Education;

17. Contracts entered into by the State Department of Vocational and Technical Education for the development, revision or updating of vocational curriculum materials and contracts entered into by the State Department of Vocational and Technical Education for training and supportive services that meet the needs of new or expanding industries, or both, contributing to economic growth and development of Oklahoma while maintaining Oklahoma's competitive advantage and flexibility in meeting their needs;

18. Contracts entered into by the Oklahoma Center for the Advancement of Science and Technology for professional services;

19. Contracts entered into by the Oklahoma Department of Commerce pursuant to the provisions of Section 5066.4 of this title;

20. Purchases made by the Oklahoma Historical Society from monies used to administer the White Hair Memorial;

21. Purchases of products available to an agency through a General Services Administration contract or other federal contract if the item is on current state contract and the terms of such contract are more favorable to the agency than the terms of a state contract for the same products as determined by the State Purchasing Director;

22. Contracts for managed health care services entered into by the state entity designated by law or the Department of Human Services, as specified in paragraph 1 of subsection A of Section 1010.3 of Title 56 of the Oklahoma Statutes;

23. Purchases of products by the Forestry Service of the State Department of Agriculture as authorized by the federal General Services Administration through a General Services Administration contract or other federal contract if the item is not on current state contract or the terms of such federal contract are more favorable to the agency than the terms of a state contract for the same products;

24. Purchases amounting to less than that requiring competitive bid pursuant to Section 85.7 of this title. The Director of Central Services shall promulgate rules related to such purchases in excess of Seven Hundred Fifty Dollars (\$750.00) and not exceeding Two Thousand Five Hundred Dollars (\$2,500.00) to ensure competitiveness and fairness in such purchases;

25. Purchases or acquisitions of clothing for clients of the Department of Human Services and purchases and acquisitions of food for group homes operated by the Department of Human Services; ~~and~~

26. Purchases made or contracts entered into by the Oklahoma Energy Resources Board; and

27. State contracts concerning flexible benefits plans pursuant to the Oklahoma State Employees Benefits Act, Section 1361 et seq. of this title.

C. Notwithstanding the exclusions provided herein, any agency or common schools of Oklahoma, any municipality of the state, any rural fire protection district and county officers may, unless the contract with the state specifies otherwise, avail themselves of the provisions of the Oklahoma Central Purchasing contracts and the services of the Purchasing Director. Provided further, however, that any subdivision of government and any rural fire protection district of the state may designate the office of Oklahoma Central Purchasing as its agent for the purchase or procurement of any item or service contracted or available to the state.

D. Further, notwithstanding the exclusions provided herein, the purchasing policies and procedures of the Oklahoma Ordnance Works Authority, the University Hospitals Authority and the Midwestern Oklahoma Development Authority shall be subject to approval by the Director of the Department of Central Services, and said Director shall make periodic audits of the purchasing policies and procedures of the Oklahoma Ordnance Works Authority, the University Hospitals Authority and the Midwestern Oklahoma Development Authority to ensure that said purchasing policies and procedures, as approved, are being followed.

SECTION 2. AMENDATORY Section 6, Chapter 400, O.S.L. 1992, as amended by Section 3, Chapter 183, O.S.L. 1996 (74 O.S. Supp. 1996, Section 1366), is amended to read as follows:

Section 1366. A. The Oklahoma State Employees Benefits Council shall establish a flexible benefits plan in accordance with the provisions of ~~this act~~ Section 1361 et seq. of this title. All participating employers shall offer the plan to their eligible employees.

B. The Council shall interpret the plan and decide any matters arising thereunder and may adopt such rules and procedures as it deems necessary, desirable or appropriate in the administration of the plan subject to the Administrative Procedures Act. All rules and decisions of the Council shall be uniformly and consistently applied to all participants in similar circumstances and shall be conclusive and binding on all persons having an interest in the plan. When making any decision or determination, the Council shall be entitled to rely upon such information as may be furnished to it by a participant, a participating employer, legal counsel, third party administrator or the management of any individual benefit plan which is incorporated in the plan.

C. The executive director, under the direction of the Council, may contract with one or more firms or organizations to administer

or provide consulting services in regard to all or any portion of the plan.

The Council shall solicit proposals on a competitive bid basis ~~from such firms or organizations according to the standards set out in the~~. Contracts for the flexible benefits plan shall not be subject to the provisions of the Oklahoma Central Purchasing Act, Section 85.1 et seq. of Title 74 of the Oklahoma Statutes this title. The Council shall promulgate rules establishing appropriate competitive bidding criteria and procedures for contracts awarded pursuant to Section 1361 et seq. of this title. When requested by the Council, the Department of Central Services shall assist the Council in the process of selecting any contracts for the design, development, communication or implementation of the plan.

When awarding a contract for services pursuant to this subsection, the Council shall satisfy itself that the contractor has no interests which would impair its ability to perform the tasks and services required and that the contractor will exercise proper independent judgment when performing its responsibilities under ~~this act~~ Section 1361 et seq. of this title and under the contract.

D. The Council shall implement the plan created by this act for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 1993. The Council shall submit to the Director of the Legislative Service Bureau and the Director of the Office of State Finance a report detailing the procedures and operations performed or to be performed by the Council along with the associated costs for implementing and operating the plan prior to December 1, 1992. Said report, written in cooperation with the State and Education Employees Group Insurance Board, shall make specific reference to the duties and responsibilities to be transferred from the Board to the Council by identifying and listing said duties and responsibilities, the actions of the Board that have facilitated or will facilitate the transfer of said duties and responsibilities, and what actions, if any, the Council desires the

Board to take in order to further the efficient and effective transfer of said duties and responsibilities.

E. Expenses included in an employee's salary adjustment agreement pursuant to the flexible benefits plan shall be limited to expenses for:

1. Premiums for any health insurance, health maintenance organization, life insurance, long term disability insurance, dental insurance or high deductible health benefit plan offered to employees and their dependents;

2. Insurance premiums or retirement plan premiums or payments which are supplemental to insurance or retirement programs offered by the State of Oklahoma or which are paid for under salary adjustment agreements pursuant to the provisions of Section 7.10 of Title 62 of the Oklahoma Statutes;

3. Dependent care;

4. Medical care, as defined by the Council; and

5. All other eligible benefit programs offered under 26 United States Code Section 125.

F. The amount by which an employee's salary is adjusted pursuant to a salary adjustment agreement shall be excluded from income in computation of income tax withholding, federal insurance contributions act taxes, unemployment payments and workers' compensation coverage. Such amount shall be included as income in computation of state retirement contributions and benefits. Provided, if the inclusions and exclusions provided in this subsection conflict with the provisions of federal law or regulations pertaining to flexible benefits plans, the Council is authorized to modify or abolish such inclusions and exclusions.

G. The Office of Personnel Management shall provide the Council with the necessary services and facilities required to administer the programs of the Council. Legal representation shall be provided by the Office of the Attorney General through the Office of

Personnel Management as provided for in Section 18 1 of ~~Title 74 of the Oklahoma Statutes~~ this title. The Office of Personnel Management shall be reimbursed by the Council for the cost of such services and facilities.

For budgetary purposes only, employees of the Council shall be considered employees of the Office of Personnel Management; however, such employees shall not for any other reason be considered employees of the Office of Personnel Management. The executive director shall be the appointing authority and agency head. All other positions and employees shall be classified and subject to the provisions of the Merit System of Personnel Administration except actuaries and other personnel and positions in the unclassified service as provided in Section 840-5.5 of this title.

SECTION 3. AMENDATORY Section 11, Chapter 400, O.S.L. 1992, as last amended by Section 8, Chapter 288, O.S.L. 1996 (74 O.S. Supp. 1996, Section 1371), is amended to read as follows:

Section 1371. A. All participants must use a portion or all of their flexible benefit allowance to purchase at least the basic plan. On or before January 1 of each year, the Council shall design the basic plan for the next plan year to insure that the basic plan provides adequate coverage to all participants. All benefit plans, whether offered by the Board, a health maintenance organization or other vendors shall at least meet the minimum requirements set by the Council for the basic plan.

B. The Board shall offer health, dental, disability, life and dental coverage to all participants and their dependents. For health, dental, disability and life coverage, the Board shall offer plans at the basic benefit level established by the Council, and in addition, may offer benefit plans that provide an enhanced level of benefits. The Board shall offer a high deductible health benefit plan which, after meeting the higher deductible amount, shall have the same coinsurance and benefit limits as the basic benefit plan

but with a higher deductible amount and with copayments which are no greater than the basic benefit plan. The Board shall be responsible for determining the plan design and the benefit price for the plans that they offer. Effective for the plan year beginning July 1, 1997, and for each year thereafter, in setting health insurance premiums for active employees and for retirees under sixty-five (65) years of age, the Board shall set the monthly premium for active employees at a maximum of Ninety Dollars (\$90.00) less than the monthly premium for retirees under sixty-five (65) years of age.

The benefits price for the basic plan during a plan year shall not exceed the flexible benefits allowance for the same plan year. The Council shall approve the plan designs to assure that they meet the minimum benefit levels.

Nothing in this subsection shall be construed as prohibiting the Board from offering additional medical plans, provided that any medical plan offered to participants shall meet or exceed the benefits provided in the medical portion of the basic plan.

C. A participant may elect the high deductible health benefit plan offered by the Board and any excess flexible benefit allowance remaining after payment of the higher deductible benefit price may be deposited in a medical saving account established in accordance with the Medical Saving Account Act. Any excess flexible benefit allowance deposited in a medical saving account shall not be considered taxable compensation.

D. In lieu of electing any of the preceding medical benefit plans, a participant may elect medical coverage by any health maintenance organization made available to participants by the Council. The benefit price of any health maintenance organization shall be determined ~~annually by a sealed bid process conducted through the Central Purchasing Division of the Department of Central Services~~ on a competitive bid basis. Contracts for said plans shall not be subject to the provisions of the Oklahoma Central Purchasing

Act, Section 85.1 et seq. of this title. The Council shall promulgate rules establishing appropriate competitive bidding criteria and procedures for contracts awarded pursuant to Section 1361 et seq. of this title. All plans offered by health maintenance organizations meeting the bid requirements as determined by the Council shall be accepted. Provided, however, the Council shall have the authority to reject the bid or restrict enrollment in any health maintenance organization for which the benefit price is determined to be excessive by the Council. In making such determination the Council shall examine the most recent financial data of the health maintenance organization and shall consider the prices charged for comparable plans offered to other groups. All bidders shall submit along with their bid a notarized, sworn statement as provided by Section 85.22 of this title. The Council shall have the authority to reject any plan that does not meet the bid requirements. Effective for the plan year beginning July 1, 1997, and for each year thereafter, in setting health insurance premiums for active employees and for retirees under sixty-five (65) years of age, HMOs, self-insured organizations and prepaid plans shall set the monthly premium for active employees at a maximum of Ninety Dollars (\$90.00) less than the monthly premium for retirees under sixty-five (65) years of age.

E. Nothing in this section shall be construed as prohibiting the Council from offering additional qualified benefit plans or currently taxable benefit plans.

F. Each employee of a participating employer who meets the eligibility requirements for participation in the flexible benefits plan shall make an annual election of benefits under the plan during an enrollment period to be held prior to the beginning of each plan year. The enrollment period dates will be determined annually and will be announced by the Council, providing the enrollment period

shall end no later than thirty (30) days before the beginning of the plan year.

Each such employee shall make an irrevocable advance election for the plan year or the remainder thereof pursuant to such procedures as the Council shall prescribe. Any such employee who fails to make a proper election under the plan shall, nevertheless, be a participant in the plan and shall be deemed to have purchased the default benefits described in this section.

G. The Council shall prescribe the forms that participants will be required to use in making their elections, and may prescribe deadlines and other procedures for filing the elections.

H. Any participant who, in the first year for which he or she is eligible to participate in the plan, fails to make a proper election under the plan in conformance with the procedures set forth in this section or as prescribed by the Council shall be deemed automatically to have purchased the default benefits. The default benefits shall be the same as the basic plan benefits. Any participant who, after having participated in the plan during the previous plan year, fails to make a proper election under the plan in conformance with the procedures set forth in this section or prescribed by the Council, shall be deemed automatically to have purchased the same benefits which the participant purchased in the immediately preceding plan year, except that the participant shall not be deemed to have elected coverage under the health care reimbursement account plan or the dependent care reimbursement account plan.

I. Benefit plan contracts with the Board, health maintenance organizations, and other third party insurance vendors shall provide for a risk adjustment factor for adverse selection that may occur, as determined by the Council, based on generally accepted actuarial principles.

SECTION 4. This act shall become effective on November 1, 1997.

46-1-0233

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