

## Save our Skookum (SOS)

### Frequently asked questions

**Q: What is the point of making members apply for Oregon Health Plan/Medicaid or other state coverage?**

**A:** To save Tribal dollars. If you are eligible for a state plan, this would become primary and pays claims before Skookum, which saves Tribal funds.

**Q: Does Tribal Council know you're doing this to the membership?**

**A:** Yes. This was a directive from Tribal Council. (We are doing this FOR the membership ... to benefit everyone by keeping the plan sustainable.)

**Q: What information can be submitted to the Skookum Secondary Payer Group if I don't qualify for the state coverage?**

**A:** Income verification, such as a pay stub or tax information showing you are over the income limits would be acceptable.

**Q: If I am an Elder receiving the Tribal Elder Pension, single family of one, do I have to apply?**

**A:** No, not if you are a single family of one, receiving the Tribal Elder Pension. The Skookum Secondary Payer Group will verify your pension information with Member Benefits.

**Q: If I am a married Elder receiving Tribal Elders Pension, and my spouse is working, do I have to apply?**

**A:** If you are a family of two, receiving Tribal Elders Pension, the Skookum Secondary Payer Group will need to verify income information for your household to help determine whether or not you need to apply for OHP/Medicaid.

**Q: If I have a primary insurance, do I have to apply?**

**A:** No, not at this time. This will only affect Tribal members using Skookum as their only coverage.

**Q: Isn't my Skookum Health Program benefit insurance coverage?**

**A:** No, Skookum is not an insurance plan, therefore, it is not considered to be insurance by definition. You should not reference Skookum as insurance, as it is not. It is a benefit you receive from the Tribe because you are an enrolled Tribal member.

**Q: What happens if I do not comply?**

**A:** Your claims will be suspended in a pending status at Shasta and not paid until you fulfill your obligation. Once it is confirmed that you have fulfilled your obligation, we will instruct Shasta to process and pay your claims.

**Q: I might be getting a job soon; if I do, should I drop my Medicaid?**

**A:** Keep your Medicaid until you have new coverage in effect and notify Medicaid of your change in status.

**Q: How do I apply for Medicaid?**

**A:** Many states have an online application and eligibility information or you can call the Department of Human Services in your state to learn about what is available to you.

**Q: Will there be Tribal staff available to answer my questions about applying for Medicaid?**

**A:** Yes, there will be Tribal staff available to assist you with questions.

**Q: Am I required to pay for insurance through my employer?**

**A:** We encourage those Tribal members with alternate resources, such as employer sponsored insurance, to enroll in those plans and use Skookum as a secondary coverage to pay for any balances that are patient responsibility. But, at this time, you aren't required to enroll in your employer plan if there is an associated premium that you must pay. (But you may certainly choose to.) ■

Thank you to everyone that has responded to this effort and/or provided necessary documentation. We look forward to hearing from you! Please call with your questions.

#### Skookum Health Plan Secondary Payer Team

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Save Our Skookum

## Letters

Dear *Smoke Signals*:

This is to all my fellow Tribal members for your consideration. Over the past few months several things have happened in our Tribe that have bothered me and should bother you, too.

One of our main issues as a people that we should be protecting is our sovereignty. Over the past few years it seems that our Tribe has moved more and more to getting people disenrolled and if you read some of the things of how these people were asked to leave the Tribe you would be outraged. I have concerns because what is to stop these people who clearly have an agenda? What is to stop them from going after somebody else who they do not like? Maybe they will come after you because you do not like them or their family. Maybe they will come after you because they do not like your political or social views.

I feel strongly that our strength is found in our people. If our ancestors could see what our leaders are doing to our own people today I am sure that our leaders would no longer lead. It should be our number one goal to keep the people enrolled in our Tribe. You do not see those who were adopted into our Tribe removed from our list, so why would we remove those people who have been a part of our Tribe for years and have a true blood lineage?

Certain people who come into power feel that because their paperwork was not filled out correctly they should be asked to leave. Our Tribe has been through a lot these past few years. You would think that our leaders would be helping us get stronger as a people instead of forcing division among us. The recession has been with us for quite some time and it does not look like it is going to be leaving any time soon.

I know this has been a trying time for our Tribal people and as a Tribal member I feel that we should be doing everything to ensure the strengths and well-being of all Tribal members and their families. I understand that we need to have cutbacks in the budget and stick to them as this is important to the well-being of our Tribe and Tribal future. I do not think as a Tribal member that we should be guaranteeing any company a three-year loan when our per capita keeps dropping and we are asking people to leave our Tribe.

When me and my wife lived in reservation housing, we paid over \$900 a month. Now keep in mind, I am on Social Security disability and she worked at the dental clinic at the time, and we were asked to pay \$900 a month to live on reservation land. We asked why the rent was so high. We were told that the Tribe was basing rental rates out of Portland, which is two hours away. There is more opportunity in Portland than there is on a reservation as we have found and relocated, and we pay only \$625 a month for a two-story duplex. I really do wonder if the people who do not live here locally really know what is going on. When they come here do they see that there is very low Tribal employment, that there are a lot of nonTribal members working for our Tribe, that a lot of those Tribal jobs are held by nonTribal members who are making more money than most Tribal members?

Now these issues are certainly not new, but what is new is how much it is getting out of hand. I know, and I'm sure most of you know, that the recession is not going away. It is going to be here for awhile and I think as a people we should be pulling together, keeping the people we have here and strengthening our families and making our leaders more accountable for their actions.

For example, those who voted to have people disenrolled. We should not support that decision and we should not re-elect those leaders who support that come election time. Our leaders have asked us to tighten up and be patient that we're going through a recession. So I understand their point of view and that is fine, but it does not seem to me that they understand our point of view because not one of them have or is willing to take a cut in pay.

I strongly feel that we are all family and we should be looking out for each other instead of tearing each other apart. Our government was almost successful in this effort, so are we just continuing where they left off?

If we keep this up we will destroy our Tribe emotionally and spiritually. I am asking you as a fellow Tribal member to contact the council members and let them know what they are doing is wrong and that you will remember their actions come re-election time.

Michael Bolton

Roll #4762

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The Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde's  
30<sup>th</sup> Restoration  
Celebration  
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503-879-1418

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