

- In This Issue...**
- Both SOM and ORS want to know what you think!
 - Strategic intent and business planning
 - More than 98 percent of members respond to BCBSM VOC
 - State of Michigan 401 (k) and 457 Plan Website Sees Improvements
 - Customers share their feedback on ORS Facebook page
 - ORS Gets Fit
 - CE's Carolyn Parkinson Earns Certification
 - Business briefs
 - Comings and Goings
 - Calling Fall sport coaches
 - Summer photo contest winner
 - Spotlight - CS puzzle project

Both SOM and ORS want to know what you think!

Employee engagement is a strong positive connection between you and your job. During the month of September, the State of Michigan and ORS will be sending Engagement Surveys to get your input. The SOM Engagement Survey will run from September 9 through September 23. Part of the goal in the reinvention of state government includes creating a work environment where all employees are respected and valued. Your feedback can help to guide actions at both the state and agency level.



The ORS Engagement Survey will run from September 18 through September 25. You see the day-to-day duties in ORS. Do you have some ideas? This is your time to speak up!

There are incentives for participating. For the entire office, we can get some casual days! If ORS has 80 percent completion of the SOM survey, we get one casual day; 85 percent completion is two casual days; and for 90 percent completion, we get four casual days! So be on the lookout for details of the incentive and the surveys; your input is valuable!

To kick off the surveys, EPC invited staff to an Engagement Party.

Calendar	
September	
SECC coin drive challenge	9
Get Fit Step-tember	

challenge	9
Central Perk cleaning	10
SECC chili and soup cook-off	11
EMPAC book sale	12
First day of autumn	22
SECC bingo	23
State employees board meeting	26
October	
SECC bake sale	1
Central Perk cleaning	9
SECC putt putt golf challenge	9
Public school employees board meeting	10
State Police board meeting	17
Get Fit Turkey Trot	21
Halloween	30



Click [here](#) to see more photos from the party.

back to top

Strategic intent and business planning

Strategic intent and business planning: two phrases that tell us what ORS is going to accomplish and how we'll know we are successful. The BPOs and BPLs (with EPO involvement) have been working to draft strategic and action steps.



- We will **forge operational excellence**. We want repeatable, reliable results in each process with quality built in.
- We will **instill customer confidence**. Our employees should convey trust and confidence, and customers should know who to ask for what.
- We will **engage hearts and minds**. All employees should have the opportunity to grow, learn, lead, and contribute. Employees should feel free to speak up, offer ideas, and raise issues that need attention.

The process could take one to two years to fully implement, but with it we'll continue to be an innovative retirement organization driven to empower our customers for a successful today and a secure tomorrow.

back to top

More than 98 percent of members respond to BCBSM VOC

For the second year in a row, more than 98 percent of members (and climbing) have responded to BCBSM's verification of coverage initiative, which starts in May, and wraps up at the end of September. BCBSM conducts this annual process on ORS's behalf to make sure that members still want, and are eligible for, their BCBSM insurance coverage and, if enrolled, Catamaran prescription drug coverage.



The excellent outreach efforts by our BCBSM partner have significantly reduced the burden on the CS call center. In 2012, CS received only 679 calls regarding the VOC. This year, the CS is prepared to field those calls quickly, effectively, and

On the Horizon	
• Central Perk cleaning - November 6	
• State employees board meeting - November 7	
• Veteran's Day - November 11	
• Thanksgiving - November 28	

Quick Links	
• ORS Member Website	
• ORS Employer Website	

Commonly Used Acronyms	
AST	Application Support Team
BLA	Business Leadership Assembly (<i>EPC, BPOs, and BPLs</i>)
BPD	Benefit Plan Design

BPL	Business Process Leader
BPO	Business Process Owner
CE	Customer Education
CS	Customer Service
DB	Defined Benefit
DC	Defined Contribution
DTMB	Department of Technology, Management and Budget
EPC	Executive Process Council (<i>Phil, Laurie H, Anthony, Laurie M, and Kerrie</i>)
EPO	Executive Process Owner
ER	Employer Reporting
ORS	Office of Retirement Services
PRIM	Preretirement Information Meeting (<i>public school employees</i>)
PRO	Preretirement Orientation (<i>state employees</i>)
PS	Process Support
SME	Subject Matter Expert
UAT	User Acceptance Testing

consistently using new the ORS KL Solution Finder.

As of August 27, 126,850 customers had responded, out of a total of 128,810. Each retiree received a minimum of two letters, and three phone calls from BCBSM before they were considered non-responders. Those who did not respond by August 27 were removed from prescription drug coverage effective August 31.

Members who respond before September 30 will be re-enrolled in prescription drug coverage and will remain enrolled in health coverage. Any members who've not responded by September 30 will have their health coverage canceled. Non-responders can be re-enrolled without a six-month wait if they submit the request and proofs within 30 days of the date of disenrollment. In that case, they'll be re-enrolled the month following the receipt of the request and proofs.

[back to top](#)

State of Michigan 401(k) and 457 Plan Website Sees Improvements

Together with ING, staff in CE and BPD are enhancing the online experience for participants in the State of Michigan 401(k) and 457 Plans with easier navigation and the creation of e-books. With the addition of so many different groups and variations in the 401(k) and 457 Plans, it was important to update the website so participants can find accurate information that is tailored to their specific plans.

The first change you'll notice at <https://stateofmi.ingplans.com> is that the Plan Information dropdown menu has been updated so participants will choose their retirement system. In the past, participants chose either information for the 401(k) plan or the 457 plan, which was mostly duplicated and it was unclear which information applied to which population.

Once the participants choose a retirement system, they are taken to the Plan Highlights page where they will navigate to the Plan Highlights e-book tailored to their plan. The e-book content is short, simple, and easy to read and navigate.

The first two e-books to go live are for [State Employees in the Defined Contribution \(DC\) Plan with Subsidized Insurances](#) and for [State Employees in the Defined Contribution \(DC\) Plan with the Personal Healthcare Fund](#).

All Pension Plus members will be directed to the [Pension Plus website](#) for their Plan Highlights – they will not have an e-book.

Watch for more additions and enhancements in the coming weeks. We'll keep you posted!

[back to top](#)



- Innovate and Improve Customer Service
- Best In Class Business Practices
- Instill Confidence in Staff Through Quality Communication
- Engage Top Talent to Realize Potential
- Continuously Renewed Business-Driven Technology

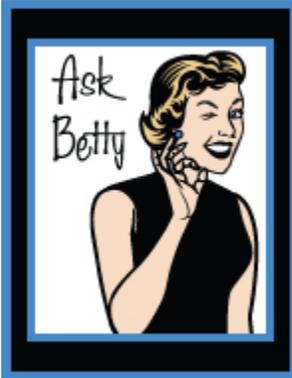
Employee Service Program

Have you ever wondered where you can find quality professional help with issues that may be a source of concern? At some point, we probably all have. It's reassuring to know that as state employees, we have access to licensed masters level social workers experienced in working with all types of everyday life and work related issues. This great resource is provided by the Employee Service Program, ESP, which provides assistance both through face-to-face and telephone appointments.



ESP offers free confidential assistance to state employees and their eligible family

- **Build Business Capacity Through Education and Development**
- **Proactive Policy Development and Legislative Strategy**



members. ESP's counselors provide individual services that include assessment of presenting problems or concerns, referrals to appropriate resources, and follow-up to ensure that the referrals are helpful. ESP counselors will help identify strategies for resolving concerns that are affecting personal or work life. Employee challenges that are addressed include managing stress, workplace issues and conflicts, job performance problems, emotional difficulties, family problems, grief and loss, substance abuse, and legal or financial difficulties.

In addition, ESP provides an excellent online interactive Systematic Stress Management Program designed to help manage stress and a Work/Life services webpage with resources covering many topics related to wellness and work/life balance.

Contact the Employee Service Program at (517) 373-7630 in Lansing, or (313) 456-4020 in Detroit, or (800) 521-1377 statewide, Monday thru Friday, 8:00 a.m.– 5:00 p.m. Access the ESP website anytime at www.michigan.gov/esp.

[back to top](#)

Customers share their feedback on ORS Facebook page



It's now been a few weeks since the ORS Facebook page launched. In less than a month, ORS has grown an unprecedented fan base among U.S. pension systems and has had a chance to make an impression on thousands of customers. The feedback we've received has been overwhelmingly positive. Kudos to Customer Service and everyone who has contributed to our success on Facebook! Here are some of the best comments:

Clark J. - *Received my answer to my question and follow up letter I requested. Thanks so much. What a great service from the ORS.*

Bruce T. - *Great job! So many changes and individual situations. I appreciate your good work!*

Nadine M. - *Really like the message board. Seems to be the quickest and best way to get things done. Good to have ORS on facebook.*

Daniel H. (first post) - *I have never experienced, such a complex mess as ORS. Trying to negotiate the site and all the layers is an out of body experience. I am 35 minutes in line waiting for a rep on the phone. Hope they can help me get in the system.*

Daniel H. (second post) - *Well, a really cool brother, from another mother, helped me out. Took 35 min for him to call back and he helped this old man get into the site and I been working on it for a couple hours. Making progress now. I hope I didn't insult all the good people like you who work there.*

Mary Ellen Y. - *I have been retired for a few years now and have always been impressed by ORS. Sometimes there is a wait, but considering all the cutbacks and short staffing, I think it's tolerable. The service and information I've requested and received has always been excellent.*

Mark A. - *You guys rock! Thanks for all you do!!*

Ziggy K. - *Social Legacy: The service to the public by so many dedicated State of Michigan people is one reason the quality of life in Michigan has been better than in most places in the United States. Do you agree?*

Veronica N.J. - *Thank you. I was able to get help through your representative over*



the telephone to access my account and see my service credit clearly displayed.

Lexie B. - *This is a great site! I always thought ORS was the easiest department to deal with.*

Jan R. - *Thank you for the prompt responses to my questions using the Message Board on the MiAccount site. You guys do a great job!*

— back to top —

ORS Gets Fit

ORS staff were greeted and treated on their first day back from the Labor Day weekend with a kickoff by the new ORS health and wellness group, Get Fit. The Get Fit team put together several informational stations that staff could check out during their lunch and breaks. Stations included:



- Taste test: Blind tasting of Coke and Coke Zero. Can you taste the difference?
- Information on quitting smoking.
- Desk-ercizes: Exercises you can do at your desk.
- Make your own yogurt parfait with yogurt, fruit, and granola.
- Have fun eat: Sheet of Top 10 tips to make healthy eating fun and delicious.
- Sign-up sheet for Get Fit.
- Steptember challenge signup and bag of goodies.

The September challenge will use a little friendly competition, and a high-tech pedometer, to encourage ORS staff to get moving in September. During the kickoff, about 50 people signed up for Get Fit and the September Challenge.

Missed the kickoff? Want to know more? Email the [Get Fit team](#) for more information and to sign up for Get Fit or the Steptember Challenge.

Click [here](#) to see photos from the event.

— back to top —



CE's Carolyn Parkinson Earns Certification

Congratulations to CE's **Carolyn Parkinson** on passing the International Foundation of Retirement Education (InFRE's) Certified Retirement Counselor exam. After a background check, she will officially become ORS' newest Certified Retirement Counselor. After about one hundred hours of study, a thousand pages of study material, and a grueling four-hour exam, Carolyn will join ING's **Heidi Schiller**, **Kathy Van Fossen**, **Eddie Carrington**, **Kelly Taylor**, and **Colleen Beaumont**, and CE's **Joy Bartell** in holding the prestigious certification. As of 2012, 1,760 other retirement professionals hold the accredited certification across the country. Be sure to congratulate Carolyn on her hard work and success and offer words of encouragement to CE's **Allison Wardlaw** who is currently studying for the exam.

— back to top —

business briefs

DC plan wins campaign award

The State of Michigan 401(k) & 457 Plans have won a Best in Show award from the Insurance and Financial Communicators Association. Chosen from 650 submissions, the award recognizes the creativity, design, and writing in the State of Michigan Match Campaign. Congratulations to all those who were involved!

Update your info in the DTMB 411

Make sure your contact information is up-to-date in DTMB's 411 tool so your coworkers, and other state employees outside of our agency, know how to find you! Simply go to inside.michigan.gov, click your name in the upper right-hand corner, then choose My Site. To update your info, click My Profile at the top of the page, and type away. You can also control who sees what content, name your specialties and interests, add a photo, and more.

[back to top](#)



comings + goings

Coming



BPD welcomed **Jamie Guardiola** as the FOIA admin analyst on September 3. Jamie has a BA from Ferris State and recently worked with the Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MHSDA). Jamie lives in Holt with her husband and two daughters, enjoys zumba, and spends many Sundays in the fall cheering on the Lions at every home game.

Going

ER wishes the best to **Joe Osentoski**, who accepted an analyst position with the Office of Financial Services (OFS). His last day at ORS will be September 13.

[back to top](#)

If you are coaching a fall sport, the LookOut would love to hear from you.

Contact the [ORS LookOut](#) to tell us your story or send us a brief write-up that you'd like to share with ORS. Photos are welcome.



[back to top](#)

Summer photo contest winner

And the winners are **Cherie Vaughn** and **Andy Kolp** tied for 1st place; **Ryan Marr** and **Pam Kenney** tied for 2nd place; **Lyndsay Aldrich** came in 3rd place. Honorary mention to Ryan Marr's lighthouse photo.



Thank you ER for selecting our winner of the 2013 Summer Photo contest. Click [here](#) to see all of the entries.

[back to top](#)

sounding out

from you for you

ORS Purpose:
 We are an innovative retirement organization driven to empower our customers for a successful today and a secure tomorrow.

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Sandy Blommer talks about the CS puzzle project; what started as an activity to give staff an activity to do during breaks has grown to an office wide activity that brings teams together by with an enjoyable and relaxing activity.



The idea to start doing puzzles was **Sherea Lacy's**. Sherea brought some puzzles in and then we decided that we'd glue them and hopefully get frames for them and

Thanks for reading!!

maybe sell them. The money will go to Get Fit. We have a bunch done; we just don't have frames for them yet. Sherea has brought some in, **Jennifer Dunavant** has brought some in, and I purchased some and brought them in. Everyone just seems to like it. They break away, go there, and work on the puzzles. When I quit smoking, instead of just sitting at my desk wishing I was outside, I decided that on my breaks and on my lunch I would go over and work on the puzzles. We started working on puzzles around April of 2012. It's been over a year that we've been doing them.

I think we've completed around 20 of them. They're all different sizes, and some were very tough. I think our toughest one with all these chickens. It's all white and the chickens are all in black, like a cartoon. That one was tough. I was ready to smack Jennifer because she was the one that brought it in. She was laughing, "I brought you a really fun one," she said. I bet that one took us at least two months!

Although the puzzles started at an team activity for Sherea's team, it's grown outside of her team to Jennifer Dunavant's team and some temporary staff.

If someone is interested in purchasing one, contact [Sandy Blommer](#) and she'll get it framed.



[back to top](#)

Note: Because some of the links in this newsletter point to network resources, some of the links may not work if you are reading this outside of the organization.