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### 1.0 Important Changes in 2026

**Open Enrollment is October 20 – October 31, 2025** for the upcoming plan year (1/1/26 – 12/31/26).

Changes for 2026 Plan Year:

- In addition to our current Base and Plus medical plans, you'll have the option to select our newer plan called the KelseyCare ACO. An ACO or Accountable Care Organization is a group of doctors, facilities and other healthcare professionals who work together to ensure your care is coordinated.

Adding dependents? Prepare your documents now!

Gather your supporting documentation now and have it ready for upload when you log in to STARS ESS during the open enrollment period. Dependents without supporting documentation uploaded in STARS will not be added to your plan. Please upload documentation by October 31, 2025. See page 14 of your Employee Benefits Guide to see who is eligible and required documents.

**Important steps when adding dependents:**

Step 1 – Add all dependent information using the steps in section 3.0, including supporting documentation (required).

Step 2 – Add dependents to your final elections.

- Dependents added during open enrollment will be effective 12/27/2025.
- Dependents removed during open enrollment will be effective 12/26/2025.

Full instructions on how to add dependents are provided in Section 3.0.

### 2.0 How to Elect the Same Benefits for 2026

If you would like to keep the exact same benefit elections as you had in 2025, you do not need to do anything! Your benefits will remain the same for 2026. You are all set!

### 3.0 How to Make Updates to Your Elections

You can now add and update dependents while updating your elections.

**Note:** If you are adding a new dependent, you must add them to all elections, including:

- Medical
- Dental
- Vision
- County Provided Dependent Life for Spouse/Child

Gather your supporting documents (birth certificate, adoption paperwork, marriage license, etc.), as those will be required when adding dependents.

Once you have added information for your dependents and uploaded supporting documentation, you will be able to make your final elections for you and your dependents.

- Dependents added during open enrollment will be effective 12/27/2025
- Dependents removed during open enrollment will be effective 12/26/2025

# Completing Open Enrollment for 2026

## How to Complete Your Open Enrollment Elections/Changes in STARS ESS

Step	Action
1	Log in to STARS HR and Payroll <a href="#">here</a> using your employee ID and password.
2	<p>You will land on the <b>Employee Self Service</b> homepage. Click the <b>Benefit Details</b> tile.</p> <div><div>Employee Self Service ▾</div><div><div><div>Time</div><div></div></div><div><div>Payroll</div><div></div><div>Last Pay Date 02/14/2025</div></div><div><div>Personal Details</div><div></div></div><div><div>Time</div><div></div></div><div><div>Benefit Details</div><div></div><div>Action Required</div></div><div><div>Change Passwd / Setup Hints</div><div></div></div><div><div>View W-2/W-2C Forms</div><div></div></div><div><div>Employee Performance Review</div><div></div></div><div><div>ESS Timesheet Print + Comme...</div><div></div></div><div><div>Training Announcements</div><div></div></div><div><div>Internal Job Opportunities</div><div></div></div><div><div>Sick Leave Pool</div><div></div></div><div><div>Security Request Forms</div><div></div></div><div><div>Announcements</div><div></div><div>2024 Form W-2s now available online</div><div>Unread</div></div><div><div>New Hire Benefits Enrollment</div><div></div></div></div></div>
3	<p>The <b>Benefit Details</b> page displays. Click the <b>Open Enrollment</b> tile.</p> <div><div><div>Open Enrollment</div><div><div></div><div><div>Starts now until 6/30/2025. Your final enrollment must be submitted by 11:59 PM CST, 6/30/2025</div><div>Countdown to Open Enrollment Deadline: Days HH MM SS31 11:38:40</div></div></div></div></div>

How to Complete Your Open Enrollment Elections/Changes in STARS ESS

Step	Action
4	<div><p>The <b>Welcome Instruction and Video</b> page displays. Enrollment steps display in a navigation pane on the left side of the screen. Use these steps throughout the enrollment process to verify every required portion of enrollment is complete.</p><p>View the <b>Welcome Video</b> or click the <b>View Video Transcript</b> button to read the contents of the video.</p><div><div>View Video Transcript</div></div><p>Click the <b>Next</b> button to proceed to the next step.</p><div><div>Next &gt;</div></div></div> <div><div><div>Welcome Instruction and Video</div><div>● Visited</div></div><div><div>★ Benefit Elections Acknowledgement</div><div>○ Not Started</div></div><div><div>★ Flexible Spending Accounts Acknowledgement</div><div>○ Not Started</div></div><div><div>★ Dependent Documentation Acknowledgement</div><div>○ Not Started</div></div><div><div>Open Enrollment</div><div>○ Not Started</div></div><div><div>Document Upload</div><div>○ Not Started</div></div><div><div>Dependent / Beneficiary Info</div><div>○ Not Started</div></div><div><div>Benefits Enrollment</div><div>○ Not Started</div></div><div><div>Benefits Statements</div><div>○ Not Started</div></div><div><div>Summary</div><div>○ Not Started</div></div></div>
5	<div><p>The <b>Benefit Elections Acknowledgement</b> page displays. Carefully read the information and select the <b>I Agree</b> check box.</p><div><div><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> I Agree</div></div><p>Click the <b>Save</b> button to save your changes and then click the <b>Next</b> button to proceed to the next step.</p><div><div><div>&lt; Previous</div><div>Next &gt;</div></div><div><div>Save</div></div></div></div>

## How to Complete Your Open Enrollment Elections/Changes in STARS ESS

Step	Action
6	<p>The <b>Flexible Spending Accounts Acknowledgement</b> page displays. Carefully read the information and select the <b>I Agree</b> check box.</p> <div><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> I Agree</div> <p>Click the <b>Save</b> button to save your changes and then click the <b>Next</b> button to proceed to the next step.</p> <div><div><div>&lt; Previous</div><div>Next &gt;</div></div><div>Save</div></div>
7	<p>The <b>Dependent Documentation Acknowledgement</b> page displays. Carefully read the information and select the <b>I Agree</b> check box.</p> <div><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> I Agree</div> <p><b>Note:</b> Documentation for new dependents is required and will be added in a later step.</p> <p>Click the <b>Save</b> button to save your changes and then click the <b>Next</b> button to proceed to the next step.</p> <div><div><div>&lt; Previous</div><div>Next &gt;</div></div><div>Save</div></div>
8	<p>The <b>Open Enrollment</b> page displays. Carefully read the information and click the <b>Next</b> button.</p> <div><div><div>&lt; Previous</div><div>Next &gt;</div></div></div>

## How to Complete Your Open Enrollment Elections/Changes in STARS ESS

Step	Action												
9	<p>The <b>Document Upload</b> page displays. Use this page to add required documentation for new dependents.</p> <p>Click the magnifying glass in the <b>Life Event Type</b> field.</p> <div><div>*Life Event Type <input type="text"/></div><div>Add</div></div>												
10	<p>In the window that displays, select the appropriate life event for the dependent.</p> <div><div>Look Up Life Event Type <span>×</span></div><div>Search by: Life Event Type <span>▾</span> begins with <input type="text"/></div><div><div>Search</div><div>Cancel</div><div>Advanced Lookup</div></div><div>Search Results</div><div><div>View 100  &lt; &lt; 1-5 of 5 &gt; &gt; </div><table><tr><th>Life Event Type</th><th>Description</th></tr><tr><td>A</td><td>Adoption</td></tr><tr><td>B</td><td>Birth</td></tr><tr><td>D</td><td>Divorce</td></tr><tr><td>L</td><td>Loss or Gain Coverag</td></tr><tr><td>M</td><td>Marriage</td></tr></table></div><p>When the life event is selected, the window closes. Click the <b>Add</b> button.</p><div><div>*Life Event Type B <input type="text"/></div><div>Add</div></div></div>	Life Event Type	Description	A	Adoption	B	Birth	D	Divorce	L	Loss or Gain Coverag	M	Marriage
Life Event Type	Description												
A	Adoption												
B	Birth												
D	Divorce												
L	Loss or Gain Coverag												
M	Marriage												

How to Complete Your Open Enrollment Elections/Changes in STARS ESS

Step	Action
11	<p>The <b>Maintain Attachments</b> window displays. This window displays instructions and indicates which documents are required to add the dependent.</p> <p>Click the <b>Add Attachment</b> button to add the appropriate documentation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Enter a file description in the <b>Subject</b> field (ex: Steven Sample Birth Certificate).</li><li>• Click the <b>Add Attachment</b> button.</li><li>• A window displays. Upload the appropriate documentation using the <b>Choose File</b> and <b>Upload</b> buttons.</li><li>• Click the <b>Save</b> button.</li></ul> <div><div>Document Definition - New Attachment</div><div><div>Instructions</div><div>You have chosen to enter a new attachment.</div></div><div><div>Selection Criteria</div><div><div>DescriptionBirth Certificate</div><div><div>SubjectSteven Sample Birth Certificate</div><div>Attachment2025-05-29_13-44-46.png</div><div>View Attachment</div></div></div><div><div>Save</div></div></div></div>
12	<p>A pop-up window will display after saving. Read the warning, then click the <b>OK</b> button.</p> <p><b>IMPORTANT:</b> You do not have to wait for any kind of notification from Benefits &amp; Wellness. You should begin enrolling you and your dependents in your benefit elections once you have uploaded all documentation.</p> <p><b>Note:</b> Benefits &amp; Wellness will reach out to you if there is an issue with any of the documentation that was submitted.</p>



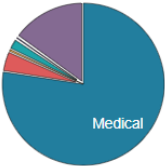

How to Complete Your Open Enrollment Elections/Changes in STARS ESS

Step	Action														
13	<p>The <b>Maintain Attachments</b> window will now show the attachment you have added. If additional documentation is required, repeat the steps to add the necessary documentation. Once you have finished adding attachments for this dependent, click the small <b>X</b> in the upper right-hand corner of the window.</p> <div><div><div>Maintain Attachments</div><div><div>Life Events - Document Upload</div><div><div>Instructions</div><div>You are required to submit the document(s) listed here. Select the document type, then an Add Attachment &amp; Add Note buttons will appear. Select the Add Attachment button, enter a description of your document and upload the document</div></div><div><div>Life Event Documents</div><div><div>Birth Certificate</div></div></div><div><div>Add Attachment</div><div>Add Note</div></div><div><div>Attachments</div><div><div><div><div></div><div></div></div><div><div>&lt;</div><div>&gt;</div><div>1-1 of 1</div></div></div><table><tr><th>Select</th><th>Sequence</th><th>Created</th><th>Author</th><th>Entry ID</th><th>Subject</th><th>Status</th></tr><tr><td><input type="checkbox"/></td><td>1</td><td>05/30/2025 12:31PM</td><td></td><td>Birth Certificate</td><td>Steven Sample Birth Certificate</td><td>Needs Approval</td></tr></table><div><div>Select All</div><div>Deselect All</div><div>Delete</div></div></div></div></div><p>The screen will be blank after you close the window.</p><p>Click the <b>Document Upload</b> step on the navigation pane and repeat the process to add an additional life event and add documentation for another dependent or click the <b>Next</b> button to proceed to the next step.</p></div></div>	Select	Sequence	Created	Author	Entry ID	Subject	Status	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	05/30/2025 12:31PM		Birth Certificate	Steven Sample Birth Certificate	Needs Approval
Select	Sequence	Created	Author	Entry ID	Subject	Status									
<input type="checkbox"/>	1	05/30/2025 12:31PM		Birth Certificate	Steven Sample Birth Certificate	Needs Approval									
14	<p>The <b>Dependent/Beneficiary Info</b> page displays. Use this page to review dependents added and add new dependents.</p> <p><b>Note:</b> If you are not adding new dependents, simply review the information for your existing dependents and click the <b>Next</b> button to proceed to the next step. To review existing dependent information, click the right arrow button.</p>														

How to Complete Your Open Enrollment Elections/Changes in STARS ESS

Step	Action						
15	<p>To add a new dependent, click the <b>Add Individual</b> button.</p> <p><b>Note:</b> You <b>will not</b> be able to add new dependents to your 2026 Benefit Elections if you skip this step.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Click the <b>Add Name</b> button to display a window where the dependent’s name can be added.</li><li>Enter information in each field in the <b>Personal Information</b> section.</li><li>Your address displays in the <b>Address</b> section. Click the right arrow button to update the address for the dependent, if needed.</li><li>Click the <b>Add National ID</b> button to display a window where the dependent’s social security number can be added.</li><li>Click the <b>Add Phone</b> button to add the dependent’s phone number.</li><li>Click the <b>Add Email</b> button to add the dependent’s email address.</li><li>Click the <b>Save</b> button to save the new dependent and return to the <b>Dependent/Beneficiary Info</b> page.</li></ul> <div><div><div>Name</div><div>Add Name</div></div><div><div>Personal Information</div><div><div>Date of BirthMM/DD/YYYY</div><div>*Gender</div><div>*Relationship to Employee</div><div>Dependent</div><div>Beneficiary</div><div>*Marital StatusSingle</div><div>*StudentNo</div><div>*DisabledNo</div><div>*SmokerNon Smoker</div><div>As ofMM/DD/YYYY</div><div>As ofMM/DD/YYYY</div><div>As ofMM/DD/YYYY</div><div>As ofMM/DD/YYYY</div></div></div><div><div>Address</div><table><thead><tr><th>Address</th><th>Address Type</th><th>Same Address as mine</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td></td><td>Home</td><td>Same as mine</td></tr></tbody></table></div><div><div>National ID</div><div>No National ID exists.</div><div>Add National ID</div></div><div><div>Phone</div><div>No Phone exists.</div><div>Add Phone</div></div><div><div>Email</div><div>No Email exists.</div><div>Add Email</div></div></div> <p>Repeat this step until all dependents have been added and reviewed. Then click the <b>Next</b> button.</p>	Address	Address Type	Same Address as mine		Home	Same as mine
Address	Address Type	Same Address as mine					
	Home	Same as mine					

How to Complete Your Open Enrollment Elections/Changes in STARS ESS

Step	Action
16	<p>The <b>Benefits Enrollment</b> page displays. Your elections from the prior benefit year are automatically entered.</p> <p>The <b>Enrollment Summary</b> section displays the total cost of your elections for each pay period.</p> <div><div><p>Enrollment Summary</p><p>Your Pay Period Cost <b>\$132.88</b></p><p>Status <b>Pending Review</b></p><p><a href="#">Preview Statement</a></p><p><b>Submit</b></p></div><div><p>Full Cost <b>\$132.88</b></p><p>Employer Cost <b>\$603.79</b></p></div></div> <p>The <b>Benefit Plans</b> section displays 12 tiles, one for each benefit election. Each benefit tile displays a status, such as <b>Pending Review</b>, <b>Visited</b>, or <b>Changed</b>.</p> <p>To view benefit elections in list form, click the <b>Grid</b> icon.</p> <div><p>Benefit Plans</p></div> <p>To make changes to your current elections, simply click the tile corresponding to the benefit you wish to change.</p>

3.1 Medical Benefit Enrollment/Change

Step	Action
1	Click the <b>Medical</b> tile.
2	Harris County offers three different medical plan options – <b>Base</b> , <b>Plus</b> , and <b>KelseyCare</b> . You also have the option to select the plan deduction <b>before</b> or <b>after tax</b> .

How to Complete Your Open Enrollment Elections/Changes in STARS ESS

Step	Action																												
3	<p>If you are not enrolling any dependents in medical coverage, skip to letter c.</p> <p>Make sure whichever dependents you would like to enroll in medical coverage have a check in the checkbox in the <b>Enroll Your Dependents</b> section.</p> <p>a. If you have dependents who are currently enrolled in the medical benefit, the checkbox next to their name will be selected. Clear the checkbox for any dependents you wish to remove from medical coverage.</p> <p>b. If you wish to add a new dependent to the coverage, select the checkbox next to the dependent's name. <b>Note:</b> If you do not see your dependents listed, make sure you have completed Steps 14 and 15 in Section 3.0.</p> <div><table><tr><th colspan="2">Dependents</th></tr><tr><td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></td><td>Susie Example</td></tr></table></div> <p>c. In the <b>Enroll in Your Plan</b> section, click the <b>Select</b> button corresponding to your desired election coverage. <b>Note:</b> Click the <b>Overview of All Plans</b> button to display a window where the costs of each plan option can be quickly compared.</p> <div><table><tr><th colspan="3">Plan Name</th></tr><tr><td>Select</td><td>Base PPO - AT</td><td><a href="#">i</a></td></tr><tr><td>✓</td><td>Base PPO - BT</td><td><a href="#">i</a></td></tr><tr><td>Select</td><td>Plus PPO - AT</td><td><a href="#">i</a></td></tr><tr><td>Select</td><td>Plus PPO - BT</td><td><a href="#">i</a></td></tr><tr><td>Select</td><td>KelseyCare ACO - BT</td><td><a href="#">i</a></td></tr><tr><td>Select</td><td>KelseyCare ACO - AT</td><td><a href="#">i</a></td></tr><tr><td colspan="3"><a href="#">Overview of All Plans</a></td></tr></table></div> <p>d. Click the <b>Done</b> button.</p>	Dependents		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Susie Example	Plan Name			Select	Base PPO - AT	<a href="#">i</a>	✓	Base PPO - BT	<a href="#">i</a>	Select	Plus PPO - AT	<a href="#">i</a>	Select	Plus PPO - BT	<a href="#">i</a>	Select	KelseyCare ACO - BT	<a href="#">i</a>	Select	KelseyCare ACO - AT	<a href="#">i</a>	<a href="#">Overview of All Plans</a>		
	Dependents																												
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Susie Example																											
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Select	Base PPO - AT	<a href="#">i</a>																											
✓	Base PPO - BT	<a href="#">i</a>																											
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Select	Plus PPO - BT	<a href="#">i</a>																											
Select	KelseyCare ACO - BT	<a href="#">i</a>																											
Select	KelseyCare ACO - AT	<a href="#">i</a>																											
<a href="#">Overview of All Plans</a>																													

## How to Complete Your Open Enrollment Elections/Changes in STARS ESS

Step	Action
4	<p>You will be brought back to the <b>Benefits Enrollment</b> page. You should now see the <b>Status</b> is updated and the changes you made reflected in the dollar amount for each pay period.</p> <div><div>Medical</div><div><div>Current</div>Base PPO - BT</div><div><div>New</div>Base PPO - BT</div><div><div>Status</div><div>✔ Changed</div></div><div><div>1 Dependents</div></div><div><div>Pay Period Cost</div>\$102.84</div><div>Review</div></div>

How to Complete Your Open Enrollment Elections/Changes in STARS ESS

3.2 Dental Benefit Enrollment/Change

Step	Action
1	Click the <b>Dental</b> tile.
2	Harris County offers <b>PPO Dental</b> coverage. You have the option to select the plan deduction <b>before</b> or <b>after tax</b> .
3	<p>If you are not enrolling any dependents in dental coverage, skip to letter c.</p> <p>Make sure whichever dependents you would like to enroll in dental coverage have a check in the checkbox under the <b>Enroll Your Dependents</b> section.</p> <p>a. If you have dependents who are currently enrolled in the dental benefit, the checkbox next to their name will be selected. Clear the checkbox for any dependents you wish to remove from dental coverage.</p> <p>b. If you previously turned in documentation to have dependent(s) added, the checkbox corresponding to their name will not be selected. Select the checkbox to enroll them in the dental benefit. <b>Note:</b> If you do not see your dependents listed, make sure you have completed Steps 14 and 15 in Section 3.0.</p> <div><div>Dependents</div><div><div><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></div>Susie Example</div></div> <p>c. In the <b>Enroll in Your Plan</b> section, click the <b>Select</b> button corresponding to your desired election coverage. <b>Note:</b> Click the <b>Overview of All Plans</b> button to display a window where the costs of each plan option can be quickly compared.</p> <div><div>Plan Name</div><div><div>Select</div><div>PPO After-Tax Requires enrollment to any Medical plan</div><div></div></div><div><div><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></div><div>PPO Before Tax Requires enrollment to any Medical plan</div><div></div></div><div>Overview of All Plans</div></div> <p>d. Click the <b>Done</b> button.</p>

How to Complete Your Open Enrollment Elections/Changes in STARS ESS

Step	Action
4	<p>You will be brought back to the <b>Benefits Enrollment</b> page. You should now see the <b>Status</b> is updated and the changes you made reflected in the dollar amount for each pay period.</p> <div><div>Dental</div><div><div>Current</div>PPO Before Tax</div><div><div>New</div>PPO Before Tax</div><div><div>Status</div><div>✔ Changed</div></div><div><div>👤 1 Dependents</div></div><div><div>Pay Period Cost</div>\$5.76</div><div>Review</div></div>

3.3 Vision Benefit Enrollment/Changes

Step	Action
1	Click the <b>Vision</b> tile.
2	For the <b>Vision</b> benefit, you have the option to select the plan deduction <b>before</b> or <b>after tax</b> .

How to Complete Your Open Enrollment Elections/Changes in STARS ESS

Step	Action												
3	<p>If you are not enrolling any dependents in vision coverage, skip to letter c.</p> <p>Make sure whichever dependents you would like to enroll in vision coverage have a check in the checkbox under the <b>Enroll Your Dependents</b> section.</p> <p>a. If you have dependents who are currently enrolled in the vision benefit, the checkbox next to their name will be selected. Clear the checkbox for any dependents you wish to remove from vision coverage.</p> <p>b. If you previously turned in documentation to have dependent(s) added, the checkbox corresponding to their name will not be selected. Select the checkbox to enroll them in the vision benefit. <b>Note:</b> If you do not see your dependents listed, make sure you have completed Steps 14 and 15 in Section 3.0.</p> <div><table><tr><th colspan="2">Dependents</th></tr><tr><td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></td><td>Susie Example</td></tr></table></div> <p>c. In the <b>Enroll in Your Plan</b> section, click the <b>Select</b> button corresponding to your desired election coverage. <b>Note:</b> Click the <b>Overview of All Plans</b> button to display a window where the costs of each plan option can be quickly compared.</p> <div><table><tr><th colspan="2">Plan Name</th></tr><tr><td><div>Select</div>Vision After-Tax Requires enrollment to any Medical plan</td><td>i</td></tr><tr><td><div>✓</div>Vision Before-Tax Requires enrollment to any Medical plan</td><td>i</td></tr><tr><td colspan="2"><div>Overview of All Plans</div></td></tr></table></div> <p>d. Click the <b>Done</b> button.</p>	Dependents		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Susie Example	Plan Name		<div>Select</div> Vision After-Tax Requires enrollment to any Medical plan	i	<div>✓</div> Vision Before-Tax Requires enrollment to any Medical plan	i	<div>Overview of All Plans</div>	
Dependents													
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Susie Example												
Plan Name													
<div>Select</div> Vision After-Tax Requires enrollment to any Medical plan	i												
<div>✓</div> Vision Before-Tax Requires enrollment to any Medical plan	i												
<div>Overview of All Plans</div>													



How to Complete Your Open Enrollment Elections/Changes in STARS ESS

Step	Action
4	<p>You will be brought back to the <b>Benefits Enrollment</b> page. You should now see the <b>Status</b> is updated and the changes you made reflected in the dollar amount for each pay period.</p> <div><p>Vision</p><div><div>Current Vision Before-Tax</div><div>New Vision Before-Tax</div><div>Status <span>Changed</span></div><div><span>1</span> Dependents</div></div><div><div>Pay Period Cost \$0.43</div><div>Review</div></div></div>

3.4 County Provided Employee Life

Step	Action										
1	Click the <b>Cnty Provided Employee Life + AD&amp;D</b> tile.										
2	<p>For the <b>County Provided Employee Life</b> benefit, basic life insurance for the employee is automatically selected, but beneficiaries must be selected.</p> <p>a. You can change the primary and secondary allocations to be a <b>Flat Amount</b> or leave them as a <b>Percentage</b>.</p> <p>b. Make any desired changes in the <b>New Primary Percentage</b> and <b>New Secondary Percentage</b> columns if desired.</p> <table><tr><th>New Primary Percentage</th><th>New Secondary Percentage</th></tr><tr><td><input type="text" value="25"/></td><td><input type="text" value="0"/></td></tr><tr><td><input type="text" value="25"/></td><td><input type="text" value="0"/></td></tr><tr><td><input type="text" value="50"/></td><td><input type="text" value="0"/></td></tr><tr><td><input type="text" value="100"/></td><td><input type="text" value="0"/></td></tr></table> <p>c. Click the <b>Done</b> button.</p> <p><b>Note:</b> If you would like to add or change your beneficiaries, click the <b>Add/Update Beneficiary</b> button. Full instructions on how to add and update beneficiaries can be accessed <a href="#">here</a>.</p> <div><div>Add/Update Beneficiary</div></div>	New Primary Percentage	New Secondary Percentage	<input type="text" value="25"/>	<input type="text" value="0"/>	<input type="text" value="25"/>	<input type="text" value="0"/>	<input type="text" value="50"/>	<input type="text" value="0"/>	<input type="text" value="100"/>	<input type="text" value="0"/>
New Primary Percentage	New Secondary Percentage										
<input type="text" value="25"/>	<input type="text" value="0"/>										
<input type="text" value="25"/>	<input type="text" value="0"/>										
<input type="text" value="50"/>	<input type="text" value="0"/>										
<input type="text" value="100"/>	<input type="text" value="0"/>										

## How to Complete Your Open Enrollment Elections/Changes in STARS ESS

Step	Action
3	You will be brought back to the <b>Benefits Enrollment</b> page. You should now see the <b>Status</b> is updated.

### 3.5 Employee Optional Life Enrollment/Changes

Step	Action										
1	Click the <b>Employee Optional Life +AD&amp;D</b> tile.										
4	<p>For the <b>Optional Life AD&amp;D</b> Benefit, you have the option to waive the benefit or elect between 1 and 3x your salary before or after taxes.</p> <p>Click the <b>Select</b> button corresponding to the election you wish to choose for the optional life benefit.</p> <p><b>Note:</b> If you select an option with <b>Proof Required</b> in the <b>Proof of Coverage</b> column, you must provide <b>Evidence of Insurability</b> before the benefit will take effect.</p>										
5	<p>a. You can change the primary and secondary allocations to be a <b>Flat Amount</b> or leave them as a <b>Percentage</b>.</p> <p>b. Make any desired changes in the <b>New Primary Allocation</b> and <b>New Secondary Allocation</b> columns if desired.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>New Primary Percentage</th><th>New Secondary Percentage</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td><input type="text" value="25"/></td><td><input type="text" value="0"/></td></tr> <tr> <td><input type="text" value="25"/></td><td><input type="text" value="0"/></td></tr> <tr> <td><input type="text" value="50"/></td><td><input type="text" value="0"/></td></tr> <tr> <td><input type="text" value="100"/></td><td><input type="text" value="0"/></td></tr> </tbody> </table> <p>c. Click the <b>Done</b> button.</p> <p><b>Note:</b> If you would like to add or change your beneficiaries, click the <b>Add/Update Beneficiary</b> button. Full instructions on how to add and update beneficiaries can be accessed <a href="#">here</a>.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;">Add/Update Beneficiary</div> <p>If you chose an election that requires proof, a message window displays. Click the <b>OK</b> button.</p>	New Primary Percentage	New Secondary Percentage	<input type="text" value="25"/>	<input type="text" value="0"/>	<input type="text" value="25"/>	<input type="text" value="0"/>	<input type="text" value="50"/>	<input type="text" value="0"/>	<input type="text" value="100"/>	<input type="text" value="0"/>
New Primary Percentage	New Secondary Percentage										
<input type="text" value="25"/>	<input type="text" value="0"/>										
<input type="text" value="25"/>	<input type="text" value="0"/>										
<input type="text" value="50"/>	<input type="text" value="0"/>										
<input type="text" value="100"/>	<input type="text" value="0"/>										

## How to Complete Your Open Enrollment Elections/Changes in STARS ESS

Step	Action
6	You will be brought back to the <b>Benefits Enrollment</b> page. You should now see the <b>Status</b> is updated and the changes you made reflected in the dollar amount for each pay period.

### 3.6 County Provided Dependent Life for Spouse/Child

Harris County provides **Dependent Life** coverage for your enrolled dependents. This is required if you have enrolled dependents in your medical/dental/vision coverage.

- If you enrolled a spouse in your medical/dental/vision coverage in 2025, they will automatically receive **County Provided Dependent Life Spouse** coverage.
- If you enrolled your child/children in your medical/dental/vision coverage in 2025, they will automatically receive **County Provided Dependent Life Child** coverage.

If you are adding a new dependent in your medical/dental/vision coverage for 2026, you must also enroll the dependent(s) in the **County Provided Life** coverage. Follow the steps below to complete the enrollment. The steps are shown for the **County Provided Dependent Life for Child**. The same steps should be taken for the **Spouse** elections.

Step	Action
1	Click <b>Cnty Provided Dep Life+AD&amp;D Spouse</b> tile or the <b>Cnty Provided Dep Life+AD&amp;D Child</b> tile.

## How to Complete Your Open Enrollment Elections/Changes in STARS ESS

Step	Action
2	<p>For the <b>County Provided Dependent Life Benefit</b> for your spouse or child, you must enroll all dependents that are enrolled in your medical/dental/vision coverage.</p> <p>a. Indicate whether you want to waive the benefit by clicking the <b>Select</b> button corresponding to the desired benefit option.</p> <div><div>Plan Name</div><div><div>Select</div>Waive</div><div>✓ Dependent Life Child (\$2,000)</div></div> <p>b. In the <b>Enroll Your Dependents</b> section, select the checkbox(es) to indicate which dependents that should be covered under the benefit listed (spouse or child).</p> <div><div>Dependents</div><div><div><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></div>Susie Example</div></div> <p>c. Click the <b>Done</b> button.</p>
3	<p>You will be brought back to the <b>Benefits Enrollment</b> page. You should now see the <b>Status</b> is updated to either <b>Changed</b> or <b>Visited</b> (if no changes were made).</p>

3.7 Optional Dependent Life + AD&D Spouse/Child

To elect the **Optional Dependent Life + AD&D** for spouse or child, you must have elected **Optional Life** coverage for yourself (employee).  
Follow the instructions below to complete any desired changes for **Optional Dependent Life + AD&D** for spouse or child.

Step	Action								
1	Click the <b>Optional Dep Life +AD&amp;D Spouse</b> tile or the <b>Optional Dep Life + AD&amp;D Child</b> tile.								
2	<p>For the <b>Optional Life + AD&amp;D Benefit for Spouse</b>, you have the option to waive the benefit or elect between \$5,000-\$50,000 (by increments of \$5,000). You must also indicate if you would like the benefit premium taken out before or after taxes.</p> <p>For the <b>Optional Life + AD&amp;D Benefit for Child</b>, you have the option to waive the benefit or elect between \$5,000-\$20,000 (by increments of \$5,000). You must also indicate if you would like the benefit premium taken out before or after taxes.</p> <div><table><tr><th>Plan Name</th><th>Proof of Coverage</th></tr><tr><td><div>Select</div> Waive</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>✓ Opt Dep Life Child AT 5,000 (\$5,000)</td><td><div>i</div> Proof Required</td></tr></table></div> <p>a. Click the <b>Select</b> button next to the election you wish to choose for the optional Dependent Life + AD&amp;D Benefit.</p> <p><b>Note:</b> If you select an option with <b>Proof Required</b> in the <b>Proof of Coverage</b> column, you will be required to provide an <b>Evidence of Insurability</b> before the benefit will take effect.</p> <p>b. Once you change the election from “Waive” to an amount, the <b>Enroll Your Dependents</b> section will appear at the bottom of the screen. Select the checkbox(es) to indicate which dependent(s) you wish to add coverage.</p> <div><table><tr><th>Dependents</th></tr><tr><td><div><div>✓</div>Susie Example</div></td></tr></table></div> <p>c. Click the <b>Done</b> button.</p>	Plan Name	Proof of Coverage	<div>Select</div> Waive		✓ Opt Dep Life Child AT 5,000 (\$5,000)	<div>i</div> Proof Required	Dependents	<div><div>✓</div>Susie Example</div>
Plan Name	Proof of Coverage								
<div>Select</div> Waive									
✓ Opt Dep Life Child AT 5,000 (\$5,000)	<div>i</div> Proof Required								
Dependents									
<div><div>✓</div>Susie Example</div>									

## How to Complete Your Open Enrollment Elections/Changes in STARS ESS

Step	Action
3	<p>If proof of insurability is required, a message window will display. Review the information and click the <b>OK</b> button.</p> <div> <p>Your enrollment in Opt Dep Life Child AT 5,000 requires proof of of insurability.</p> <p>You will need to submit the appropriate documents to the Benefits Department.</p> <p>Your new coverage will not take effect until proof of insurability is received.</p> <p>OK</p> </div>
4	<p>You will be brought back to the Benefits Enrollment page. You should now see the <b>Status</b> is updated and the changes you made reflected in the dollar amount for each pay period.</p>

### 3.8 Optional LTD Enrollment/Changes

Follow the instructions from Section 3.5 **Optional Life Enrollment** to complete any desired changes for **Optional LTD**.

### 3.9 Flex Spending – Health and Dependent Care – Enrollment/Changes

#### Notes:

- The maximum election amount for FSA health account is \$3,400 and FSA dependent daycare maximum election is \$7,500. If you wish to increase or decrease from your original amount, you will need to make that change during your open enrollment. Otherwise, your 2026 elected amount will stay the same.
- The minimum election amount for both health and dependent care FSA is \$300.
- The Dependent Daycare Account is only for the care of a child under the age of 13 while you are at work. It is NOT for healthcare expenses.
- The IRS allows pre-tax contributions to Flexible Spending Accounts as long as the plan does not favor Highly Compensated Employees (HCEs) as defined by the IRS. For the 2026 plan year, an employee who earns more than \$160,000 is considered an HCE. If you are an HCE, your Dependent Daycare FSA deduction may not exceed \$900.

## How to Complete Your Open Enrollment Elections/Changes in STARS ESS

Enrolling in **Flex Spending for Dependent Care** will be completed the same way that the **Flex Spending Health** enrollment is completed. Follow the steps below to enroll for **Flex Spending Health** and/or for **Flex Spending Dependent Care**.

Step	Action
1	<p><b>Flex Spending Health – U.S.</b> tile or the <b>Flex Spending Dependent Care</b> tile.</p> <p>If you were enrolled in either of the FSAs in the previous benefit plan year, the amount you elected will be shown. If you were not enrolled previously, the <b>Waive</b> option will be selected.</p> <div data-bbox="237 758 522 991"> <p>Plan Name</p> <p>Select Waive</p> <p>✓ FSA</p> </div>
2	<p>Click the <b>Flexible Spending Account Worksheet</b> button to help calculate your annual pledge for this plan year.</p> <div data-bbox="237 1085 1282 1306"> <p>Employee Annual Pledge <input type="text"/></p> <p><i>Minimum Employee Pledge \$300.00</i>  <i>Maximum Employee Pledge \$3,200.00</i>  <i>Annual pledge amount for all Flexible Spending Accounts must not exceed \$8,050.00.</i></p> <p><a href="#">Flexible Spending Account Worksheet</a></p> </div> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If you do <u>not</u> want to enroll in FSA, choose the <b>Select</b> button corresponding to the <b>Waive</b> option.</li> <li>If you <u>do</u> want to enroll in FSA, click the <b>Select</b> button corresponding to the <b>FSA</b> option.</li> <li>Enter your annual pledge amount.</li> <li>Click the <b>Done</b> button.</li> </ol>
3	<p>You will be brought back to the <b>Benefits Enrollment</b> page. You should now see the <b>Status</b> is updated and the changes you made reflected in the dollar amount for each pay period.</p>

4.0 Saving and Submitting Your Benefit Enrollment/Changes

You may save your elections at any time by clicking the **Exit** button at the top left of the screen. Do not click the **Submit Enrollment** button on the **Open Enrollment** page until you are ready to submit your final benefit elections!

Follow the steps below to submit your benefit elections/changes for the new plan year.

Step	Action
1	<div><p>Once you have finished making your benefit elections you can click the <b>Preview Statement</b> button to display a summary of your election choices.</p><p>Click the <b>Submit Enrollment</b> button to send your final choices to the Benefit Department.</p><div><div>Your Pay Period Cost \$132.88</div><div>Status Pending Review</div><div><div>Preview Statement</div><div>Submit</div></div></div></div>



## How to Complete Your Open Enrollment Elections/Changes in STARS ESS

Step	Action
2	<p>A window displays to confirm your elections have been submitted.</p> <p>If any warning messages for your enrollment elections exist, such as if the enrollment selection you made will require proof of insurability when requested by the insurance carrier, they will also display on this window.</p> <div><div>Done</div><div>Benefits Alerts</div><div>View</div><div><div>Instructions</div><div>Your benefit choices have been successfully submitted to the Benefits Department.</div><div>Select View to review your Election Preview statement, Done to return to the Benefits Enrollment Summary</div><div>Warning statements here listing the warnings for the entire benefits enrollment.</div><div><div><div>⚠ Employee Optional Life + ADD Warning</div><div>Your enrollment in this benefit plan requires proof of insurability. You will need to submit the appropriate documents when requested by BlueCross Blue Shield. Your new coverage will not take effect until proof of insurability is received and approved by BlueCross BlueShield.</div></div><div><div><div>⚠ Optional Dep Life + ADD Child Warning</div><div>Your enrollment in this benefit plan requires proof of insurability. You will need to submit the appropriate documents when requested by BlueCross Blue Shield. Your new coverage will not take effect until proof of insurability is received and approved by BlueCross BlueShield.</div></div></div></div></div><p>Click the <b>Done</b> button.</p></div>
3	<p>The Benefits Enrollment page displays and the <b>Status</b> field is updated to <b>Submitted</b>.</p> <p>Click the <b>Next</b> button.</p>

Step	Action						
4	<p>The <b>Benefits Statements</b> page displays.</p> <div><div><div>Benefits Statements</div><div><div>Filters</div><div><div>Event Year</div><div>Enrollment Event</div><div>Statement Type</div><div>ApplyReset</div></div></div></div><div><div>Benefits Statements</div><table><tr><th>Event Date ↑↓</th><th>Issue Date ↑↓</th><th>Enrollment Event ↑↓</th></tr><tr><td>05/12/2025</td><td>05/30/2025 2:53:36PM</td><td>2026 HFT Open Enrollment</td></tr></table></div></div> <p>To review your benefits selections again, click the statement. The statement displays and can be printed or saved for your records, as needed.</p> <p>Click the <b>Next</b> button to proceed to the next step.</p>	Event Date ↑↓	Issue Date ↑↓	Enrollment Event ↑↓	05/12/2025	05/30/2025 2:53:36PM	2026 HFT Open Enrollment
Event Date ↑↓	Issue Date ↑↓	Enrollment Event ↑↓					
05/12/2025	05/30/2025 2:53:36PM	2026 HFT Open Enrollment					

## How to Complete Your Open Enrollment Elections/Changes in STARS ESS

Step	Action																														
5	<p>The <b>Summary</b> page displays.</p> <p>The <b>Status</b> column indicates the status of the step. Once the step has been completed, the date displays in the <b>Date Completed</b> column. In addition, the <b>Required</b> column indicates whether the step is required.</p> <table><tr><th>Status</th><th>Date Completed</th><th>Required</th></tr><tr><td>● Visited</td><td></td><td>No</td></tr><tr><td>✔ Complete</td><td>05/30/2025</td><td>Yes</td></tr><tr><td>✔ Complete</td><td>05/30/2025</td><td>Yes</td></tr><tr><td>✔ Complete</td><td>05/30/2025</td><td>Yes</td></tr><tr><td>● Visited</td><td></td><td>No</td></tr><tr><td>● Visited</td><td></td><td>No</td></tr><tr><td>✔ Complete</td><td>05/30/2025</td><td>No</td></tr><tr><td>✔ Complete</td><td>05/30/2025</td><td>No</td></tr><tr><td>● Visited</td><td></td><td>No</td></tr></table> <p>To quickly access a step that needs to be completed, click the <b>Go to Step</b> button corresponding to the step.</p> <div><div>Go to Step</div><div>Go to Step</div></div> <p>Verify each step has been completed and click the <b>Exit</b> button.</p>	Status	Date Completed	Required	● Visited		No	✔ Complete	05/30/2025	Yes	✔ Complete	05/30/2025	Yes	✔ Complete	05/30/2025	Yes	● Visited		No	● Visited		No	✔ Complete	05/30/2025	No	✔ Complete	05/30/2025	No	● Visited		No
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● Visited		No																													
6	<p>You have now <b>submitted your Open Enrollment Benefit Elections</b> in STARS through Employee Self Service.</p> <p>Should you have any additional benefits questions, please refer to your Benefits Guide and/or contact the Benefits department at 713-274-5500 or <a href="mailto:benefits@harriscountytexas.gov">benefits@harriscountytexas.gov</a>.</p>																														