

Case Study

How a major health insurer implemented an employee vaccine incentive program in only six weeks, achieving a more than 70% vaccination rate.



LSA
Benefit



Healthcare
Industry



25,000
Eligible employees





Challenge



Solution



Success

Employee health and safety risks challenged HCSC to maximize employee vaccination rates without a mandate.

Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, organizations large and small have grappled with new and urgent issues. Like most employers, Health Care Service Corporation (HCSC), an Independent Licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association, needed to move quickly to support their employees. They needed a benefit that provided flexibility and the ability to cater to the needs of their employees and after careful consideration and education, HCSC rolled out a lifestyle savings account to encourage vaccinations to 25,000 employees without a mandate—one that was fast, seamless, and thoughtful.

✓ A program to achieve specific goals

To reach their goals, HCSC leaders needed to overcome challenges on multiple fronts. They wanted a program that would:

- Support their employees' health and safety
- Reflect their role as a healthcare leader
- Allow for exemptions
- Reflect legal requirements
- Be flexible and quick to implement

✓ Incentives to drive engagement

HCSC decided to compensate employees who participated in a vaccine program (those who provided vaccination documentation or who provided proof of exemption). The challenge was finding a way to avoid the added burden of administering the program internally along with collecting and storing sensitive data.

HCSC wanted a partner who had the experience and expertise to implement and maintain an incentive-based program.

“ We needed to uphold our core responsibilities to stand with our members—including our employees—in sickness and in health, which meant helping them understand as much as they could with respect to COVID-19 while keeping them as safe as possible. ”

John Hosea,
VP HR Benefits and
Operations for HCSC





Challenge



Solution



Success

HCSC chose HealthEquity to implement a vaccine incentive program, prioritizing seamless administration and a hassle-free employee experience.

In February of 2021, HCSC asked the HealthEquity team—which manages several HCSC benefit accounts—if it was possible to duplicate the company’s existing Lifestyle Spending Account (LSA) to offer a new incentive to employees who could show proof of full vaccination or a valid exemption. HealthEquity determined it could modify an existing type of LSA to suit HCSC requirements. This was possible because HCSC already had infrastructure in place—from backend payroll systems to data integration— through its Commuter and Wellness LSA.

HCSC and HealthEquity were motivated to move quickly. The project took six weeks from concept to implementation.



Lifestyle Spending Account

An LSA is an employer-funded, post-tax account that reimburses eligible expenses related to employee wellbeing—physical, emotional, social, and financial—customized by the employer.

“ In challenging times like we have experienced we were able to collaborate and create a program we can all be proud of. All of this was done without a roadmap and with limited time to go live. We involved the right people at the right time with the right motivation. That’s what made this work—people. ”

- John Hosea



Challenge



Solution



Success

Within six weeks of program rollout, HCSC achieved a more than 70% employee vaccination rate.

HCSC considers its vaccine incentive program a success on multiple fronts including speed to market and ease of use, as well as the overall participation rate and outcome. Of those participating in the program, the vast majority provided proof of full vaccination, with only 3% participating under the valid exemption.

HCSC is pleased they were able to mirror their dedication to their members by doing the same for their employees—doing everything in their power to support their health and safety during the COVID-19 pandemic.



Approximately **\$10M** total reimbursed



Key ways HCSC used an LSA to achieve rapid, widespread vaccination among employees

- Created nimble action teams
- Tapped internal clinical expertise
- Leveraged existing relationship with HealthEquity and stayed in constant communication
- Developed a separate account reimbursed through payroll
- Engaged with employees and adjusted along the way

“ Had we not partnered on our vaccine incentive program, it would have taken us longer and we may not have achieved the results we wanted,” said Hosea. “Speed to market was key and agility was essential for our success. ”

- John Hosea

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LSA