



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

CLICK ON THE STORY YOU WANT TO READ

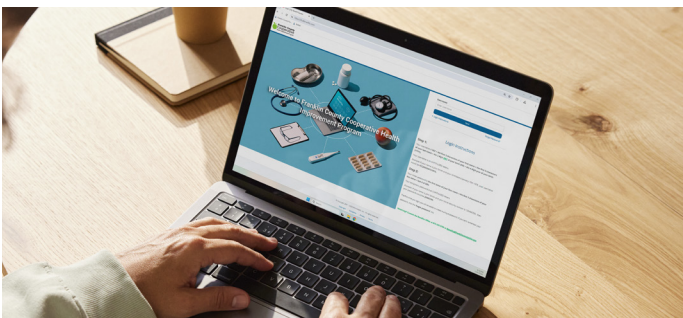
Open Enrollment is Here!

Healthy Eating for Diabetes Prevention and Management

Meet Your Health Engagement Nurses

Navigating Post-Election Stress

Join ThriveOn's Sweet Dreams Challenge



OPEN ENROLLMENT IS HERE!

ENROLL BETWEEN NOVEMBER 6 - NOVEMBER 20

The 2025 Open Enrollment period for Franklin County employees runs from November 6 to Wednesday, November 20. During this time, you can make changes to your health, life, and disability insurance elections, enroll in a Flexible Spending Account (FSA), choose voluntary benefits, and update your dependent information.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW:

Open Enrollment is Optional: Your current elections for health, life, disability, and legal plans will automatically carry over into 2025 unless you make changes during the Open Enrollment period. However, FSA elections will not automatically renew. You must re-elect FSA benefits each year, so if you want to participate in an FSA in 2025, you must actively enroll between November 6 and November 20 at [fccBenefits.com](https://www.fccBenefits.com).

STEPS TO TAKE DURING OPEN ENROLLMENT:

We recommend that all employees, whether making changes or not, complete the following steps to ensure your 2025 benefits are correct and up to date:

- **Review Your 2025 Benefit Elections:** Log in to [fccBenefits.com](https://www.fccBenefits.com) to review your choices and confirm they're accurate.
- **Verify Personal Information:** Make sure your contact details, including phone number(s) and email(s), are current.
- **Update Beneficiary Assignments:** Ensure your beneficiaries are listed correctly and update if necessary.
- **Review Dependent Eligibility Requirements:** Verify that all listed dependents meet the eligibility requirements.
- **Elect Your FSA Benefits:** If you want to participate in an FSA in 2025, you must enroll this year, even if you had an FSA in 2024.

HOW TO ACCESS OPEN ENROLLMENT RESOURCES:

We offer several resources to help you navigate the Open Enrollment process and understand any changes to your benefits:

- **[The Spotlight: 2025 Open Enrollment Edition:](#)** Our digital newsletter provides an overview of benefit changes, highlights for 2025, and detailed information about the Open Enrollment process.
- **[On-Demand Tutorial:](#)** Watch a pre-recorded, all-inclusive video at your convenience to learn more about Open Enrollment and benefit updates for 2025.
- **[Live Virtual Presentations:](#)** Join any of our live sessions with Benefits & Wellness staff, where each session covers specific topics and ends with a Q&A. Check the Open Enrollment Virtual Presentation Schedule for dates and times.

- **Benefits & Wellness Office Support:** A member of the Benefits staff is available Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. For assistance, call **614.525.5750**, email Benefits@franklincountyohio.gov, or stop by the office to speak with someone in person.

Take this opportunity to review and update your benefits for 2025. The Franklin County Benefits & Wellness team is here to support you through the process.



HEALTHY EATING FOR DIABETES PREVENTION AND MANAGEMENT

TIPS FOR CONTROLLING BLOOD SUGAR LEVELS

Managing blood sugar levels is crucial for diabetes prevention and management. A balanced diet can help control blood sugar and reduce the risk of complications like heart disease. Here are some top recommendations for foods to include in a diabetes-friendly diet, as well as foods to limit or avoid.

TOP 10 FOODS FOR DIABETES MANAGEMENT

1. **Fatty Fish** – Rich in omega-3 fatty acids, which help reduce inflammation and support heart health.
2. **Leafy Greens** – High in nutrients and antioxidants that protect heart and eye health.
3. **Avocados** – Low in sugar and linked to improved diet quality, with potential benefits for diabetes prevention.
4. **Eggs** – Support blood sugar management and heart health, while keeping you full longer.
5. **Chia Seeds** – Help stabilize blood sugar and may improve heart health.
6. **Beans** – A low-cost, low-glycemic food that supports stable blood sugar levels.
7. **Greek Yogurt** – Promotes healthy blood sugar

and weight management.

8. **Strawberries** – Low in sugar with anti-inflammatory properties that may aid insulin sensitivity.
9. **Garlic** – Helps lower cholesterol and blood pressure in people with diabetes.
10. **Squash** – Contains antioxidants and may help lower blood sugar levels.

FOODS TO LIMIT OR AVOID

Certain foods can cause blood sugar spikes or negatively impact heart health. If you have diabetes, consider limiting:

1. **Refined Grains** – Like white bread, pasta, and rice, which increase blood sugar quickly.
2. **Fruit Juice** – Lacks fiber and may cause quick sugar spikes; whole fruits are a better option.
3. **Breakfast Cereals** – Many varieties are high in sugar; consider low-sugar options or oatmeal with fresh fruit.

RESOURCES FOR FRANKLIN COUNTY COOPERATIVE MEMBERS

As a member of the Franklin County Cooperative, you have access to several resources to help you thrive in your everyday life:

- **Health Engagement Nurses** - Franklin County's dedicated Health Engagement Nurses, Therese Lentz, Brittany Meszaros, and Laura Lawrence, are available for private consultations. They offer:
 - Health promotion and education on healthcare decisions.
 - Guidance on UnitedHealthcare tools, resources, and wellness programs.
 - Support for managing chronic conditions like diabetes, heart disease, and asthma.
 - Assistance in finding healthcare providers tailored to your needs.
- **Nutrition Counseling** - Cooperative members enrolled in the health plan can access unlimited visits with an in-network nutritionist or dietitian at no cost. These sessions are fully covered, providing guidance on diet and nutrition to support your health journey.
- **Health Coaching** - Work one-on-one with a trained health coach who will help you set and achieve your wellness goals. Together, you'll create

an action plan tailored to your health status, medical conditions, and personal objectives. You decide what to work on and set the pace, while your coach offers inspiration, resources, and progress tracking. To get started, register for the web portal at fccThriveOn.com, complete the Online Health Assessment, and explore Health Coaching options suited to your needs.

- **[WeightWatchers Diabetes Program](#)** - Eligible members receive a 75% discount on the WeightWatchers Diabetes Program, designed to simplify meal planning and weight management with tools like ZeroPoint foods, 24/7 support, and integration with continuous glucose monitors. The program helps manage blood sugar and reduce diabetes-related stress through sustainable food choices and supportive community engagement.

When diabetes is not well managed, it increases your risk of several serious conditions. However, a healthy diet, regular physical activity, and maintaining a healthy weight can all help keep blood sugar, insulin, and inflammation in check, significantly reducing these risks. Monitoring your blood sugar can also help you understand how your body responds to different foods and activities. Make the most of the resources offered through the Franklin County Cooperative to support your diabetes management and take control of your health today.



MEET YOUR HEALTH ENGAGEMENT NURSES

GET THE SUPPORT YOU NEED

The Franklin County Cooperative is deeply committed to providing thoughtful, supportive employee benefits and wellness programs centered around the needs of our members. As part of this commitment, we're excited to expand our team of UnitedHealthcare **[Health Engagement Nurses](#)** with the addition of a third nurse dedicated to helping members thrive in their everyday lives.

Meet Therese Lentz, Brittany Meszaros, and our newest Health Engagement Nurse, Laura Lawrence:



Therese Lentz RN, MSN

Nurse Therese has over 35 years of experience with a focus on cardiovascular disease, prevention, and wellness. She is married with 2 sons and 1 daughter, all of whom are married, and she has 5 grandchildren. In her free time, she enjoys going to live music & sporting events, the beach, and spending time with family & friends.



Brittany Meszaros BSN, RN

Nurse Brittany has over 33 years of experience with a focus on cardiovascular disease, case management and leadership. She has worked in cardiac, stress lab and critical care environments. She is married with two adult sons. In her spare time, she enjoys spending time with family traveling, running, hiking, biking, and going to concerts. She is very excited to work with the Franklin County Cooperative.



Laura Lawrence BSN, RN

Nurse Laura has been working as a registered nurse for over 28 years with clinical background knowledge in skin cancer prevention and treatment, surgery, sleep medicine, and vaccination education. Her experience has led to building strong rapport with others, focusing on disease prevention and health education, and addressing challenges with a problem-solving mindset. Laura enjoys spending time outdoors with her family, hiking, biking, and kayaking.

Your conversations are confidential and at no cost to you. To speak with any of them, you can call the Onsite EAP and Health Engagement Nurse Support Line at **614.525.6773**.

NAVIGATING POST-ELECTION STRESS

UTILIZING YOUR RESOURCES

As we move through another election season, many of us may experience heightened emotions, stress, and uncertainty. Elections can impact not only our own sense of security and direction but also our relationships with family, friends, and colleagues who may have differing views. Recognizing these feelings as normal can help us handle them in healthier ways and maintain meaningful connections with those around us.

CARING FOR YOURSELF

During this time, it's essential to focus on self-care. Take breaks from the news or social media if you feel overwhelmed by constant updates. Engage in activities that refresh your mind and body, such as going for a walk, cooking a favorite meal, or listening to music. Staying hydrated, getting enough sleep, and remaining physically active are also helpful to manage stress. Give yourself permission to experience emotions without judgment, and recognize the difference between emotions (which are alerts) and feelings (which guide actions) to navigate the season with greater awareness.

MAINTAINING RELATIONSHIPS

In today's climate, election discussions can feel especially intense, even among people who share similar views. Sometimes, continued conversations about the results or future implications can create unwanted anxiety or stress. If you're finding that political discussions are affecting your well-being, it's okay to set boundaries. You might choose to shift conversations toward shared interests or ask for a break from election-related topics.

If a conversation does come up, try focusing on respectful listening without the expectation of changing anyone's mind. When emotions run high, taking a step back to reflect can help you stay grounded and maintain healthy relationships through this season. If you're finding that these discussions – even with those who agree with you – are affecting your well-being, taking breaks and setting limits on such topics can help reduce stress and protect your peace of mind.

RESOURCES FOR SUPPORT

Get Help When You Need It - Optum's [Onsite EAP Consultant](#), Valerie Schenk-Greil, is available to

discuss a wide range of topics, from work-life balance and parenting concerns to managing anxiety. Don't hesitate to reach out to these resources to help navigate stress and strengthen relationships, especially during times of heightened emotion.

For those who need additional support, Franklin County Cooperative offers resources through Emotional Wellbeing Solutions (EWS). EWS provides confidential support for a range of concerns, including stress, anxiety, and family relationships. Benefits-eligible employees, their dependents, and household members can access eight free counseling sessions per issue per year, either in person or virtually. Call **800.354.3950** 24/7 to talk with a master's level clinician and get started today. In addition, digital self-care tools, including the [Calm app](#) and [Talkspace](#), are available through [liveandworkwell.com](#) (access code: EAP) for stress management and emotional wellness.

If you're feeling anxious or uncertain this election season, know that support is available whenever you need it. Remember, caring for yourself and keeping a respectful, open approach with others can make all the difference.

JOIN THRIVEON'S SWEET DREAMS CHALLENGE

JOIN BEFORE NOVEMBER 13

Join our Sweet Dreams Challenge, running from November 6 to December 3, 2024, to make sleep a priority and earn a \$50 Well-Being Activity Incentive while you're at it.

HOW TO JOIN THE CHALLENGE:

1. **Register** for ThriveOn's Sweet Dreams Challenge by **November 13, 2024** at [fccThriveOn.com](#)
2. **Achieve the Participation Requirement:** Enter a "Yes" or "No" response for 21 of the 28 days
3. **Achieve the Daily Goal:** Prioritize your sleep on 14 days of the challenge and record "Yes" for doing so

Bonus Rewards: [Attend the Sweet Dreams Sleep Webinar](#) on November 12th at 11:00 a.m., and you'll be entered to win a Hatch Restore Alarm Clock, valued at \$170! Five winners will be selected and taxed on the prize.

Don't miss out on this chance to improve your health and quality of rest. Sign up today and sleep your way to better well-being!