

**Submission title: 2009 KEHP Benefits Selection Guide**  
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**State: KY**  
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## **NASPE Communication Award Application**

Open Enrollment is usually a stressful time for all involved. The Personnel Cabinet's Center for Strategic Innovation partnered with the Department of Employee Insurance (DEI) by drastically revamping the communication strategy for this process. This began with decreasing the amount of pages in our benefits book from 90 to 36 and assuring that the new document would be more customer oriented, visually appealing and thematically linked to our desire to promote a healthy workforce. Our desire was to also reduce the cost of printing and shipping. With our new booklet we were able to accomplish our goals, and deliver by drop shipment instead of air mailing each individual brochure to each of the approximately 193,000 eligible participants.

Furthermore, in addition to a first-time partnership between DEI and CSI, we've also worked with our Governor Steve Beshear who recorded a video that was later posted on You Tube giving a brief overview of things to come in this year's open enrollment and featured the Benefits Selection Guide while informing the constituents that rates would be increasing. Finally, because this was the first open enrollment since, and because of the vast number of employees, teachers and quasi-agencies who participate in our plans, our Deputy Secretary of the Personnel Cabinet, Timothy Longmeyer, conducted town hall meetings to introduce the guide and help to explain

the new plans and rates to a randomly selected focus group. By virtue of our new communication plan and booklet for Open Enrollment, we were able to complete this process more efficiently, more creatively and with a 99% enrollment rate.

**1. Please provide a brief description of the submission.**

KEHP Benefits Selection Guide – CSI was asked to partner with the Personnel Cabinet’s Department of Employee Insurance in evaluating the processes and practices which take place during Open Enrollment to improve customer service, assure that the same was aligned to our vision and values and For the past five years the KEHP Open Enrollment process was passive – plan holders automatically rolled over into the new plan year with the same plan as the previous year. For the 2009 plan year, all 154,000 eligible employees were required to actively enroll during a two-week window in October 2008 to continue their coverage. Communication was critical.

CSI then assisted in the development and implementation of solutions in three areas: handbook, web site, and customer support phone calls. The handbook was scaled down to a 36-page selection guide (<http://personnel.ky.gov/NR/rdonlyres/D6458E6F-A6D6-4E98-9886-68B466C6BA13/0/kehquickrefguideFINAL91508.pdf>) from a 90-page handbook which decreased printing costs while improving readability.

CSI redesigned the website (<http://personnel.ky.gov/dei/09OE/>) to have all of the information in one place and improve usability.

CSI recommended new strategies for providing customer support phone service which included redesigning the phone system to forward calls to other subject matter

experts such as the Commonwealth Office of Technology for IT calls and Humana for benefits information. This decreased the calls to our 6-member DEI staff which gave more efficient service to our customers (285,000 covered lives) who didn't have to wait on hold as in previous years to have questions answered.

As a result of these efforts, at the conclusion of OE, our Governor stated that this was the smoothest Open Enrollment in recent years.

**2. How long has the submission been in existence?** October 2008

**3. Why was the submission created?** The Benefits Selection Guide was created to simplify the enrollment process, to assure that information was more accessible, and to create a concise and visually stimulating format. Our desire was to convey pertinent information to plan holders and answer frequently asked questions from years prior and decrease incoming calls and paper applications.

**4. How does the submission support the goals and objectives of your agenda/department?** We believe in innovative human resource services. Our motto within the Cabinet is we serve the people who serve the people. This document, a product of our Cabinet, needed to reflect our new service model. In addition, we have a significant focus on wellness which needed to be reflected in this book.

In addition, in support of DEI's philosophy of "Members Matter" it was important to ensure quality communication tools that served the needs of our diverse audience that includes almost 36,000 state employees, 95,000 teachers, 50,000 retirees, and 12,000 employees from local agencies and governments.

**5. Have you been able to measure the effectiveness of this submission? If so,**

**how?** Yes. Almost 85,000 Open Enrollment phone calls were for technical and password issues. These were handled by the Commonwealth Office of Technology freeing the DEI staff to deal directly with issues related to insurance coverage. We were very comprehensive in the information shared within the book, we saw a significant decrease in call volume because of that. Participants were able to have their questions answered in the booklet.

Web enrollment was the best it's ever been with almost all eligible employees able to enroll via the web and only one hour of downtime for technical issues during the two-week period. Online enrollment was increased by at least 50%.

The Legislature voiced their pleasure with the entire process to the Secretary of the Personnel Cabinet.