

PEBB Annual Report of Customer Service Complaints and Appeals

September 30, 2016

Substitute Senate Bill 6584, Chapter 293, Laws of 2010
Revised Code of Washington 41.05.630



PEBB Annual Report of Customer Service Complaints and Appeals



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Executive Summary

The Washington Legislature passed Substitute Senate Bill (SSB) 6584 in 2010 and it was codified as RCW 41.05.630. This statute requires the Health Care Authority (HCA) to capture customer service complaints for each health plan that provides medical coverage to the Public Employees Benefits Board (PEBB) Program and to summarize the complaints and appeals made by PEBB Program members, both “Active” employees and “Retired” members related to these health plans.

The resulting report, delivered to the Legislature annually, contains a summary count of complaints and appeals for the previous twelve months and records annual trends that are related to the following categories:

1. Availability of a health care service,
2. Customer service, and
3. Quality of a health care service.

During Fiscal Year 2016, there were slight increases in the number of complaints regarding *Quality of a Health Care Service* and *Customer Service*, however, the overall small number of complaints per 1,000 members does not indicate any significant change in trend. The total number of appeals has declined over the five years tracked.

Scope of the 2016 Report

Each health plan provided the number of complaints and appeals related to the three categories described above. However, the data is limited by two factors:

1. The plans do not use these three specific categories to track complaints internally or in other reports to HCA. Each plan individually determines the placement of complaints and appeals into these three categories. This may result in some inconsistencies in how the plans sort complaints.
2. This report includes only those complaints and appeals that fit into one of the three named categories. Complaints and appeals that do not fit into one of the three named categories are not included in this report.



PEBB Health Plan Complaints and Appeals Data

Table 1. Total Number of Appeals and Complaints

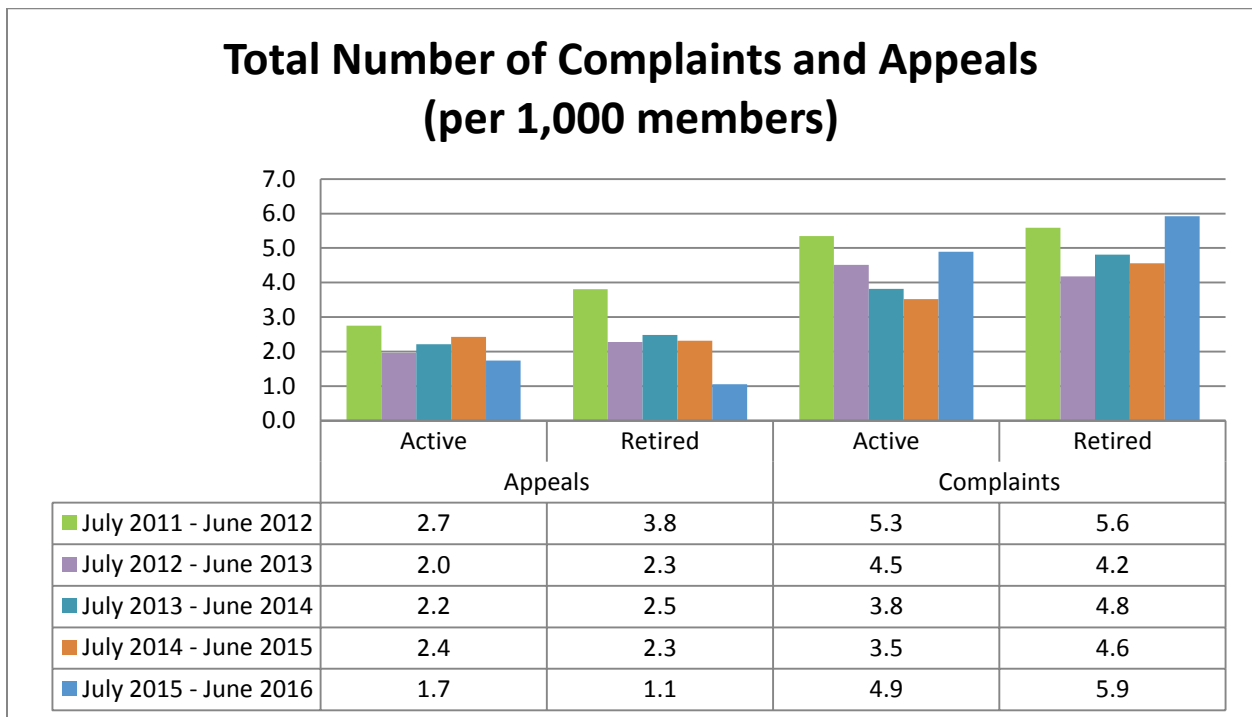
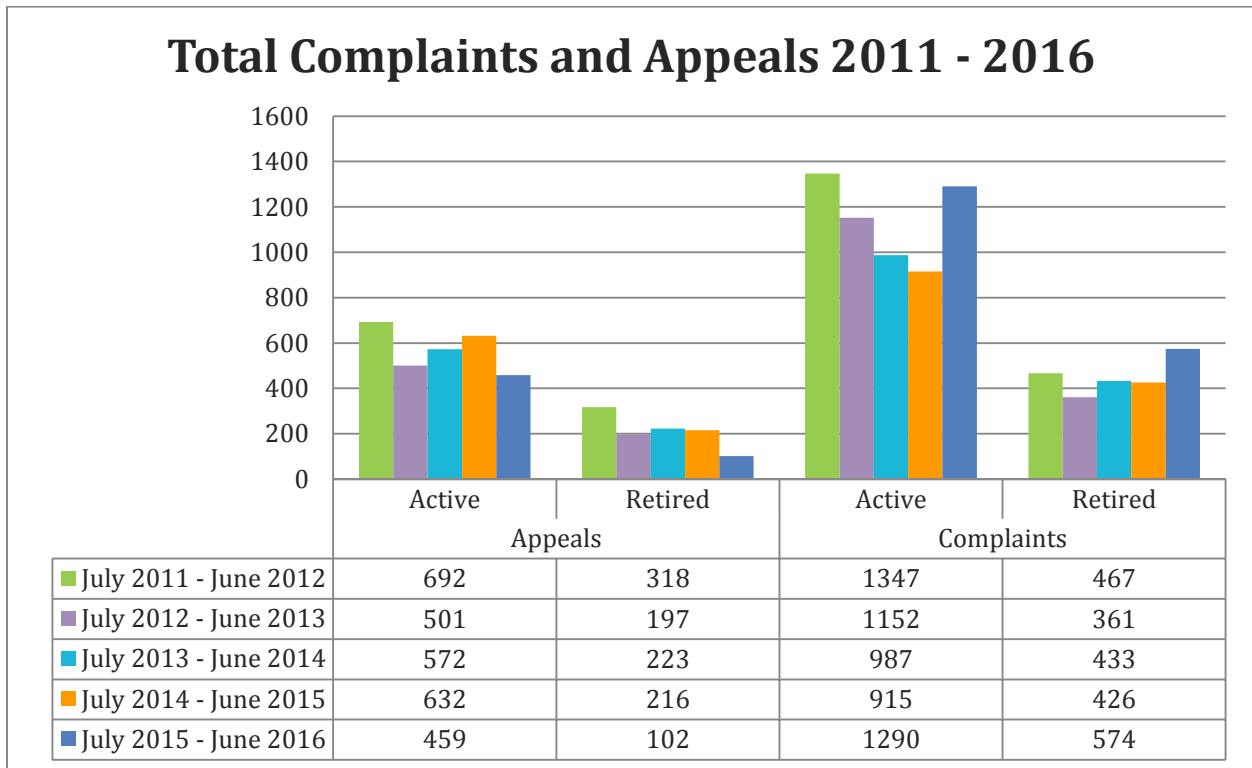
| July 2015 - June 2016 | Appeals | | Complaints | |
|---------------------------------------|------------|------------|--------------|------------|
| | Active | Retired | Active | Retired |
| Availability of a Health Care Service | 444 | 92 | 370 | 149 |
| Customer Service | 15 | 10 | 766 | 332 |
| Quality of a Health Care Service | 0 | 0 | 154 | 93 |
| Total | 459 | 102 | 1,290 | 574 |

Table 2. Appeals and Complaints per 1,000 Members

| July 2015 - June 2016 | Appeals | | Complaints | |
|---------------------------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| | Active | Retired | Active | Retired |
| Availability of a Health Care Service | 1.6 | < 1 | 1.4 | 1.5 |
| Customer Service | < 1 | < 1 | 2.9 | 2.5 |
| Quality of a Health Care Service | < 1 | < 1 | < 1 | < 1 |
| Total | 1.7 | 1.1 | 4.9 | 5.9 |

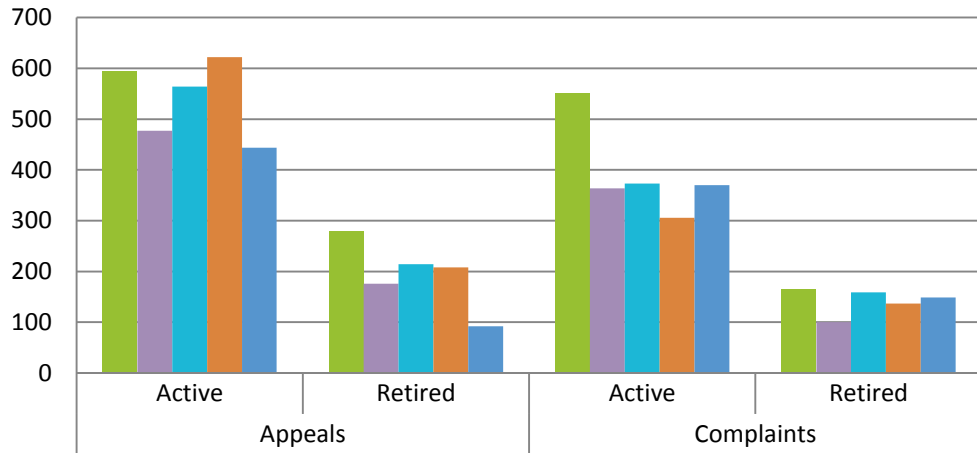


Complaints and Appeals Data 2011-2016



Availability of a Health Care Service

Total Appeals & Complaints by Year
(July 2011 - June 2016)



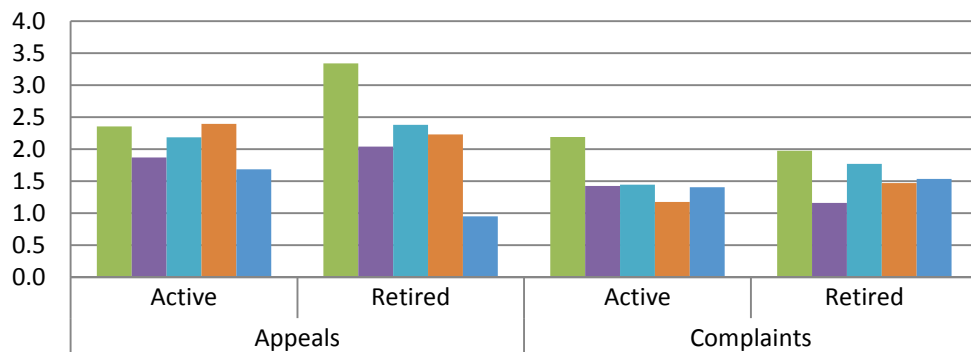
| | | | | |
|-------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| ■ July 2011 - June 2012 | 593 | 279 | 551 | 165 |
| ■ July 2012 - June 2013 | 477 | 176 | 364 | 100 |
| ■ July 2013 - June 2014 | 564 | 214 | 373 | 159 |
| ■ July 2014 - June 2015 | 622 | 208 | 306 | 137 |
| ■ July 2015 - June 2016 | 444 | 92 | 370 | 149 |

Availability of a Health Care Service

Total Appeals & Complaints by Year

(per 1,000 members)

July 2011 - June 2016

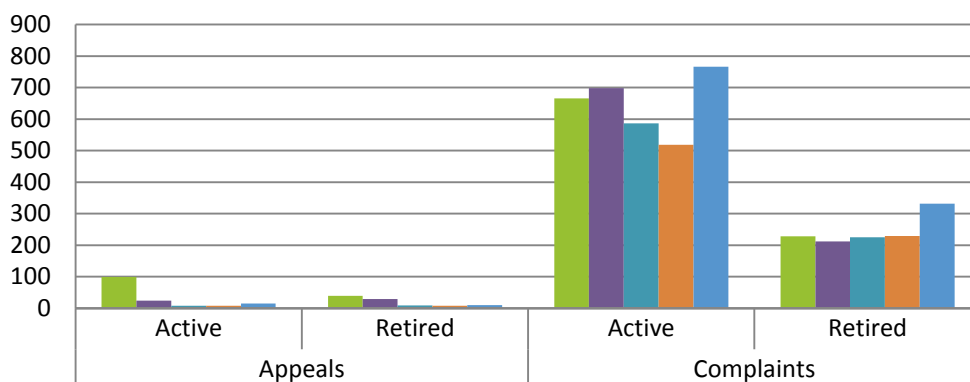


| | | | | |
|-------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| ■ July 2011 - June 2012 | 2.4 | 3.3 | 2.2 | 2.0 |
| ■ July 2012 - June 2013 | 1.9 | 2.0 | 1.4 | 1.2 |
| ■ July 2013 - June 2014 | 2.2 | 2.4 | 1.4 | 1.8 |
| ■ July 2014 - June 2015 | 2.4 | 2.2 | 1.2 | 1.5 |
| ■ July 2015 - June 2016 | 1.7 | 0.9 | 1.4 | 1.5 |



Customer Service

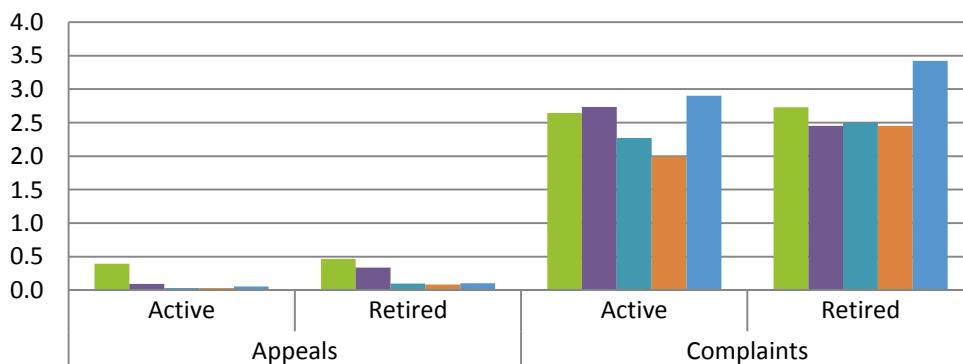
Total Appeals & Complaints by Year July 2011 - June 2016



| Year | Appeals | | Complaints | |
|-----------------------|---------|---------|------------|---------|
| | Active | Retired | Active | Retired |
| July 2011 - June 2012 | 99 | 39 | 666 | 228 |
| July 2012 - June 2013 | 24 | 29 | 698 | 212 |
| July 2013 - June 2014 | 8 | 9 | 587 | 225 |
| July 2014 - June 2015 | 8 | 8 | 519 | 229 |
| July 2015 - June 2016 | 15 | 10 | 766 | 332 |

Customer Service Complaints & Appeals

(per 1,000 members) July 2011- June 2016

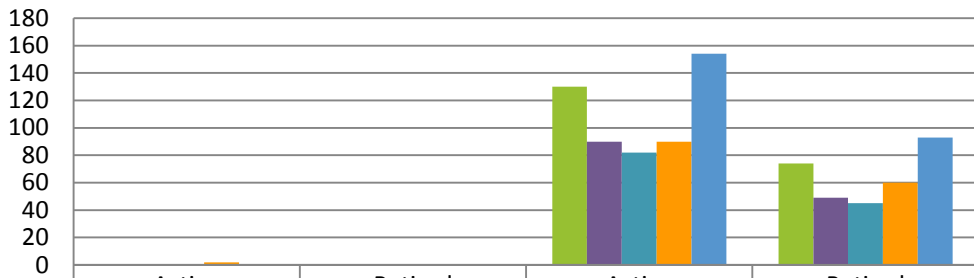


| Year | Appeals | | Complaints | |
|-----------------------|---------|---------|------------|---------|
| | Active | Retired | Active | Retired |
| July 2011 - June 2012 | 0.4 | 0.5 | 2.6 | 2.7 |
| July 2012 - June 2013 | 0.1 | 0.3 | 2.7 | 2.5 |
| July 2013 - June 2014 | 0.0 | 0.1 | 2.3 | 2.5 |
| July 2014 - June 2015 | 0.0 | 0.1 | 2.0 | 2.5 |
| July 2015 - June 2016 | 0.1 | 0.1 | 2.9 | 3.4 |



Quality of a Health Care Service

Total Appeals & Complaints by Year
July 2011 - June 2016

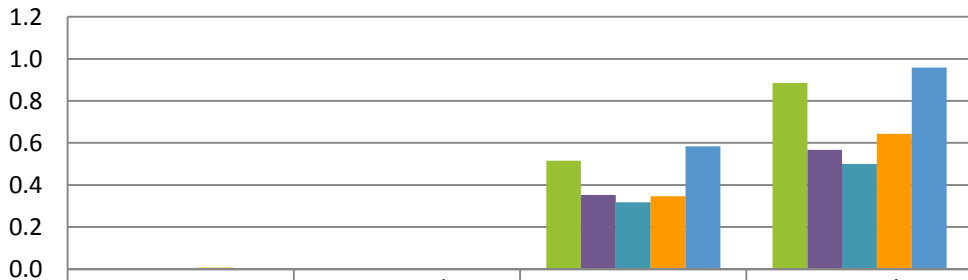


| Year | Appeals | | Complaints | |
|-----------------------|---------|---------|------------|---------|
| | Active | Retired | Active | Retired |
| July 2011 - June 2012 | 0 | 0 | 130 | 74 |
| July 2012 - June 2013 | 0 | 0 | 90 | 49 |
| July 2013 - June 2014 | 0 | 0 | 82 | 45 |
| July 2014 - June 2015 | 2 | 0 | 90 | 60 |
| July 2015 - June 2016 | 0 | 0 | 154 | 93 |

Quality of a Health Care Service

Complaints & Appeals

(per 1,000 Members)
July 2011 - June 2016



| Year | Appeals | | Complaints | |
|-----------------------|---------|---------|------------|---------|
| | Active | Retired | Active | Retired |
| July 2011 - June 2012 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.5 | 0.9 |
| July 2012 - June 2013 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.4 | 0.6 |
| July 2013 - June 2014 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.3 | 0.5 |
| July 2014 - June 2015 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.3 | 0.6 |
| July 2015 - June 2016 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.6 | 1.0 |



Analysis

The Public Employees Benefits (PEB) Division regularly monitors PEBB Program health plan complaints and appeals statistics. PEB contract management staff work with the plans to address benefit administration and plan design issues that generate any significant complaints and appeals.

During Fiscal Year 2016, complaints increased slightly around *Quality of a Health Care Service* and *Customer Service*. However, when viewed per 1,000 members, the increase remains less than one per 1,000 members. Complaint levels for *Availability of a Health Care Service* remain static at approximately 1.5 per thousand members for both groups. Customer service complaints increased slightly for active employees and retirees.

The total number of appeals has declined over the five years tracked. From the high totals in 2011, the 2016 totals have dropped approximately 33 percent. Given that PEBB has a July 2016 enrollment of 263,750 active employees and 96,964 retirees, the number of appeals is quite low—1.6 per 1,000 members for both groups.

Overall, the small number of complaints and appeals per 1,000 members with a total enrollment growth of more than 3 percent does not indicate any significant complaint or appeal trend.

