

STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS IN BENEFITS



Implementation in Zero to 60 ... Days

Beall's Inc., a privately held clothing retailer with 560 locations throughout the United States and more than 10,000 employees, faced a daunting benefits challenge. Beall's had to identify a new group carrier and complete the implementation of its multi-line employee-benefits program in fewer than 60 days before a Jan. 1 "go live" date. In addition to installing the company's group short- and long-term disability, life and family medical-leave programs in a compressed timeline, Beall's had two additional requirements—first, to import its historical-leave history as part of the move and second, the new carrier would be subject to an audit prior to the program's effective date.

The benefits consultant representing Beall's knew that Liberty Mutual Group Benefits had the people, expertise and integrated systems in place to meet this challenge.

"We'd heard very positive things about Liberty Mutual as a group-benefits provider and even though it was late in the game, decided on Nov. 1 to pull the trigger and move to a new carrier," says Arne Lemke, divisional vice president of compensation and benefits at Beall's.

The Response

Understanding the short time frame and Beall's program requirements, Liberty Mutual acted quickly to plan for the conversion. Liberty Mutual employed its structured protocol for implementation, assigning a dedicated resource to lead the implementation team and leveraging its proprietary system to set key milestones.

Liberty Mutual's account service manager led the implementation team and worked closely with Beall's to accomplish two immediate goals:

- Assure that Liberty Mutual's integrated claim and leave system was configured to accept Beall's program data; and
- Coordinate the activities of the teams in charge of underwriting, contracts, leave and claims to develop program documents and employee-support guidelines and materials.

Following receipt of historical-leave data from Beall's former carrier, the implementation team loaded the records and conducted quality testing over the ensuing two weeks on more than 11,000 records.

Communication is the cornerstone of a successful implementation. Liberty Mutual Group Benefits was in frequent contact with Beall's and its consultant to monitor progress and stay on track. Lemke was instrumental in

ensuring that Liberty Mutual had answers to critical questions and could make decisions on a timely basis.

In December, Beall's and its benefits consultant began an audit of Liberty Mutual's service offering by:

- Presenting group-benefits claims and leave-team representatives with past scenarios to assess quality standards in administration, service and customer experience;
- Conducting in-person interviews to capture claims and service team members' understanding of Beall's program design and service needs; and
- Reviewing

all program contracts and services for consistency with Beall's previous plan.

During this time, Liberty Mutual Group Benefits continued to prepare for the launch by hosting live training webinars for Beall's benefits personnel to review the program, systems and processes. The goal was to make this transition smooth and uneventful.

The Result

The implementation of Beall's disability, life and leave programs took 60 days of heroic effort.

In group benefits, an implementation can often take 90 to 120 days or more. Due to the exceptional teamwork and commitment of all involved, Beall's employees and their families began 2010 with uninterrupted service and peace of mind.

Beall's Lemke summed up the customer's perspective.

"Liberty Mutual Group Benefits lived up to its



reputation and was able to handle a very aggressive, comprehensive installation very late in the game. We are very satisfied with the implementation and level of service to date."

HIGHLIGHTS

Organization: Beall's Inc.

Headquarters: Bradenton, Fla.

Primary Business: A privately held clothing retailer with 560 stores in states across the Sun Belt, from Florida to California.

Benefits Challenge: Implement Beall's multi-line employee-benefits program in fewer than 60 days before a Jan. 1 "go live" date.