



More than numbers: Delivering life-changing results

Filed in [Wages and Benefits](#), [Health and Retirement Benefits](#) • By: [Lisa M. Gomez](#) • December 16, 2024

When one woman answered a phone call from the Employee Benefits Security Administration (EBSA), we gave her the good news she would never forget – we recovered \$31,000 that her husband’s retirement plan owed him. She said it was a “miracle” because they had been struggling to pay his health expenses.

But this wasn’t just a miracle. It’s what we do every day at EBSA: protect the job-based benefits of America’s workers.

Small Agency, Big Results

We protect more than 153 million workers, retirees and their families who receive coverage from approximately 765,000 private retirement plans, 2.8 million health plans and 619,000 other welfare benefit plans. Together these plans hold estimated assets of \$13.6 trillion.

Although we’re relatively small compared to other government agencies, we punch above our weight class. Last year, with a budget of under \$200 million, we recovered \$1.4 billion for plans, participants and beneficiaries—a return on investment that delivers results for America’s workers.

Making a Difference for Workers and Families

Our impact goes beyond the numbers. Here are just a few examples of how we make a difference in the lives of workers and their families:

- **Securing mental health treatment:** In Oregon, we helped a mom recover over \$200,000 after her self-funded plan failed to cover her daughter’s mental health claims.
- **Ensuring access to necessary care:** In just three days, we worked with a plan participant and provider to reverse a denied claim, allowing the worker to undergo critical surgery and avoid paralysis.
- **Reducing crushing medical bills:** After a cycling accident left a worker’s son with \$140,000 in incorrectly processed claims, we stepped in, reducing the bill to \$1,630.
- **Recovering lost retirement savings:** We tracked down a man living in a Michigan homeless shelter who was owed a pension. He received a lump sum of over \$82,000 and now gets \$711 monthly, allowing him to plan for permanent housing.

And then there are stories like the one we began with. That \$31,000 “miracle” was part of a larger case where we recovered more than \$230,000 in retirement funds for plan participants who only spoke Spanish.

EBSA’s Benefits Advisors Protect ALL Workers



If you have questions about your retirement or health benefit plans, EBSA's Benefit Advisors can help. They provide free, confidential assistance in over 105 languages, regardless of language barriers or immigration status. You can contact them online at [AskEBSA.dol.gov](https://askEBSA.dol.gov) or call toll-free at 1-866-444-3272. Benefit Advisors respect your privacy and will only contact your employer or union with your permission.

While our Benefit Advisors don't consider themselves miracle workers, they work hard to protect workers in the United States. Last year, our Benefits Advisors closed more than 197,000 inquiries and recovered \$444.1 million in benefits on behalf of workers and their families.

Lisa M. Gomez is the Assistant Secretary for the U.S. Department of Labor's Employee Benefits Security Administration.

Tags: [Employee Benefits Security Administration](#), [Employee Benefits Security Administration \(EBSA\)](#)

SHARE THIS:

Right fit, right protection

Right fit, right protection

RELATED POSTS

MORE FROM AUTHOR



Preparing for the future? Start by reviewing your benefits



Partnering to achieve ERISA's mission



Celebrate your financial independence

[Scroll to top ↑](#)

Stay Connected! Sign up to receive Department of Labor updates.

Email Address

SUBSCRIBE

[Agencies](#)

[Forms](#)

[Guidance Search](#)

[FAQ](#)

[About DOL](#)

[News](#)

[Contact Us](#)

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

[White House](#)

[Benefits.gov](#)

[Coronavirus Resources](#)

[Disaster Recovery Assistance](#)

[DisasterAssistance.gov](#)

[USA.gov](#)

[Notification of EEO Violations](#)

[No Fear Act Data](#)

[U.S. Office of Special Counsel](#)

LABOR DEPARTMENT

[About DOL](#)

[Guidance Search](#)

[Español](#)

[Office of Inspector General](#)

[Subscribe to the DOL Newsletter](#)

[Read the DOL Newsletter](#)

Submit Feedback

[Emergency Accountability Status Link](#)

[A to Z Index](#)

ABOUT THE SITE

[Freedom of Information Act](#)

[Disclaimers](#)

[Plug-Ins Used on DOL.gov](#)

[Accessibility Statement](#)



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

200 Constitution Ave NW

Washington, DC 20210

[1-866-4-USA-DOL](tel:1-866-4-USA-DOL)

[1-866-487-2365](tel:1-866-487-2365)

www.dol.gov

Connect With DOL



[Site Map](#) |

[Important Website Notices](#) |

[Privacy & Security Statement](#)

Submit Feedback