

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: March 26, 2015

Contact: Stephen Blakely, EBRI, 202/775-6341, blakely@ebri.org
Paul Fronstin, (author), EBRI, 202/775-6352, fronstin@ebri.org

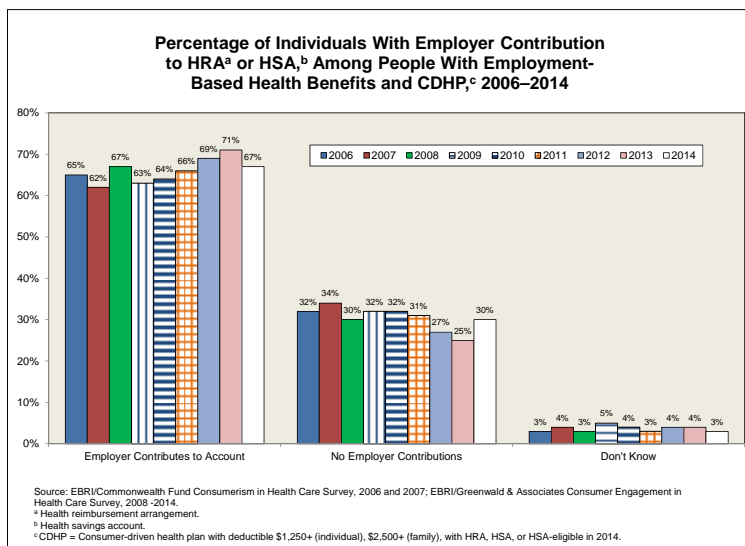
New Research from EBRI:

Employer, Worker Contributions to Health Savings Accounts Are Decreasing

WASHINGTON—Both employers and workers decreased their contributions to health savings accounts (HSAs) last year, according to new research from the nonpartisan Employee Benefit Research Institute (EBRI).

HSAs, an element of so-called “consumer-driven” health plans (CDHPs)—is a combination of high deductibles (at least \$1,250 in 2014) and tax-preferred savings or spending accounts that workers and their families can use to pay their out-of-pocket health care expenses.

EBRI notes that about 15 percent of the population was enrolled in a CDHP in 2014, representing about 26 million individuals with private insurance. Among the 15 percent of individuals enrolled in a CDHP, 57 percent (or 9.3 million) had an HRA or had opened an HSA, while 43 percent were enrolled in an HSA-eligible health plan but had not opened an HSA.



Employer contributions: According to the new EBRI analysis, 2 in 3 workers (67 percent) with an HRA or HSA reported that their employers contributed to the account in 2014. The percentage of workers with an HRA or HSA-eligible health plan whose employers contributed to the account had steadily increased since 2009 and reached its highest level of 71 percent in 2013 since the inception of EBRI surveys monitoring trends in health accounts. It fell to 67 percent in 2014.

Worker contributions: Individuals’ contributions to HSAs had been growing until 2011, but have

declined since then, EBRI found. Between 2006 and 2011, the percentage of individuals with employee-only coverage contributing nothing to an HSA decreased from 28 percent to 11 percent. At the same time, the percentage contributing \$1,500 or more increased from 21 percent in 2006 to 44 percent in 2011.

More recently, between 2011 and 2014, the percentage of individuals reporting that they contributed nothing to their HSA increased from 11 percent to 23 percent, and the percentage reporting that they contributed \$1,500 or more fell from 44 percent to 30 percent.

Among individuals with individual coverage and employer contributions, the percentage with contributions between \$200–\$999 decreased while contributions of \$1,000 or more increased in 2014. Both lower- and higher-income individuals slightly lowered their contributions in 2014, and lower-income individuals were less likely to contribute anything than higher-income individuals.

The findings are based on results the 2008–2014 EBRI/Greenwald & Associates Consumer Engagement in Health Care Survey (CEHCS) and the 2006 and 2007 EBRI/Commonwealth Fund Consumerism in Health Care Survey, and examine the availability of HRAs and HSA-eligible plans, as well as employer and individual contribution behavior.

The full report, “Employer and Worker Contributions to Health Reimbursement Arrangements and Health Savings Accounts, 2006–2014,” is published in the March 2015 *EBRI Notes*, online at www.ebri.org

The Employee Benefit Research Institute is a private, nonpartisan, nonprofit research institute based in Washington, DC, that focuses on health, savings, retirement, and economic security issues. EBRI does not lobby and does not take policy positions. The work of EBRI is made possible by funding from its members and sponsors, which include a broad range of public, private, for-profit and nonprofit organizations. For more information go to www.ebri.org or www.asec.org

###