



Dear Society Member,

I am writing to share some important news with you regarding next year's Symposium. Unfortunately, circumstances beyond our control have forced the Society to change both the dates and location of the 2009 Symposium. The new dates are **August 9-12, 2009**, and the meeting will be held at the **Mandalay Bay Hotel in Las Vegas**. The reasons for these changes follow.

Change of Location to Las Vegas

The Governing Council recently learned that the Manchester Grand Hyatt Hotel in San Diego has been added to the national boycott list compiled by the Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees Union (HERE). As a matter of policy, the Society does not patronize hotels that are on this list. Further, all Society hotel contracts contain language that states that hotels must advise ISCEBS of any union situation that might occur prior to or during the contracted meeting which could result in hotel employees failing to report to work or which could result in activities directed at the hotel, such as pickets or other information activities which could persuade attendees to avoid use of the hotel's facilities or which could otherwise affect the hotel's performance or the success of the meeting. Since the hotel could be the subject of informational picketing and demonstrations during the 2009 Symposium, the Governing Council decided to cancel the agreement with the Manchester Grand Hyatt so as to not risk any disruptions that might adversely affect the success of the meeting. Because of the complexities involved in planning the Symposium and the size of the expected attendance, it is imperative that we take action now to assure that there is sufficient lead time to relocate the meeting. For those members who were looking to attending next year's meeting, we sincerely apologize and will do everything possible to schedule a future Symposium in San Diego.

New Dates – August 9-12, 2009

Since 1982, the Symposium traditionally has been held in early fall, typically in late September or early October. Over the years, the results of member surveys have indicated that there is no firm consensus as to what time of year is best for the Symposium. Because of the Society's diverse membership, members' preferred dates are usually spread out all over the calendar. The timing of competing meetings also plays a large role in scheduling the Symposium. In addition, because the Symposium is a fairly large meeting that requires a great deal of meeting space, the Society must book its dates three to five years out to secure the best properties.

So why are the dates moving up to late summer in 2009? One of the biggest reasons members give for not attending the Symposium is that it conflicts with open enrollment. The fall season has become one of the busiest times for benefit professionals, both on the plan sponsor and provider side. Since the Symposium was moving to a new venue, the Governing Council saw this as an opportunity to test new dates. Why late summer? It's before open enrollment, usually a slower time in the business cycle and may provide members with the opportunity to bring families and guests. If the new dates for 2009 are well received, the Governing Council may look into scheduling future Symposiums in a similar time period; however the Society does have contracts with hotels for early October dates in 2010 and 2011.



International Society
of Certified Employee Benefit Specialists

18700 W. Bluemound Rd. • P.O. Box 209 • Brookfield, WI 53008-0209
(262) 786-8771 • Fax (262) 786-8650 • E-mail: iscebs@iscebs.org

Although some members may be disappointed by the change in location, the Governing Council feels that it is the best possible alternative considering the circumstances. The Symposium was last held in Las Vegas in 2004 and experienced an all-time record high attendance. The Mandalay Bay Hotel is one of the premier properties in Las Vegas and features outstanding meeting facilities, a variety of unique shopping opportunities and great restaurants. Plus, the negotiated room rate of \$129 per night is a terrific bargain for this first class property.

Most attendees have told us over the years that they come to the Symposium for the outstanding educational program and unparalleled networking opportunities. For many, the Symposium could be held in any venue, as long as the program content and speakers were at their usual high level. Whether you attend for professional development reasons only or like to mix some time off in an attractive location, we hope that the 2009 Symposium will exceed your expectations.

Thank you for your consideration. If you have any questions or comments, please send them to my attention at iscebs@iscebs.org.

We hope to see you in Las Vegas next August!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Philip Grisafi". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Philip Grisafi, CEBS

President

ISCEBS Governing Council

