



BlueCross BlueShield of Nebraska

An Independent Licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association.

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Blue Cross and Blue Shield Approves New Home *10-story corporate headquarters coming to Aksarben*

January 8, 2009 (Omaha, NE) – Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Nebraska unveiled plans today for a 10-story, 315,000 square-foot facility in the Aksarben Village area that will serve as the company's new corporate headquarters beginning in the first quarter of 2011.

Construction is set to begin immediately on the \$98 million Blue Cross Centre, which will be developed and owned by Tetrad Corporation of Omaha and leased by Nebraska's largest health insurance company.

"We are extremely pleased to move ahead with relocating our corporate headquarters," said BCBSNE President and Chief Executive Officer Steve Martin. "We said from the beginning that we would do this only if it is in the best interest of our members statewide. With the extensive approval process we have undergone with our board and other entities, we are confident we are acting in the best interest of our members and the community at large."

Before Blue Cross could secure a 25-year lease agreement and Tetrad could move into the construction phase, the project had to be approved by Blue Cross and Blue Shield's board of directors, the Omaha City Council and Ak-Sar-Ben Future Trust.

Blue Cross officials estimate the company will save a minimum of \$2 million per year in leasing the new facility, versus ownership of its current multiple facilities—with the savings being invested in enhancements to member services. Two buildings at South 72nd and Mercy St., and the Omaha Tower just north of those facilities will be marketed and sold. Several parties have made inquiries into the properties, but no formal offers have been made.

"Property and building management is extremely resource-intensive and is not where we want to focus our energy," said Lew Trowbridge, Blue Cross Executive Vice President, Treasurer and Chief Financial Officer. "This decision further focuses us on our core competency of providing health and wellness solutions for our members."

(continued)

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One less thing to worry about.

Plans call for Blue Cross to relocate 1,000+ employees to the new facility in 2011, making the Omaha-based insurer an anchor tenant in the developing Aksarben Village area that will include retail shops, restaurants, theaters and residential properties.

"We are very excited to move more than 1,000 employees into Aksarben Village to work, shop, eat and play," said Janet Richardson, Blue Cross' Senior Vice President, Business Process and Corporate Services. "Some may even choose to live in the Village."

Along with expanded training space, the new facility has capacity for 1,200 employees and features a wellness education area and employee cafeteria. The Blue Cross Centre will be the tallest corporate headquarters built in Omaha since Union Pacific headquarters opened in 2004. The building will potentially carry a Silver LEED certification with environmentally sound construction material, lighting and mechanical systems. Kiewit Building Group is the contractor for the project, which was designed by architectural firm Leo A. Daly Co.

"This will certainly be a first rate, state-of-the-art office building, and will be an asset not only to Aksarben Village, but also to the entire Omaha community," said Tetrad President Don Mohlman. "We are thrilled to be part of this great project and assist Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Nebraska to meet their overall facility needs and goals."

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Nebraska, an independent licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association, insures or provides benefit administration to nearly 700,000 people. Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Nebraska is a mutual insurance company committed to delivering the health and wellness solutions that people value most. Among recent honors: The 2008 Integrity Award from the Better Business Bureau, the Platinum Well Workplace Award from the Wellness Councils of America in 2007 and one of the Best Places to Work in Omaha in 2008.

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