

## Domestic Partnership Benefits Frequently Asked Questions

DOMESTIC PARTNERSHIPS MUST HAVE BEEN REGISTERED WITH THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO'S BENEFITS OFFICE ON OR BEFORE DECEMBER 31, 2016.

### 1. What is a domestic partnership?

- Two individuals of the same sex who live together in a long-term relationship of indefinite duration; and
- Both partners have an exclusive mutual commitment in which they agree to be jointly responsible for each other's common welfare and share financial obligations; and
- The partners are not related by blood to a degree of closeness which would prohibit legal marriage in the state in which they legally reside; and
- The partners may not be married to any other person.

Individuals who meet the criteria listed above must also demonstrate joint responsibility for each other's common welfare and financial obligations. Partnership must have been registered with the University of Chicago Benefits Office on or before December 31, 2016.

### 2. What benefits is my Domestic Partner eligible for?

Benefits-eligible faculty and staff may add domestic partners (registered with the University of Chicago's Benefits Office on or before December 31, 2016) to their coverage under the

- Medical – BCBS PPO Maroon Plan, BCBS HDHP Maroon Savings Choice Plan, the University of Chicago HealthPlan (UCHP), BCBS HMO Illinois Plan;
- Dental - MetLife Dental Plans (Copay and PPO),
- Vision - VSP Vision Plans (Basic or Premier);
- Spouse/Partner Life Insurance.

Domestic partners (registered with the University of Chicago's Benefits Office on or before December 31, 2016) are also eligible for coverage under the University's Personal Accident Insurance Plan (PAI).

### 3. Why did the University of Chicago change the domestic partner benefits program effective January 1, 2017?

Following the 2015 U.S. Supreme Court ruling legalizing same sex marriage, the University revised its program to reflect the change in law. To respect the relationships of current employees, the new program will continue to offer benefits to all employees who are currently participating in the program or register as domestic partners with the University of Chicago's Benefits Office on or before December 31, 2016.

### 4. How is the new program different?

Effective January 1, 2017,

- Participants who were grandfathered into the program will continue to receive benefits under the existing program and do not have to take any action, as long as they remain in their existing partnership.
- Partners who are not grandfathered into the existing domestic benefit partnership program will need to be married or be in a civil union to receive benefits.

**Domestic Partnership Benefits  
Frequently Asked Questions**

**5. Are current domestic partners impacted by this change?**

No, current registered domestic partners will continue to receive benefits under the existing program, as long as they remain in their existing partnership.

**6. If my domestic partner is currently enrolled in health benefits, do I need to do anything?**

No action is needed to continue health benefits for registered domestic partners, as long as they remain in their existing partnership.

**7. What happens if my registered domestic partner is not enrolled in health benefits prior to January 1, 2017?**

Domestic partners registered with the University of Chicago's Benefits Office before December 31, 2016 will be grandfathered into the program and will remain an eligible dependent for health benefits as long as they remain in their existing partnership.

**Partners who are not grandfathered into the domestic benefit partnership program will need to be married or be in a civil union to receive benefits.**

**8. What happens if my partner and I terminate our relationship, or my relationship no longer meets the criteria of a domestic partnership?**

If a partnership that is grandfathered into the existing program is dissolved or ceases to meet the criteria of the current program, then the former partner is no longer eligible to receive partnership benefits.

**9. What happens if I leave the University and return?**

If you leave the University prior to December 31, 2016, and return after this date, your prior domestic partnership will no longer be honored.

**10. Who can I contact if I have additional questions?**

Contact the Benefits Office to speak to a Benefits Specialist at (773)702-9634 or [benefits@uchicago.edu](mailto:benefits@uchicago.edu).