

Frequently Asked Questions – Domestic Partner Coverage



1. Do the USG voluntary benefits plans offer Domestic Partner coverage?

The USG system-wide voluntary benefits plans do not offer Domestic Partner coverage.

2. Is Domestic Partner coverage available to USG employees?

Domestic coverage is available on 100% employee paid voluntary benefits plans (dental, vision, Supplemental Life and AD&D) through separate insurance policies, not through the USG voluntary benefits plans.

3. Does Domestic Partner coverage refer to same and opposite sex coverage?

Domestic Partner coverage includes same or opposite sex Domestic Partners who meet the Domestic Partner definition and documentation requirements.

4. What is the Domestic Partner definition?

Generally, the definition of a Domestic Partner (same or opposite sex) is one who resides with, is financially interdependent upon and shares the common necessities of life with their partner.

The employee and the domestic partner must certify the following to be true:

- 1) we have an exclusive and committed relationship which has existed for at least 6 months prior to the enrollment of the Domestic Partner for coverage(s) and which is expected to last indefinitely;
- 2) we share responsibility for each other's welfare and financial obligations;
- 3) we share the same residence;
- 4) we are each **18 years of age or older**;
- 5) neither of us is **married to anyone else**;
- 6) we are **not related** by blood in a manner that would bar our marriage in the state of Georgia in which we reside; OR
- 1) we are same sex spouses, provided the couple was married in a state that recognizes same sex marriages, however, the state of residence shall not be used to determine eligibility.

5. How does an employee enroll in Domestic Partner coverage?

An employee will enroll in Domestic Partner coverage on-line. The enrollment will be pended until the employee submits the Domestic Partner Affidavit and the required

documentation to the institution's HR/Benefits office and the documents have been approved.

6. What documentation is required for an employee to enroll a Domestic Partner in coverage?

Two or more of the following documents must exist and be provided in addition to the signed and notarized affidavit:

- ☐ joint mortgage, deed or lease
- ☐ designation of the Domestic Partner as durable power of attorney or health care proxy
- ☐ joint wills or designation of the Domestic Partner as executor and/or primary beneficiary
- ☐ joint bank account, joint credit cards or other evidence of joint financial responsibility
- ☐ designation of the Domestic Partner as beneficiary for life insurance or retirement benefits
- ☐ other evidence that establishes economic interdependence
- ☐ Child's birth certificate or adoption papers confirming the parent/child relationship

7. Where can an employee obtain the affidavit and documentation requirements?

The employee will contact their institution's HR/Benefits office to obtain the affidavit and documentation requirements.

8. Who should the employee submit the Affidavit and documents to?

The Affidavit and documents should be submitted to the institution's HR/benefits office.

9. If employees have questions, who should they speak to?

Employee questions about Domestic Partner coverage should be directed to the institution's HR/Benefits office. HR/Benefits administrators may contact the vendors directly if they have policy questions. (i.e. Delta Dental, EyeMed). Enrollment issues may be directed to SSC for ADP institutions.

DOMA Ruling and Healthcare Plan benefits for legally married same sex spouses

1. Is coverage available on the USG Healthcare plan for Domestic Partners?

Coverage is not available to Domestic Partners on the USG healthcare plan.

2. Does the recent ruling in regards to DOMA require USG to cover Domestic Partners or same sex spouses legally married in another state on the healthcare plan?

USG is not allowed to offer coverage to Domestic Partners or same sex spouses on the healthcare plan. The USG healthcare plan must use the State of Georgia definition of marriage which is between a man and a woman. See Georgia Code 19-3-3.1.

- 3. If an employee was legally married in another state to their same sex spouse, can he/she cover the spouse on the USG healthcare plan?**

The USG healthcare plan definition of legal spouse is based on State of Georgia definition of marriage which is between a man and a woman.