

VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY AND MEDICAL CENTER

HUMAN RESOURCES POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

SUBJECT: DOMESTIC PARTNER BENEFIT POLICY

POLICY #: HR-016

EFFECTIVE DATE: January 1, 2000

(Revised September 8, 2000; updated November 1, 2007; May 1, 2008)

POLICY

It is the policy of Vanderbilt to extend Domestic Partner benefits to eligible staff in accordance with the established guidelines within specific benefit plan designs. Vanderbilt will make reasonable efforts to maintain the confidentiality of any staff member who seeks these benefits consistent with the confidentiality of all benefits offered to staff members at Vanderbilt.

PROCEDURE

Eligibility

A staff member who seeks benefits for a domestic partner or a dependent of a domestic partner must adhere to the criteria defined in the Vanderbilt University and Medical Center Statement of Domestic Partnership. The dependent receiving benefits must meet the Federal Tax Code definition of dependent to avoid the taxability of benefits provided under this program.

Criteria

Domestic Partners must certify they are:

- ⌚ of the same sex;
- ⌚ not related by blood;
- ⌚ at least 21 years of age;
- ⌚ not legally married to anyone and neither has a different domestic partner; and
- ⌚ currently in a committed relationship of six months or more duration and reside in a common household sharing joint responsibility for the household.

PROCESS

I. Enrolling a Domestic Partner

When a staff member wishes to obtain Vanderbilt University benefits for his/her Domestic Partner or a dependent of a domestic partner, the

staff member must complete and register the "Vanderbilt University and Medical Center Statement of Domestic Partnership" and provide documentation to the office of the Associate Vice Chancellor for Human Resources or its designee. Once properly registered, the staff member will follow the same steps required for all other health benefit enrollments.

II. Dissolution of Domestic Partnership

If there is a change in the status of a certified relationship resulting in dissolution, a Termination Statement of Domestic Partnership must be completed and submitted. Staff members receiving benefits under a Domestic Partner arrangement who dissolve the relationship must notify the Office of the Associate Vice Chancellor for Human Resources within 30 days by filing a Termination Statement of Domestic Partnership. A twelve-month waiting period from the date the Termination Statement is signed and returned to the Office of the Associate Vice Chancellor for Human Resources or its designee must elapse before a staff member can enroll a new domestic partner.

Staff who have previously enrolled a Domestic Partner, but have terminated or otherwise lost benefit eligibility and are again employed/ and are benefit eligible do not have to re-certify the certified domestic partner.

III. Benefits Extendible to Domestic Partners

A. Health, Dental, Vision, Life Insurance, Accidental Death and Dismemberment Insurance and other voluntary benefits (these are taxable benefits to the staff member to the extent the domestic partner is covered and is eligible¹);

B. Ability to include a domestic partner in the family member definition under the Medical and Personal Leave of Absence policy and other current policies that include family;

C. The tuition benefit is available to the staff member seeking this benefit on behalf of a child, stepchild, or adopted child of a domestic partner as long as the child, stepchild or adopted child is a dependent of the staff member. If the child is not a dependent, then it is a taxable benefit (as defined by the Federal Tax Code) to the staff member.

¹ Taxable benefits will be reported as a taxable benefit on the employee's appropriate tax and information returns subject to required withholding for income and employment taxes.

D. Tuition benefit for an eligible domestic partner for one course per semester; however, this benefit is taxable.

E. Participation in employee PERQS program discounts, including obtaining a membership card, other services offered to family members of staff, such as a library card;

F. Participation in Vanderbilt sponsored special events that include families;

G. Family activities in Health Plus and the Student Recreation Center i.e., discounts on summer camps for dependent child(ren);

H. Participation as available in the Vanderbilt Child Care Center for eligible child(ren) of a domestic partner.

I. Continuation benefits available under the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA) following status change that results in loss of applicable coverage.

IV. General

The University reserves the right to unilaterally change the terms, conditions for qualification, or discontinue eligibility for its Domestic Partnership Benefit at anytime without notice.

**Approved Lenon Coleman, Interim Associate Vice Chancellor, Human Resources
Approved Lauren Brisky, Vice Chancellor, Administration Approved Harry Jacobson, Vice
Chancellor, Health Affairs**

This policy is intended as a guideline to assist in the consistent application of VU/VUMC programs and procedures. The policy does not create a contract, implied or expressed, with any VU/VUMC employees who are employees at will. VU/VUMC reserves the right to modify this policy in whole or in part, at any time, at its sole discretion.

Other Related Links:

[Frequently Asked Questions](#)

[Domestic Partnership Termination Form](#)