

## **UC Adopts New Benefits Eligibility Rules for Domestic Partners**

If you are in a domestic partnership, you may have more options for enrolling your family members in health and welfare coverage next year. Effective Jan. 1, 2019, UC will offer access to benefits based on the same eligibility criteria for all domestic partners.

Beginning with this year's Open Enrollment (Oct. 25 - Nov. 20, 2018), with coverage effective Jan. 1, 2019, all benefits-eligible employees will be able to enroll their domestic partners and their partners' eligible dependents as long as the relationship meets established criteria (see this FAQ for eligibility rules). The current requirement for opposite-gender domestic partners that one or both be age 62 and eligible for Social Security will no longer apply.

The new policy applies to UC employees eligible for Full, Mid-level or Core benefits, postdoctoral scholars eligible for Postdoctoral Scholar Benefit Plans and UC retirees eligible for retiree health benefits.

All UC employees or retirees who enroll a family member in benefits are required to submit documentation to verify the relationship. For domestic partners, supporting documentation may include proof of a joint bank account, mortgage or lease, and/or liability (such as a credit card or car loan).

### **Important tax considerations for domestic partners**

Although UC's rules now allow more domestic partners to enroll in benefits, it is important to understand how federal and state tax laws may apply to your situation.

In most cases, your domestic partner and your partner's children do not automatically qualify as your dependents under the Internal Revenue Code (IRC). That means any UC contribution toward their medical, dental and vision coverage is considered "imputed income" and may be subject to federal and California state income taxes, as well as Social Security and Medicare taxes (FICA) and any other required payroll taxes. This income is reported on your annual W-2 statement.

See "[Imputed Income](#)" on [UCnet](#) for more details, including what to do if your partner is a tax dependent as defined by the IRC.

### **New, streamlined process for UCRP survivor benefits**

Beginning in 2019, domestic partners who are enrolled in medical, dental and/or vision benefits will automatically be designated as the survivor for UCRP benefits, subject to additional eligibility requirements. If you enroll your domestic partner for health benefits and complete the eligibility verification process, you do not need to submit a Declaration of Domestic Partnership for Purposes of UC Retirement Plan Benefits (UBEN 250).

Please note that enrolling your partner in benefits such as Accidental Death & Dismemberment or Legal Insurance that do not require completion of the family member eligibility verification process will not establish your partner as your survivor for UCRP benefits.

Look for the details on this change during Open Enrollment. In the meantime, you can find more information in [Establishing a Domestic Partnership](#) on UCnet.

### **Who's your beneficiary?**

Adding a new family member is a good time to review your beneficiary designations, which are separate from your health and UCRP benefits. You can designate beneficiaries for your life and/or AD&D insurance plans in your [At Your Service Online account](#), and for your Retirement Savings Plan accounts at [netbenefits.com](#).