Domestic Partnership Benefits for
Contract College Faculty and Staff for 2015

Health Insurance (NYSHIP) and Domestic Partners
New York State offers health and dental benefits to all domestic partners, same and opposite-sex. To be eligible for coverage under New York State, the domestic partners of Contract College faculty and staff must prove six months of cohabitation as well as financial interdependence.

How and when may I enroll my domestic partner in health and dental insurance?
If you are a new faculty/staff member, you should complete and return the PS-425 (https://www.cs.ny.gov/forms/ps425-1.pdf) and associated documentation at the same time you complete and return your enrollment form, within 56 days of your hire date. Coverage will be effective on the 57th day.

If you are already enrolled and are enrolling a new partner or are enrolling an existing partner who has recently had a qualifying event, we will need the PS-425 (see the link in the prior paragraph) and PS-404 (http://hr.cornell.edu/benefits/health/PS404.pdf) at the same time, along with documentation that you have just met the requirements for a new enrollment/qualifying event.

If your partner has had no qualifying event, you may enroll him or her using the PS-404 and PS-425 and associated documentation, but there will be a waiting period applied to the coverage.

Other than completing the PS-425, will I need to provide proof of my domestic partnership?
Yes. There are a number of pieces of documentation that will be necessary to enroll your partner and that information can be found on the PS-425. Questions can be directed to the Resource Center at Benefit Services at (607) 255-3936.

Are the children of domestic partners eligible for health and dental insurance through NYSHIP?
If you are a benefits eligible faculty/staff member, your domestic partner and your partner’s child (ren) may be added to your health and dental insurance.

What is imputed income, and why does it apply to the cost of covering my domestic partner under NYSHIP?
Domestic partners are not considered qualified dependents under the Internal Revenue Code, Section 152. Thus, the tax treatment for domestic partners must be handled differently than for qualified dependents.

The employer contribution to the cost of health plan coverage for qualified dependents does not become taxable income to the employee. For non-qualified dependents, domestic partners and their children, a portion of the employer contribution to the overall cost of the health insurance
plan must be reported to the IRS as taxable income, also known as “imputed income” in tax language. Imputed income will be added to your annual salary for reporting purposes. It applies even if you cover other qualified dependents on your health coverage.

However, if your partner qualifies as a dependent under IRC 152, there is no imputed income. If your partner or the child(ren) of your partner qualifies under this section (and ONLY if they qualify) you must complete PS-425.3 Dependent Tax Affidavit (https://www.cs.state.ny.us/forms/ps425_3.pdf) and submit it with your other enrollment documents. If your domestic partner’s tax status changes during the year, no retroactive changes will be made to imputed income. It is your responsibility to amend your tax return to correct taxable income. If you have questions regarding your eligibility under Section 152, please contact your tax advisor.

**What does that mean in terms of actual cost?**

According to current IRS rules, unless your domestic partner is a tax-qualified dependent, you will need to pay taxes on the “imputed income” discussed above as well as the portion of the premium that you pay for your non-tax-qualified dependent. The charts below provide the per payroll amount of after-tax premium as well as imputed income for individuals enrolling in family coverage. Please note, this is not the amount you will pay in taxes per payroll that varies by individual. These are the additional amounts of money that you will have a tax liability for. Your premium will be no different than any other family plan premium, but you will be responsible for the taxes on the portion that covers a non-tax-qualified dependent.

As an example, the current premium for a biweekly employee with an annual salary over $40,936, enrolled in the Empire Plan, is $178.28 so if you subtract $47.23 (the cost of single coverage) you are left with $131.05. As a result, the amount that would be deducted from your paycheck on an after-tax basis is $131.05. In addition to this, you are responsible for the taxes on the additional $170.99 in taxable imputed income that Cornell pays for that coverage.

**After Tax Premiums for 2015**

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<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Annual Salary up to &amp; including $40,936</th>
<th>Annual Salary over $40,936</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Empire Plan</td>
<td>Individual $123.65 24 Pays $114.14</td>
<td>Family $141.97 26 Pays $131.05</td>
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<tr>
<td>HMO Blue/CNY</td>
<td>Individual $205.87 24 Pays $190.04</td>
<td>Family $224.19 26 Pays $206.95</td>
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<tr>
<td>MVP (Central)</td>
<td>Individual $176.32 24 Pays $162.76</td>
<td>Family $194.10 26 Pays $179.17</td>
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Imputed Income for the medical plans

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<tr>
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<th>Annual Salary up to &amp; including $40,936</th>
<th>Annual Salary over $40,936</th>
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<tr>
<td>Empire Plan</td>
<td>Family $203.56</td>
<td>Family $185.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HMO Blue/CNY</td>
<td>Family $167.58</td>
<td>Family $149.26</td>
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<tr>
<td>MVP (Central)</td>
<td>Family $165.51</td>
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Imputed Income for the dental plan

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<th>Family Imputed Income</th>
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<tr>
<td>EmblemHealth</td>
<td>$14.14</td>
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<tr>
<td>(formerly GHI)</td>
<td>$13.05</td>
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Detailed questions regarding the tax implications of covering a domestic partner are best discussed with your tax advisor.

What happens if my domestic partner and I terminate our relationship, or my relationship no longer meets the criteria of a domestic partnership?
Your partner loses their eligibility the day you terminate the relationship, we will need a signed PS-404 to remove the partner, as well as a PS-425.4 (https://www.cs.state.ny.us/forms/ps425_4.pdf). Please refer to later in this document concerning the University provided benefits.

Cornell University Benefits and Domestic Partners
Effective January 1, 2012, Cornell University offers benefits coverage to domestic partners (same and opposite sex partners).

For which benefits are my domestic partner and the child(ren) of my domestic partner eligible?
If you are a benefits eligible faculty/staff member, your domestic partner and the child(ren) of your domestic partner may be added to your Group Universal Life (GUL), Personal Accident Insurance (PAI), and long term care insurance plans (children are not eligible for long term care). Your partner's children are eligible for Cornell Children's Tuition Scholarship (CCTS).
How and when may I enroll my partner in the University provided benefits?
If you are a new faculty/staff member, you should complete and return the “Statement of Domestic Partnership” within 60 days from your hire date or date of benefit eligibility. Note: Benefit Services will also accept an “Affidavit of Domestic Partnership” from the City of Ithaca, NY or other locality or the NYS PS-425.1 form “Application for Enrolling Domestic Partner in the New York State Health Insurance Plan and Affidavit of Domestic Partnership” to enroll in NYSHIP in lieu of Cornell’s “Statement of Domestic Partnership.”

If you wish to register a new domestic partner and/or your partner's eligible child(ren), contact the Resource Center at Benefit Services at (607) 255-3936 within 60 days of the new partnership to request a “Statement of Domestic Partnership” form (or provide as mentioned above an “Affidavit of Domestic Partnership” from the City of Ithaca or NYS PS-425.1 form).

You and your domestic partner will be asked to sign the “Statement of Domestic Partnership,” which certifies that your partnership meets the university's requirements. If you wish to enroll your domestic partner and/or your domestic partner's child(ren) for benefits at the time of certifying your partnership, you will also need to complete new benefit enrollment forms, adding your domestic partner and/or your partner's child(ren) to your insurance plans.

Other than completing the Statement, will I need to provide proof of my domestic partnership?
Just as with faculty and staff who state they are married, your signature warrants that you meet the requirements noted in the “Statement of Domestic Partnership” and that the information provided is true and correct. If questions arise at any time, the university may ask for documentation that your partnership meets the university criteria (as specified in the “Statement of Domestic Partnership” form).

What is the deadline for enrollment in Group Universal Life (GUL), Personal Accident Insurance (PAI) and Legal Insurance plans?
If you are new to Cornell, you have 60 days from your hire date or date of benefit eligibility to enroll your partner and/or your partner’s child(ren) for coverage.

If you register a new domestic partner with Benefit Services at any time during the year, you have 60 days from the date of your attestation of the partnership to enroll your partner and/or the child(ren) of your partner.

If you wish to cover your domestic partner for life insurance, enrollment for up to $40,000 without medical underwriting can be done within the first 60 days of the signed Domestic Partnership Agreement. Domestic partners can be covered to a maximum amount of $250,000 but need to complete a medical history questionnaire for the insurance company. Similarly, if your partner chooses to sign up for life insurance beyond the 60-day initial period, he/she will need to fill out the medical history questionnaire. Either the employee or partner must be enrolled in GUL in order for children to have coverage.
Eligible children may also be enrolled for up to $20,000 of coverage in $2,000 increments during this time.

Domestic partners may be enrolled in PAI if the employee is also enrolled. Domestic partner coverage can be either 50% or 100% of the employee total amount, not to exceed $250,000. Children may also be enrolled for 10% of the employee amount to a maximum of $25,000. You can enroll in PAI at any time because medical underwriting is not necessary for this insurance.

If both domestic partners are employees of the university, they may not cover each other for GUL or PAI. Only one employee is permitted to carry coverage for children under either plan.

**When will coverage be effective?**
For new faculty/staff members, coverage for GUL and personal accident insurance begins on the first day of the first month after enrollment (or approved by CIGNA) provided you were actively at work.

For the Cornell Children’s Tuition Scholarship (CCTS) benefit, children of the non-Cornell domestic partner will be eligible to use the benefit according to the date of the signed Domestic Partnership Agreement if the Cornell faculty/staff has met the program eligibility requirements. **Awards made on behalf of the children of the non-Cornell partner will be taxable to the Cornell faculty or staff member.** Federal and state taxes will be reflected in the employee’s paycheck or if retired, disabled or otherwise off payroll, in a Form 1099, report of miscellaneous income.

**What happens if my domestic partner and I terminate our relationship or my relationship no longer meets the criteria of a domestic partnership for university provided benefits?**
You must notify Benefit Services within 60 days of ending the relationship. Your partner may no longer be eligible for athletic and library privileges and you must remove your ex-domestic partner and his or her child(ren) from all university benefit plans. (This same rule also applies to the termination of a marriage through divorce.)

For Cornell Children’s Tuition Scholarship (CCTS) benefit, eligibility would cease as of the date of the dissolution of the partnership for the children of the domestic partner who is not employed at Cornell. If payment has already been made for a student attending another institution, Benefit Services will bill the faculty or staff member for the overpaid amount. If the child is attending Cornell, an adjustment will be made to the student’s bursar account for the pro-rated amount.

**What if I have other questions?**
If you have questions about how to enroll a domestic partner and/or domestic partner's child(ren) in any of the benefits above, contact the Resource Center at Benefit Services at (607) 255-3936 or via email at: benefits@cornell.edu