Retirement Benefits Decision Guide

For eligible faculty and staff hired on or after July 1, 2016
Your UC Retirement Benefits

As a University of California employee, you help shape the quality of life for people throughout California and around the world.

UC’s comprehensive benefits are among the ways we recognize our employees for their contributions, and are an important part of your compensation.

UC offers you a choice of primary retirement benefit options—Pension Choice or Savings Choice. Participation in one of the options is required, and you choose the one that’s right for you.

Make a choice and enroll as soon as you can — your benefits only begin to grow once you enroll.

The summaries in this booklet explain the plans’ provisions and the policies and rules that govern them. If a conflict exists between these summaries and the plan documents, the plan documents govern. The Plan Administrator has the authority to interpret disputed provisions.
Helping You Prepare for a Successful Retirement

Preparing for a successful retirement is one of the biggest financial responsibilities you’ll face. All eligible new employees have a choice of primary (required) retirement benefits, with costs shared by you and UC. With this guide, we’ll show you your options and explain how each one works, along with examples and other resources to help you choose the best option for your personal situation.
Your Benefits Decision Checklist

Check off the actions on the right to understand your UC retirement benefits and enroll as soon as you can. See page 13 to learn more about why it’s important to enroll sooner rather than later.

Your retirement benefits are prospective – they don’t start until you make an account and enroll through myUCretirement.com. If you don’t choose a primary retirement option within 90 days, you will be permanently enrolled in Pension Choice—you cannot change your participation to Savings Choice later (see page 17).

In general, your 90-day enrollment window starts on the day you become eligible, usually the day you’re hired. If you’re uncertain about your eligibility date, please contact the UC Retirement Administration Service Center at 800-888-8267. Your enrollment window closes once you submit a choice.

LEARN ABOUT YOUR PRIMARY RETIREMENT BENEFIT OPTIONS
SEE HOW EACH OPTION WORKS
Pages 6–11
SEE ILLUSTRATIONS OF DIFFERENT CHOICES
Pages 14–15
FIND DEFINITIONS AND DETAILS
ucal.us/guidetoretirementben
COMPARE THE OPTIONS
myUCretirement.com/choose

GET HELP WITH YOUR DECISION
ATTEND A WORKSHOP OR WEBINAR
myUCretirement.com/classes
MEET WITH A WORKPLACE FINANCIAL CONSULTANT
800-558-9182 or Fidelity.com/schedule/UC

MAKE YOUR CHOICE
ENROLL ON MYUCRETIREMENT.COM
myUCretirement.com/choose
Your Primary Retirement Benefit Options: Pension Choice or Savings Choice

When it comes to choosing your primary retirement benefits, you have two options—Pension Choice or Savings Choice. Both options help you build valuable retirement income in addition to Social Security benefits and any savings you may have. Here’s an overview of who’s eligible for these benefits, how each option works, and how long you have to make your choice. For complete details, please see your Summary Plan Description.
WHO IS ELIGIBLE FOR RETIREMENT CHOICE?

You are eligible for a choice of primary retirement benefits if you:

• Are hired into an eligible faculty or career staff appointment on or after July 1, 2016; OR
• Are hired in an ineligible position on or after July 1, 2016 and then become eligible for retirement benefits.

REHIRED, NEWLY ELIGIBLE AND FORMER CALPERS-COVERED EMPLOYEES

You may not be subject to the PEPRA maximum (and your retirement benefit options may differ) if you:

• Previously worked for UC in an eligible appointment;
• Were hired before July 1, 2016 and became eligible for retirement benefits after July 1, 2016; OR
• Were a “Classic Member” under CalPERS and are eligible for reciprocity with UC.

If you believe you meet these criteria, or if you have questions regarding whether you are subject to the PEPRA maximum, contact the UC Retirement Administration Service Center at 800-888-8267. New UC employees who were classified as a “Classic Member” under CalPERS and are also eligible for reciprocity with UC need to self-identify to the UC Retirement Administration Service Center within 90 days of their Pension Choice election.

UNION-REPRESENTED EMPLOYEES

If you’re represented by a union, your retirement benefits are governed by your union’s contract with UC and may be different than the benefits outlined here. Please refer to your collective bargaining agreement (available at ucal.us/agreements) for details.

ABOUT PEPRA AND RETIREMENT EARNINGS MAXIMUMS

The maximum amount of your compensation that counts toward your retirement benefits may be affected by a number of factors, including the 2013 California Public Employees’ Pension Reform Act (PEPRA) maximum, the IRS dollar maximum and UC guidelines about eligible pay.

Please note that the Plan year runs from July 1 to June 30.

PEPRA Pensionable Earnings Maximum

The maximum salary that counts toward your pension benefits is consistent with the maximum on pensionable earnings for the Plan year under PEPRA. This maximum also applies to other California public pension plans and is reviewed annually and may be adjusted. For the 2023 Plan year, the maximum is $146,042.

IRS Pay Maximum

The IRS sets a dollar maximum for annual earnings for the Plan year upon which retirement benefits and contributions may be based. This maximum is also reviewed and may be adjusted annually. For the 2023 Plan year, this maximum is $330,000.

Eligible Pay

Retirement benefits are calculated based on “eligible pay,” which does not include certain types of compensation. For a list of types of compensation that are not considered “eligible pay” when calculating retirement benefits, see A Complete Guide to Your UC Retirement Benefits on UCnet (ucal.us/guidetoretirementben).
# HOW YOUR OPTIONS COMPARE

## PENSION CHOICE

### How it Works

Pension Choice includes a monthly pension benefit under the University of California Retirement Plan (UCRP), for predictable lifetime retirement income based on your eligible pay (up to the PEPRA maximum), service credit and retirement age.

Along with the pension benefit, some faculty and staff are eligible for a supplemental 401(k)-style account, with contributions from you and UC.

UC makes decisions about the investments of the UCRP and assumes the investment risk. For the supplemental account, you choose from a menu of funds and you assume the investment risk.

The decision to participate in Pension Choice is irrevocable—you cannot change your participation to Savings Choice later.

### Shared Contributions

You contribute 7% of your eligible pay, before taxes. Contributions on pay above the PEPRA maximum up to the annual IRS pay maximum go into your supplemental account.

UC contributes:

**Pension:** A percentage of eligible pay (determined by the UC Regents), up to the PEPRA maximum.

**Supplement for designated faculty:** 5% on all eligible pay up to the IRS pay max.

**Supplement for staff and other academic employees:** 3% on eligible pay above the PEPRA maximum, up to the IRS pay maximum.

### Your Retirement Income and Benefits

When you vest in (become eligible for) benefits: Your contributions to your pension and supplemental account (if you have one) are always yours. You vest in your pension benefits and in UC’s contributions to your supplemental account once you have earned five years of UCRP service credit. You begin to earn service credit when you start making contributions.

**Income:** When you retire, you receive lifetime monthly income based on your highest average 36 months of eligible pay (up to the PEPRA max), your UCRP service credit, and your age. You can choose a "contingent annuitant" to receive monthly lifetime income upon your death. Supplemental account distributions are governed by plan rules. The balance depends on contributions from you and UC and your investments’ performance, and can be left to your beneficiary.

**Additional benefits:** You may be eligible for retiree health benefits (see ucal.us/retireehealth) and continuing health benefits for your contingent annuitant (if eligible) after your death. If you become disabled before retirement, you may be eligible for some income and health benefits.
Chapter Title

2. Your Primary Retirement Benefit Options: Pension Choice or Savings Choice

See A Complete Guide to Your UC Retirement Benefits on UCnet for more information.

Some types of compensation not considered “eligible pay” when calculating retirement benefits are:
- Pay that exceeds the full-time rate or established base pay rates for regular, normal positions;
- Overtime pay (unless for compensatory time off);
- Pay that exceeds the base salary \((X+X')\) under the Health Sciences Compensation Plan.

Employer and employee contribution rates are set periodically by the UC Regents. Because UCRP is a defined benefit plan, a member receives a specified payment amount at retirement (based on UCRP service credit, retirement age and eligible annual pay, up to the applicable maximum), irrespective of the amount the individual or UC contributes. Provisions of the 2016 Retirement Choice Program are subject to collective bargaining for represented employees. Please refer to the appropriate collective bargaining agreement, as benefits and other provisions may vary.

In general, you are eligible for the faculty program if you are an academic appointee in one of the following groups.
- Ladder-rank faculty and equivalent titles (Professorial and Equivalent titles, which include Agronomists, Astronomers, Clinical Professor of Dentistry [over 50%] and Supervisor of Physical Ed)
- Professor in Residence series
- Professor of Clinical (X) series
- Acting full, associate and assistant professors
- Lecturers/Senior Lecturers (full-time) with Security of Employment or Potential Security of Employment (excluding UC Hastings Lecturers/Senior Lecturers)
- Adjunct Professor series
- Health Science Clinical Professor series
- Librarians covered by the Professional Librarians Unit (LX Unit) and Non-Senate Instructional/UC-AFT (IX), due to specific provisions within their collective bargaining agreement

SAVINGS CHOICE

How it Works

Savings Choice works much like a 401(k) plan. Your mandatory pretax contributions, contributions from UC (based on your eligible pay\(^2\)) and any investment earnings accumulate in a tax-deferred retirement account. You choose your investments from a menu of available funds, and you assume the investment risk. UC provides educational resources to help you plan.

If you choose Savings Choice, you will have a one-time opportunity, beginning on the fifth anniversary of the calendar year you make your election, to switch to Pension Choice prospectively. See page 17.

Shared Contributions\(^3\)

You contribute 7% of your eligible pay, before taxes, up to the annual IRS pay maximum. UC contributes 8% of your eligible pay, up to the IRS pay maximum.

Your Retirement Income and Benefits

When you vest in (become eligible for) benefits: Your contributions to your account are always yours. UC’s contributions will vest after one year.

Income: You draw money from your account; distributions are governed by plan rules. The balance will depend on the amount contributed by you and UC and your investments’ performance, and can be left to your designated beneficiary.

Additional benefits: You may be eligible for retiree health benefits from UC (see ucal.us/retireehealth). Savings Choice does not include disability benefits or continuing health benefits for your survivor, but you can choose employee-paid disability and supplemental life insurance.

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1 See A Complete Guide to Your UC Retirement Benefits on UCnet for more information.

2 Some types of compensation not considered “eligible pay” when calculating retirement benefits are:
   - Pay that exceeds the full-time rate or established base pay rates for regular, normal positions;
   - Overtime pay (unless for compensatory time off);
   - Pay that exceeds the base salary \((X+X')\) under the Health Sciences Compensation Plan.

3 Employer and employee contribution rates are set periodically by the UC Regents. Because UCRP is a defined benefit plan, a member receives a specified payment amount at retirement (based on UCRP service credit, retirement age and eligible annual pay, up to the applicable maximum), irrespective of the amount the individual or UC contributes. Provisions of the 2016 Retirement Choice Program are subject to collective bargaining for represented employees. Please refer to the appropriate collective bargaining agreement, as benefits and other provisions may vary.

4 In general, you are eligible for the faculty program if you are an academic appointee in one of the following groups.
2. Your Primary Retirement Benefit Options: Pension Choice or Savings Choice

Retirement Options at a Glance

This at-a-glance summary is intended to help you understand the key features and differences of the two options. Remember, the sooner you make your choice, the sooner you start receiving UC contributions and service credit. If you don’t make an election within 90 days from your date of hire (or your eligibility date), you automatically will be enrolled in Pension Choice.
## 2. Your Primary Retirement Benefit Options: Pension Choice or Savings Choice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>PENSION CHOICE</strong></td>
<td>Stand-alone 401(k)-style benefit</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pension benefit based on UCRP service credit, age at retirement and eligible pay up to PEPRA maximum ($146,042 in 2023); 401(k)-style supplemental account for those faculty and staff who are eligible</td>
<td>Based on eligible pay up to IRS maximum ($330,000 for 2023)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Mandatory employee pretax contributions</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>7% up to IRS maximum</td>
<td>7% up to IRS maximum</td>
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<td><strong>UC contributions</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Pension benefit for all employees:</strong> Percentage of eligible pay, as determined by the UC Regents, up to PEPRA maximum</td>
<td>8% for all employees up to IRS maximum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Supplement for designated faculty:</strong> 5% on all eligible pay up to IRS maximum</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Supplement for eligible staff and other academic appointees:</strong> 3% on eligible pay above PEPRA maximum up to IRS maximum</td>
<td>8% for all employees up to IRS maximum</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Vesting (your contributions always belong to you)</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>5 years UCRP service credit</td>
<td>1 year from eligibility date</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Disability and survivor benefits</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>UCRP provides disability and survivor benefits for qualifying eligible members and survivors. You can choose someone to receive lifetime monthly income upon your death. Continued UC health and welfare benefits may be available to an eligible member who becomes disabled before retirement and to eligible dependents.</td>
<td>No survivor or disability benefits, or the continuation of UC health and welfare coverage often available with such benefits, as provided under UCRP. You can designate a beneficiary for your account balance and opt for employee-paid disability and/or supplemental life insurance group coverage.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Choice / Default</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Initial choice:</strong> Eligible employees choose one option within an initial 90-day enrollment period. Your enrollment window closes once you submit a choice.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Default:</strong> Employees who do not make a choice within the 90-day period will be enrolled prospectively in Pension Choice by default.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Second choice:</strong> Enrollment in Pension Choice is irrevocable. Employees who choose Savings Choice will have a one-time opportunity on the fifth anniversary of their election to switch to Pension Choice prospectively. See page 17.</td>
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Pension Choice or Savings Choice: Which One is Right for You?

Deciding which option is right for you depends on a number of factors, including your age, the length of time you expect to work for UC, your personal financial situation, your investing style and risk tolerance, and how much retirement income you expect from other sources (e.g., Social Security).
### HOW YOUR OPTIONS COMPARE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONSIDER PENSION CHOICE IF YOU</th>
<th>CONSIDER SAVINGS CHOICE IF YOU</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Want predictable and secure retirement income payments.</td>
<td>• Want a portable retirement benefit (vested after one year) you can roll over into an IRA or another employer’s retirement plan if you leave UC.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Expect to work for UC for most of your career (and at least five years).</td>
<td>• Don’t know how long you’ll be at UC, and prefer the option to switch to Pension Choice later.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Want the protections offered by the UC Retirement Plan, such as the option to provide health benefits and a secure income for your survivor and income and health benefits if you become disabled.</td>
<td>• Are comfortable choosing and managing your retirement investments.</td>
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### RESOURCES TO HELP YOU CHOOSE

**RETIREMENT DECISION TOOL**
Use this interactive tool to compare your primary retirement benefit options and make your choice.

myUCretirement.com/choose

**PERSONAL RETIREMENT COUNSELING**
UC offers you one-on-one, personal help with your retirement benefits decisions. Meet with a Workplace Financial Consultant by phone or in person, when and where it’s convenient for you. This service is available at no cost to you.

800-558-9182
Fidelity.com/schedule/UC

**CLASSES AND WEBINARS**
Attend an onsite class or webinar to learn about your retirement benefit options, understand how to make your choice and get answers to your questions. A schedule of upcoming classes and webinars is available online.

myUCretirement.com/classes

### THE SOONER THE BETTER:
Every day — and dollar — counts. You don’t receive UC contributions or service credit toward your primary retirement benefits until you enroll or you default (after 90 days) into Pension Choice.

Once you enroll in Savings Choice, you and UC start to contribute to your retirement savings and you start to earn service credit toward your retiree health benefits. **If you wait until the deadline, you lose three months of contributions from UC.** If you miss the deadline, you’ll be enrolled in Pension Choice with no option to switch later.

Once you enroll in Pension Choice, you start to earn service credit toward your pension and your retiree health benefits. **If you wait 90 days to enroll or default, you lose three months of UCRP service credit,** which counts toward your eligibility for — and the amount of — your pension.
Illustrations of Different Choices

Everyone’s circumstances and retirement income needs vary, so it’s important to think carefully about which option will best help you meet your goals. Here are five illustrations of different types of employees with different circumstances, intended to help you decide which option is right for you.
Meet Madhu
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR, 36

ELECTED: PENSION CHOICE

“Pension Choice was an easy decision for me, since I’m confident I’ll be with UC for a long time. Since I knew I wanted Pension Choice, I was tempted to save myself time and just wait to be defaulted into Pension Choice after 90 days. Once I realized that waiting the 90 days meant sacrificing several months of service credit, I enrolled right away.”

Meet Mike
ANALYST, 31

ELECTED: SAVINGS CHOICE

“The interactive modeler on myUCretirement.com really helped me understand how the two options worked over time. I’m early in my career, and I’m not sure how long I’ll be with UC. I like the fact that I can take my Savings Choice account with me if I leave, and that I’ll have the opportunity to switch to Pension Choice if I stay with UC for five years. I enrolled as soon as I decided so I wouldn’t lose any UC contributions.”

Meet Debra
PROFESSOR, 51

ELECTED: PENSION CHOICE

“I met with a Workplace Financial Consultant to help me understand the supplemental benefit under Pension Choice. She explained that because of my position, I’m eligible for a supplemental account in addition to my pension benefit, with a 5 percent contribution from UC on all of my eligible pay to my supplemental account.

Since I plan to stay at UC for the long term, Pension Choice was the right option for me.”

Meet Javier
HEALTH PROFESSIONAL, 37

ELECTED: PENSION CHOICE

“I had a 401(k) with my former employer, so at first I thought Savings Choice might make sense. After doing more research, though, I decided that Pension Choice was the best option for me. I’m hoping to spend a good portion of my career at UC, and since my income is above the PEPRA maximum I’ll also receive UC contributions to a supplemental account.”

Meet Jiro
ASSISTANT PROFESSOR, 42

ELECTED: SAVINGS CHOICE

“I took a retirement benefits webinar to make sure I understand my options, and I was at first very interested in Pension Choice. The idea of having a predictable stream of income throughout my retirement is really attractive.

My partner hasn’t found a position in the area yet, though, so there’s a chance we may need to relocate before I can vest in the pension. I had a 403(b) plan at my last job, so I’m comfortable with the way it works, especially since the UC contribution vests after a year. I was glad to hear that I’ll have a second choice in five years if I’m able to stay at UC.”
Making Your Choice

Remember, your enrollment is **prospective**. The sooner you enroll in Pension Choice or Savings Choice, the sooner you start receiving UC contributions (and service credit under Pension Choice). Your enrollment window closes once you submit a choice. If you don’t choose a primary retirement option, you automatically will be enrolled in Pension Choice at the end of the 90-day period.
READY TO MAKE YOUR SELECTION?

1. Go to myUCretirement.com/choose. You can begin the tutorial for a quick refresher on the options, and use an interactive modeler to compare how your retirement benefits may grow over time with Pension Choice or Savings Choice.

2. When you’re ready to choose, you’ll need to log in. If you haven’t already registered, you’ll be taken to the NetBenefits site to complete the registration process.

3. There are several steps before you make and confirm your choice, with the option along the way to return to the tutorial for more information. Your election is final once you click “confirm choice.”

4. You’ll receive a confirmation statement—check to ensure it accurately records your enrollment in Pension Choice or Savings Choice.

5. Your contributions will begin to be deducted from your paycheck following your choice (usually within one to two pay periods).

YOUR SECOND CHOICE WINDOW

Enrollment in Pension Choice is irrevocable—you cannot change your participation to Savings Choice later.

Savings Choice participants have a window of opportunity to switch prospectively from Savings Choice to Pension Choice, and become members of the UC Retirement Plan (UCRP). The second choice window for Savings Choice participants opens on the fifth anniversary of the calendar year in which they made their initial election.

A move from Savings Choice to Pension Choice is effective on July 1 (the beginning of the plan year) following your election, if your election is postmarked on or before May 31.

A switch from Savings Choice to Pension Choice is a change in your primary retirement benefits going forward; it is not retroactive. As of the effective date of your switch:

- Contributions (from you and UC) to your Savings Choice account will stop. Your Savings Choice account balance will remain yours.

- You will begin earning UCRP service credit toward the calculation of your pension benefit. The service credit you earned as a participant in Savings Choice will count toward vesting in UCRP and in your supplemental account (if you have one) and toward your retiree health benefits.

- You will remain in the pension plan for the remainder of your career, even if you separate from UC and return later.
After You’ve Enrolled: Additional Opportunities to Save

Once you’ve enrolled in your primary (required) retirement benefits—Pension Choice or Savings Choice—it’s a good idea to consider whether you’ll need additional savings to reach your retirement goals. UC’s voluntary savings opportunities and retirement planning resources can help.
Chapter Title

In addition to your primary (required) retirement benefits, you may want to save additional money to prepare for retirement. UC’s voluntary 403(b) and 457(b) pretax savings plans and after-tax Defined Contribution Plan help you build additional retirement savings to augment your primary UC retirement benefits, Social Security, and other non-UC retirement income.

- UC’s 403(b) and 457(b) Plans let you add to your retirement savings with pretax contributions. Taxes are deferred until you withdraw the money.

- UC’s Defined Contribution Plan also lets you add to your retirement savings, but with after-tax contributions. You can take the money out at any time and only pay taxes on your investment earnings, since you already paid taxes on the after-tax contributions you have made.

You can enroll in these plans at any time. For more information, see “Supplemental Retirement Benefits” on myUCretirement.com.

VOLUNTARY RETIREMENT SAVINGS PROGRAM

UC 403(b), 457(b) AND DEFINED CONTRIBUTION PROGRAM

RETIREMENT EDUCATION AND COUNSELING RESOURCES

PERSONAL RETIREMENT COUNSELING

Workplace Financial Consultants are available to meet with you by phone or in person—at no cost to you.

800-558-9182

Fidelity.com/schedule/UC

RETIREMENT CLASSES AND WEBINARS

Onsite classes or webinars offer information about all of UC’s retirement plans and programs, and guidance for saving and investing wisely. A schedule of upcoming classes and webinars is available online.

myUCretirement.com/classes

MYUCRETIREMENT.COM

Explore articles and classes designed to help you make informed financial decisions.

myUCretirement.com

UCNET

Your source for information, tools and resources to help you understand your benefits and UC.

ucnet.universityofcalifornia.edu

UC RETIREMENT AT YOUR SERVICE (UCRAYS)

Review and manage your UCRP benefits and beneficiaries.

retirementatyourservice.ucop.edu
By authority of The Regents, University of California Human Resources, located in Oakland, administers all benefit plans in accordance with applicable plan documents and regulations, custodial agreements, University of California Group Insurance Regulations, group insurance contracts, and state and federal laws. No person is authorized to provide benefits information not contained in these source documents, and information not contained in these source documents cannot be relied upon as having been authorized by The Regents. Source documents are available for inspection upon request (800-888-8267). What is written here does not constitute a guarantee of plan coverage or benefits—particular rules and eligibility requirements must be met before benefits can be received. The University of California intends to continue the benefits described here indefinitely; however, the benefits of all employees, retirees, and plan beneficiaries are subject to change or termination at the time of contract renewal or at any other time by the University or other governing authorities. The University also reserves the right to determine new premiums, employer contributions and monthly costs at any time. Health and welfare benefits are not accrued or vested benefit entitlements. UC’s contribution toward the monthly cost of the coverage is determined by UC and may change or stop altogether, and may be affected by the state of California’s annual budget appropriation. If you belong to an exclusively represented bargaining unit, some of your benefits may differ from the ones described here. For more information, employees should contact your Human Resources Office and retirees should call the UC Retirement Administration Service Center (800-888-8267).

In conformance with applicable law and University policy, the University is an affirmative action/equal opportunity employer. Please send inquiries regarding the University’s affirmative action and equal opportunity policies for staff to Systemwide AA/EEO Policy Coordinator, University of California, Office of the President, 1111 Franklin Street, Oakland, CA 94607, and for faculty to the Office of Academic Personnel and Programs, University of California Office of the President, 1111 Franklin Street, Oakland, CA 94607.