UCRP
Updated Methods for Designating a Domestic Partner

Effective January 1, 2019, UC will expand eligibility for UC-sponsored health & welfare benefits to all opposite gender domestic partners of UC employees, retirees and disabled members the same as for same gendered partners; the current requirement for opposite-gender domestic partners that one of the partners be at least age 62 and eligible for Social Security will no longer apply.

This change not only simplifies the health & welfare rules, but it also aligns with UCRP rules already in place which treats all domestic partners – regardless of gender – the same for purposes of UCRP survivor benefits.

When a member adds a family member, including a domestic partner, to their health & welfare benefits, there is a family member eligibility verification (FMEV) process where documentation is submitted to confirm the family member's eligibility. Separately, to establish a domestic partner for UCRP purposes, one of the three following documents must be submitted to the RASC prior to a member's retirement or preretirement death:

- State of California domestic partnership registration
- Domestic partnership registration with another jurisdiction (for same-gender partnerships only)
- UC Declaration of Domestic Partnership form (UBEN 250) signed by both partners, with two supporting documents demonstrating financial interdependence. If the partners are both UCRP members, each must submit their own UBEN 250 designating the other as their domestic partner.

Currently, one of these methods for UCRP purposes is required even if a member had submitted similar documentation to verify their domestic partner through UC's FMEV process.

The change in health & welfare rules provided an opportunity to update the UCRP procedures for establishing a domestic partnership. Accordingly, the following changes are being adopted:

- Domestic partnership registration with another jurisdiction will be accepted for all domestic partners, regardless of gender.
- A domestic partner who is enrolled under the employee's UC-sponsored health & welfare benefits (medical, dental, or vision) and whose eligibility has been verified via the FMEV process will automatically be declared as the member's domestic partner for UCRP survivor eligibility purposes—no additional forms or documents will need to be submitted. This will also apply to UCRP disabled members who enroll a domestic partner in UC-sponsored retiree medical or dental benefits.

There are few things to keep in mind about the changes for UCRP eligibility purposes:

- This change does not impact existing retirees who must have declared their domestic partnership prior to their retirement.

- If the domestic partners are both UCRP members and they each enroll separately in their own health benefits, they each must designate the other as their partner for the purpose of UCRP survivor benefits by one of the other methods listed above.

- If the domestic partners are both UCRP members and one partner covers the other as a family member in health benefits, only the member who enrolled their domestic partner as a family member will automatically be declared domestic partners for UCRP survivor eligibility purposes. The enrolled domestic partner must designate the other member for their own UCRP survivor benefits by one of the three methods listed above.

- Employees or UCRP disabled members who terminate their domestic partnerships must submit the proper termination form to the RASC.

- An individual designated as a domestic partner must meet all additional eligibility requirements in order to receive UCRP survivor benefits.

- Any method of designating a domestic partnership for UCRP purposes must be done prior to a preretirement death or retirement.