

## Frequently Asked Questions - Marriage Equality Act and Domestic Partners Ordinance

**1. Does Minnesota Recognize Same Sex Marriages?**

Yes, the Marriage Equality Act passed by the Minnesota Legislature recognizes same-sex civil marriages entered into in Minnesota on or after August 1, 2013, as well as same-sex marriage validly entered into in other states.

**2. What are the major impacts of the Marriage Equality Act?**

As a result of the Marriage Equality Act, an employee may add their legally-married, same-sex spouse to an employee's medical and dental coverage and to dependent life insurance.

**3. Now that my partner and I are legally married, may my spouse receive reimbursement for medical expenses?**

Yes, qualified expenses incurred by a legally married same-sex spouse are eligible for reimbursement under your health care flexible spending account (FSA) and your HRA/VEBA.

**4. Now that my partner and I are legally married, can I cover my spouse's children under the City's benefit plans?**

Yes, your spouse's children are eligible dependents under the City's medical and dental plans. Their qualified health care and dependent care expenses may be reimbursed under the flexible spending accounts and HRA/VEBA. They may also be covered under dependent life insurance.

**5. Now that my partner and I are legally married, does this impact my spousal retirement benefits under PERA and the Minnesota State Retirement System (MSRS health care savings plan and deferred compensation)?**

For more information on how this will impact your retirement benefits contact PERA (ph: 651-296-7460) and the Minnesota State Retirement System (ph: 651-296-2761) directly.

**6. When must I change my benefits to add my same-sex spouse and his/her dependents?**

You must act within a 30-day time period:

- Same-sex couples *legally married prior to August 1, 2013* have until August 30, 2013 to sign up for benefits. Coverage will become effective August 1, 2013.
- Same-sex couples *legally married on or after August 1, 2013* have 30 days from the date of marriage to sign up for benefits. Coverage will be effective as of the date of marriage.

**7. If I don't add my spouse and dependents within the 30-day time period, will I have another chance to enroll them?**

If you do not add your spouse to your benefit plans during the 30-day time period outlined above, you must wait for the next open enrollment period in November 2013 (coverage will be effective January 1, 2014).

**8. What forms do I need to fill out to add my same-sex spouse and dependents to my benefit plans?**

To enroll a same-spouse and their dependents in City-sponsored benefit plans, you must complete enrollment forms and return them with the required documents. Enrollment forms and instructions are available online at [http://www.minneapolismn.gov/hr/benefits/medical/benefits\\_change-elections](http://www.minneapolismn.gov/hr/benefits/medical/benefits_change-elections).

**9. Do I need to change my income tax withholding?**

You should consult with your tax advisor to determine whether your income tax withholding should be changed.

**10. My partner and I are registered under the Domestic Partnership Ordinance and are not married. Is my partner eligible for City benefits such as health care, dental and medical reimbursement?**

No, only legally married spouses are eligible for health care, dental and medical reimbursement under the City's benefit plans. However, as a registered domestic partner you remain eligible for certain leaves as a result of an illness or injury of a registered domestic partner and as more fully set forth in Labor Agreements, Civil Service Rules or City policy.