

# BENEFITS BULLETIN

JUNE 1, 2011

City of Chicago  
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[www.cityofchicago.org/benefits](http://www.cityofchicago.org/benefits)



## UNDERSTANDING YOUR DEPENDENT ENROLLMENT NEW OPTIONS

When the new Civil Union law becomes effective in Illinois on June 1, 2011, City of Chicago employees, who are enrolled for medical benefits, may add a Civil Union Spouse (same sex or opposite sex) as an eligible dependent, if all enrollment guidelines are met.

If the following enrollment form and proof of dependency certified document is not submitted to Benefits Management within the required timeframes outlined below, your next opportunity to enroll your Civil Union Spouse will be the annual Open Enrollment Period:

- **Civil Union Spouse Information Form is required within 30 days of the ceremony.** (This new form is available either from your department's personnel section Benefits Liaison or from the Benefits Management Office)
- **Civil Union License is required within 60 days of the ceremony.** (The license must be certified. Photocopies are not acceptable. The certified license is issued by county clerks in Illinois.)

**Please see the reverse side of this Benefits Bulletin for Civil Union Law Highlights that are currently posted on the Cook County Clerk website:**  
**[www.cookcountyclerk.com](http://www.cookcountyclerk.com)**

**Important Reminder:** Spouse enrollment (**opposite sex**) and Domestic Partner enrollment (**same sex**) are additional dependent eligibility options for City employees, if all enrollment guidelines are met:

**How to Add Your Spouse** (opposite sex) - A Spouse Information Form must be submitted to Benefits Management within 30 days of your marriage. (This form is available on-line: [www.cityofchicago.org/benefits](http://www.cityofchicago.org/benefits). A paper enrollment form can also be obtained either from your department's personnel section Benefits Liaison or from the Benefits Management Office. In addition, a certified marriage license must be submitted to Benefits Management within 60 days of your marriage.

**How to Add Your Domestic Partner** (same sex) – A Certificate of Partnership obtained from the City of Chicago Department of Human Resources is required prior to Benefits Management enrollment. For more details, please contact Jesus Alanis: (312) 744-8289.

See Reverse Side

# Public Act 96-1513

## Civil Union Law Highlights

The following information is currently posted on the Cook County Clerk website: [www.cookcountyclerk.com](http://www.cookcountyclerk.com)

Starting June 1 2011, Civil Union licenses will be issued by county clerks in Illinois.

- ✓ They will be available to same-sex and heterosexual couples of at least 18 years of age.
- ✓ The clerk's office does not perform a ceremony. After obtaining a license, a couple must wait until the following day to have their union certified by an officiant such as a judge or religious official.
- ✓ The license will be valid for a ceremony held within 60 days of being issued.
- ✓ The officiant must return the certified license to the clerk's office as proof of the union within 10 days of their ceremony.
- ✓ We believe the fee will be \$35. Couples who are currently registered as Domestic Partners in Cook County will receive a \$20 discount towards their Civil Union application and their Domestic Partnership will be automatically dissolved.
- ✓ A Civil Union must be dissolved in court like divorce, rather than simply by notifying your local county clerk.

### Benefits of a Civil Union:

- ✓ Health insurance for partner;
- ✓ Partners automatically considered parents;
- ✓ Hospital visitation/health care decision rights;
- ✓ State benefits for partners of military veterans;
- ✓ Right to sue over partner's death.

### Differences from marriage:

- ✓ Not recognized in all states;
- ✓ Can't file joint federal tax returns;
- ✓ Can't inherit partner's property without paying federal taxes;
- ✓ Can't receive Social Security payments upon partner's death;
- ✓ Can't get immigration benefits for partner.

**NOTE:** This is not a comprehensive list.

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[CookCountyClerk.com](http://CookCountyClerk.com)

