

**Benefits enrollment for same-sex spouses of
Texas Employees Group Benefits Program members
begins July 1, 2015**

Following the U.S. Supreme Court's ruling on June 26, 2015, regarding same-sex marriage, state agency and higher education employees and retired employees eligible for the Texas Employees Group Benefits Program (GBP) will be able to enroll their same-sex spouses and dependent children of those spouses in the same coverages and services, and at the same cost, as opposite-sex spouses.

Enrollment will begin on July 1, 2015

For already existing same-sex marriages that took place in other states, the Supreme Court's decision legalizing those marriages in Texas will be considered a Qualifying Life Event (QLE) by ERS. The QLE period for this event – the time in which someone can enroll a same-sex spouse and/or dependent stepchildren outside of his or her annual enrollment period – is June 26 - July 25, 2015. The effective date for coverage will be July 1, 2015. Evidence of insurability (EOI) will not be required to enroll in Dependent Term Life Insurance in connection with the QLE.

For new marriages occurring on and after June 26, 2015, the standard QLE period (within 30 days from the date of the marriage) will apply. For marriages occurring during the Summer Enrollment period, a QLE should be used. As with all coverages added through the QLE process, coverage will be effective the first day of the month following the QLE date.

Participants who are not enrolled in Medicare may add a spouse and/or dependent stepchildren during the Summer Enrollment period that is currently underway and ends on July 31, 2015. A spouse or dependent stepchild enrolled during the Summer Enrollment period will have coverage beginning September 1, 2015. EOI will be required to elect Dependent Term Life Insurance when enrolling in coverage during Summer Enrollment, outside the 30-day QLE enrollment period.

Retirees who participate in Medicare will have an enrollment period this fall. At that time, a Medicare-eligible retiree may add his or her spouse as part of the Fall Enrollment opportunity. If a Medicare-eligible retiree would like to add a same-sex spouse before then, beginning July 1, he or she can contact ERS to have the spouse added during the QLE period or may log into ERS OnLine to complete the online QLE enrollment process.

As of 2011, ERS requires each GBP member to verify a dependent's eligibility. Everyone enrolling a new dependent will be notified to send documentation that shows each dependent's eligibility. Find more information on the [dependent verification process](#).

ERS maintains the enrollment and eligibility system for GBP benefits. ERS is notifying all third-party administrators of GBP programs (such as UnitedHealthcare

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for HealthSelectSM of Texas, or Humana for HealthSelect Medicare AdvantageSM) about these dependent eligibility changes. We will require that they accept these enrollments, issue ID cards for them and make other administrative changes, as needed.

For questions, please call [\(877\) 275-4377](tel:877-275-4377), or contact your benefits coordinator for individual guidance.

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