Important Information Affecting Health Benefits Coverage
For Your Spouse, Domestic Partner or Dependent Child(ren)

If you do not have a dependent enrolled on your health plan,
this message is not meant for you.

The City’s Health Benefits Program is undertaking a Dependent Eligibility Audit of all employees and retirees who have at least one dependent enrolled on their health benefits coverage. The audit will be conducted by the City of New York Health Benefits Program in conjunction with Aon Hewitt’s Dependent Eligibility Verification Center.

Failure to participate or provide required documentation will result in termination of the dependent(s) health plan coverage.

On, or about, June 5, 2013, the Health Benefits Program/Dependent Eligibility Verification Center will send a letter to each affected employee and retiree at the address on record with the health plan. In that letter, you will receive information about how to comply with the audit, as well as contact information for any questions that you might have concerning the audit. Access and information will be available to you on-line and by telephone, e-mail, fax and regular mail. You will also be able to submit your information on-line and by fax and regular mail.

No action is required at this time. This Notice is simply to inform you that an audit will be taking place and that you will receive detailed instructions in a letter shortly.
NYC Dependent Verification
Frequently Asked Questions

About Dependent Eligibility Verification

1. Why is the City of New York conducting a dependent eligibility verification audit?
   The City is conducting the dependent verification audit to make sure that only eligible dependents receive health benefits. The City has a fiduciary responsibility to manage healthcare costs and to ensure that health plans offered through the City cover only those who meet the eligibility criteria.

2. Who must complete the dependent eligibility verification audit?
   All employees and retirees who have a dependent enrolled in the City's Health Benefits Program must complete and return the required documentation. Dependents may include a spouse, domestic partner, or child.

3. How do I know if I have dependents enrolled on my City-sponsored health plan?
   You can access the New York City Automated Personnel System (NYCAPS) Employee Self-Service Portal at www.nyc.gov/lasso to see if you have dependents enrolled on your health plan. You can also contact your agency or employer's human resources and benefits staff with any questions about your health plan enrollment.

4. What documents do I need to submit to verify the eligibility of my dependent(s) to receive City-sponsored health benefits?
   You will need a legal document that shows your relationship to any person you cover as a dependent. This will be determined by your relationship to the dependent, and may include a marriage certificate, a domestic partnership registration certificate, a birth certificate, an adoption certificate, or a legal adoption placement document. You will receive a detailed document titled "Eligibility Rules and Documentation Required" among the materials you will receive by mail.

   The Dependent Eligibility Verification Center can provide telephone numbers to state and county records offices to help you obtain the necessary documents, as well as to consult with offices for documents from other countries.

5. I provided dependent documentation when I enrolled my dependent(s) under my City health plan. Do I still need to submit a copy for the audit?
   Yes. You must provide a copy of the required documentation even if you previously submitted it to your agency to enroll the dependent(s). Failure to provide this documentation may result in termination of coverage of your dependent(s).

6. How do I submit my documents for the audit?
   You will be able to submit your documents and information on-line, by fax or through the mail.

   To start the verification process and submit documents online, please visit www.nyc.gov/dependentverification. The website contains background and instructions on the audit process and a link to a secure dependent verification portal [LINK] where you can securely upload your documents.

7. What will happen if I do not return the required documentation?
   Your unverified dependents will lose the healthcare benefits they receive through a City-sponsored plan.

8. Will I receive confirmation that Aon Hewitt has received my documentation and that the eligibility of my dependents has been verified?
   You will receive a letter to confirm receipt of sufficient documentation and to confirm that your dependents have been verified, or to notify you that the eligibility of your dependent has not been verified and additional documents are needed.

9. What about the privacy of my information? How can I be sure that confidentiality is maintained?
   Your privacy is very important, and the Dependent Eligibility Verification Center has implemented technological tools, security features, and strict policy guidelines to safeguard the privacy of your information from unauthorized access or improper use. Copies of documents submitted to the Dependent Eligibility Verification Center will be destroyed following verification of your dependent(s). The full Security and Privacy Policy is available at www.nyc.gov/dependentverification.

Proprietary and Confidential Information
The following documentation is accepted to verify a legal spouse:

- Government-issued Marriage Certificate and Federal Tax Return within the last two years listing your spouse
- Government-issued Marriage Certificate and Proof of Joint Ownership issued within the last six months
- Government-issued Marriage Certificate only (if married within the last 12 months)

19. What documentation is required for married same-sex couples?
A same-sex spouse dependent may be verified by a government-issued Marriage Certificate and Proof of Joint Ownership issued within the last 6 months. If married within the last 12 months, a government-issued marriage certificate will suffice.

20. Why isn’t my joint tax return sufficient to verify my legal spouse? Why is a government-issued marriage or domestic partnership certificate also required?
Verification for a legal spouse or domestic partner is two-fold: the marriage or domestic partnership certificate establishes the relationship and the tax return (for those who file it) is proof that the relationship currently exists.

21. How do I order government-issued marriage license or certificate?
If you were married in New York City, you must submit an application in person or by mail to the Office of the City Clerk to obtain a copy of a marriage license or certificate. The application to submit a mail request for marriage records is available at www.cityclerk.nyc.gov/downloads/pdf/mail_in_request_form.pdf or you can call the Dependent Eligibility Verification Center for assistance.

To request a marriage license or certification in person:

- If you were married in New York City from 1996-present: visit any of the office locations listed at www.cityclerk.nyc.gov/html/about/office.shtml.
- If you were married in 1995 or before: visit the Record Room Division at 141 Worth Street in Manhattan.

If you were married in New York State (not New York City): review New York State procedures at http://www.health.ny.gov/vital_records/marriage.htm.

If you were married outside of New York State or in another country, please call the Dependent Eligibility Verification Center for assistance.

22. What documentation is required to verify my domestic partner?
The following documentation is accepted to verify a domestic partner:

- Domestic Partnership Registration Certificate and Proof of Joint Ownership issued within the last six months
- Domestic Partnership Registration Certificate only (if registered within the last 12 months)

23. How do I obtain a Domestic Partnership Registration Certificate?
To obtain a Domestic Partnership Registration Certificate, you can pick up and complete an application from the Office of the City Clerk at one of the locations listed at www.cityclerk.nyc.gov/html/about/office.shtml or by calling 311.

24. What kind of documentation do I need to verify the eligibility of a biological child?
To verify the eligibility of a biological child, you must provide a government-issued birth certificate that lists your name as a parent. "Short form" birth certificates that do not list the birth date and parents of the child are not acceptable documentation for the purpose of dependent verification.

25. How do I order an official birth certificate?
If you were born in New York City, you can apply for a birth certificate in person at the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene in Lower Manhattan. To apply in person, you must bring additional documentation with you. A list of acceptable documents can be found at www.nyc.gov/html/doh/html/how/oth_certificates.shtml. To apply in person, visit the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, located at 125 Worth Street, Room 133, between the hours of 9:00AM and 3:30PM on weekdays, excluding holidays.

Proprietary and Confidential Information
If you were born in New York State (but not in New York City): You can order an official birth certificate online at www.vitalchek.com/birth-certificate.

If you were born outside of New York State or in another country, visit www.nyc.gov/html/id/html/special/special.shtml or call 311 for more information.

26. How do I obtain adoption documentation, including an Adoption Placement Agreement, Petition for Adoption, or Adoption Certificate?
To request a copy of adoption documents, you must contact the Family Court of the borough in which the adoption was processed. To reach NYC Family Court, please visit www.nycourts.gov or call 311 for information on the locations and hours of operation of courts in each borough.

If you adopted your dependent outside of New York City, please call the Dependent Eligibility Verification Center for assistance.

27. How do I obtain a Court Ordered Document of Legal Custody?
To request a copy of court ordered documents of legal custody, you must contact the Family Court of the borough in which the documents were processed. To reach NYC Family Court, please visit www.nycourts.gov or call 311 for information on the locations and hours of operation of courts in each borough.

If you obtained legal custody of your dependent outside of New York City, please call the Dependent Eligibility Verification Center for assistance.

28. What if I cannot obtain copies of the required documentation above during the audit period?
If you cannot obtain copies of the documentation listed above, call the Dependent Eligibility Verification Center to discuss how to provide alternative documentation to verify the eligibility of your dependents. Please note that in some cases, including the verification of a biological child, there is no alternative form of acceptable documentation.

Special circumstances:

29. What if the City employee, or his/her spouse or domestic partner, is performing active military duty?
The health benefits of dependents of City employees performing ordered military duty are protected under State law. If the deployment on active duty of a City employee during the audit period interferes with the ability to provide necessary documentation, additional time to comply is available. Similar protections apply to City employees with dependent spouses or domestic partners performing active military duty. To ensure protection of dependents' health benefits, military families should contact the Dependent Eligibility Verification Center at 1-855-596-7454. Please note, however, that after the City employee, spouse or domestic partner returns from ordered military duty he or she will be required to submit documentation in order to maintain coverage of dependents.

30. What if my verification documents were damaged or destroyed during Hurricane Sandy?
If your required documents were damaged or destroyed during Hurricane Sandy and you have not been able to replace these documents, please contact the Dependent Eligibility Verification Center at 1-855-695-7454. Please be prepared to provide your FEMA number or additional information at that time.