Domestic Partnership
Health Insurance Stipend (DPHIS) Program

Florida Atlantic University employees who meet the eligibility requirements may participate in the DPHIS program to assist in defraying the cost of health insurance for a domestic partner. For the purposes of this program, a domestic partner is defined as a same-sex individual who shares a committed, mutually-dependent relationship with a FAU employee. The amount of the stipend will be the lesser of: (1) the difference between the university’s contribution for Individual coverage in the plan selected by the employee and the university’s contribution for Family coverage for that plan, or (2) the actual cost of the domestic partner’s own insurance coverage.

The stipend will be adjusted when changes are made in the employee’s coverage selection or to the amount of university contribution to the state health insurance. The stipend amount may also be adjusted at the sole discretion of the university based on availability of program funding. FAU will provide one year’s public notice if this program is ever terminated, unless state or federal law causes such termination. The stipend will be paid to participating eligible FAU employees on a bi-weekly basis.

Enrollment
An employee who wishes to participate in the DPHIS program must submit the completed DPHIS Partnership Certification form to Human Resources-Benefits along with the attestations of the employee and domestic partner and other required documentation, including proof of the domestic partner’s health insurance coverage and premium payment.

Eligibility
For the purposes of this program, a domestic partner is defined as a same-sex individual who shares a committed, mutually-dependent relationship with a benefits-eligible FAU employee. In order to be eligible for the domestic partnership health insurance stipend, the FAU employee must be in an established benefits-eligible position, have individual health insurance coverage with FAU, and the employee and domestic partner must jointly complete a DPHIS Declaration and Partnership Certification form and attest that:

1. they are at least 18 years of age and are mentally competent to consent to a contract
2. they are not legally married to anyone else and are not related
3. they have shared financial responsibilities for at least the past six months
4. the non-employee domestic partner is not employed or is not eligible for health benefits through his or her employer
5. health insurance coverage is in effect for the domestic partner and coverage shall be maintained during any period for which the domestic partner health insurance stipend is paid
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Required Documentation

The FAU employee must submit documentation (such as an employer-provided handbook, benefits booklet or other documents) showing the employee’s domestic partner, if employed, is not provided health insurance coverage or is not eligible for coverage by the available plan provided by his or her employer as attested on the DPHIS Partnership Certification form. In addition, proof of the domestic partner’s health insurance coverage and premium payment must be sent to Human Resources-Benefits on a semi-annual basis by September 15th and March 15th of each year. Additionally, one (1) of the following must be submitted:

- Municipal domestic partnership registration
- State domestic partnership registration
- State civil union license
- State marriage license
- Marriage licenses issued in other countries

If none of the above documents is available then at least three (3) of the following must be submitted with the DPHIS Partnership Certification form to support the domestic partnership relationship:

- Joint ownership of real property
- Mutual designation as attorney in a durable power of attorney document
- Joint ownership of personal property or assets, such as automobiles or stock
- Designation of health care surrogate
- Joint bank account
- Driver’s license or tax documents showing the same address
- Legal documentation demonstrating joint adoption or legal guardianship of any dependents, whether children or adults
- Joint consumer or bank loan
- Joint credit cards
- Joint lease
- Designation of beneficiary for life insurance, retirement plan, and/or last will and testament

Recordkeeping

At FAU, benefit elections are treated with a high degree of sensitivity. Information about employee participation in the Domestic Partnership Health Insurance Stipend Program will be subject to and maintained according to the same internal processes and protocols for all sensitive employee information. However, as with most information contained in employee personnel files, certain information may be accessible under Florida public records law.
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Tax Implications

The amount of the cash stipend is taxable to the employee and subject to FICA and income tax withholding. The payment will be grossed up to diminish the effect of income tax on the stipend. It will be taxed separately from regular pay. This payment will not count toward retirement, life insurance or any other benefits. Employees are advised to seek financial or legal advice regarding any other implications of enrolling in the DPHIS program.

Participation

If the complete documentation is received prior to the 15th of the month, upon verification and approval of the domestic partnership status, payment of the stipend to the employee will be made on the first pay date of the following month. Once the domestic partnership health insurance stipend is approved, the employee must submit documentation of the domestic partner’s health insurance coverage and premium payment to Human Resources-Benefits along with signing a short statement form certifying that no changes have occurred since the original application, on a semi-annual basis by September 15th and March 15th of each year. Payments will not be retroactive for any time period due to lack of documentation; the stipend does not become effective until approval of the documentation by Human Resources-Benefits. FAU may terminate the health insurance stipend if the employee does not provide proof of continued health insurance coverage for the domestic partner. If the domestic partner becomes eligible for insurance coverage through his or her employer, the employee must immediately notify Human Resources-Benefits in writing via the Termination of Domestic Partnership Health Insurance Stipend form of the effective date and the employee will no longer be eligible to receive the stipend.

Termination of Domestic Partnership Stipend Eligibility

An employee receiving the domestic partnership health insurance stipend shall notify Human Resources-Benefits immediately, but no later than 15 days, upon any of the following conditions via completion and submission of the DPHIS Termination of Participation form to Human Resources-Benefits:

1. termination of the domestic partnership for which participation has been approved;
2. the domestic partner becomes eligible for health insurance through his or her employer; or
3. death of the domestic partner.

The employee must wait six (6) months from the date of termination of a domestic partnership before applying for another domestic partnership health insurance stipend, unless the employee can provide proof of a marriage license, civil union license, or a municipal or state domestic partnership registration. If the employee is filing for the same partner and is unable to provide legal proof of the domestic partnership, a form for the same partner can be filed after three (3) months have elapsed since the effective date of the termination of the prior domestic partnership.
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An employee who knowingly makes false statements or omissions relevant to the Health Insurance Stipend Program or fails to notify Human Resources-Benefits of a change in domestic partnership status may be subject to disciplinary action.

If the complete documentation is received prior to the 15th of the month, upon verification and approval of the domestic partnership status, payment of the stipend to the employee will be made on the first pay date of the following month. Once the domestic partnership health insurance stipend is approved, the employee must submit documentation of the domestic partner’s health insurance coverage and premium payment to Human Resources-Benefits on a semi-annual basis by September 15th and March 15th of each year. FAU may terminate the health insurance stipend if the employee does not provide proof of continued health insurance coverage for the domestic partner. To continue in the program, the employee must annually complete and submit the DPHIS Declaration and Partnership Certification form by March 15th, (after 2013). If not received by this date, the stipend will cease and not be continued until proper documentation is submitted. Payments will not be retroactive for any time period due to lack of documentation; the stipend does not become effective until approval of the documentation by Human Resources-Benefits. If the domestic partner becomes eligible for insurance coverage through his or her employer, the employee must immediately notify Human Resources-Benefits in writing via the Termination of Domestic Partnership Health Insurance Stipend form of the effective date and the employee will no longer be eligible to receive the stipend.

**Repayment**

Any stipend received after eligibility has terminated, or should have terminated, must be repaid to FAU. This may be deducted from employee compensation.

**Health Insurance Stipend Program Implementation**

The University President or designee shall make final determinations as to implementation and interpretation of the Health Insurance Stipend Program and related procedures.

Revised May 2014