

November 7, 2012

Mr. Henry M. Huckaby, Chancellor
University System of Georgia Board of Regents
270 Washington Street, SW
Atlanta, Georgia 30334

Dear Chancellor Huckaby:

The University Council body at the University of Georgia recently passed a policy recommendation that would have this institution offer a full range of health care benefits for registered domestic partners of UGA benefits-eligible employees. There are two distinct recommendations in the proposal. I have included the proposal for your information.

The first recommendation in the proposal is to develop and fully fund a benefits package using non-state funds that matches the benefits and premiums currently granted to employees with spouses. Our University Council is already on record in support of the System providing full health care benefits for domestic partners as articulated in previous recommendations submitted to the Regents for approval. The Board is the sole authority on determining benefits eligibility for the USG state-funded health insurance program. Considering the Council request, we seek guidance on the following question: Is it permissible under current Board of Regents policy for USG institutions to provide such a benefit using non-state funds?

The second recommendation in the proposal is to allow domestic partners full eligibility in the university's *voluntary employee-paid only benefits* plans (VEPOB). These VEPOBs include dental, vision, supplemental life insurance, critical illness insurance, and accident insurance (AD&D). The costs of these plans are paid *entirely* by the employee and involve no employer dollars. We have learned that several USG institutions, specifically Georgia Tech, Kennesaw State University, Georgia Perimeter College, Georgia State University, and Georgia Health Sciences University, are allowing domestic partners to participate in their VEPOB plans.

Given what other USG institutions have provided to their employees, UGA wishes to be fair and consistent in how it addresses benefits eligibility for employees participating in UGA-administered VEPOBs. Unless otherwise directed, UGA intends to extend this eligibility to employees with domestic partners in the same fashion as the aforementioned institutions.

This will allow domestic partners to be eligible for benefits that are offered by the VEPOBs for which we are the plan sponsor/administrator. This appears appropriate action for UGA to take given what other USG institutions have implemented in recent years and what GPC and GHSU implemented in 2010.

I appreciate your guidance on the aforementioned question.

Sincerely,

Michael F. Adams
President

MFA/mmw

Enclosures