

NORTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY DOMESTIC PARTNER BENEFIT PROGRAM

NIU SPONSORED BENEFITS:

Northern Illinois University extends recognition to any domestic partnership meeting eligibility criteria and offers certain benefits to domestic partners of Northern Illinois University employees. The domestic partner may be of the same or of the opposite sex. The benefits that are provided and summarized here are those controlled solely by Northern Illinois University. Benefits provided by the State of Illinois are summarized at the end of this document. The following is a summary of domestic partner benefits offered by Northern Illinois University. A table summarizing benefits available on the basis of marital status and/or domestic partnerships is available on the website.

Family Illness Leave: An employee may use accumulative sick leave for absence due to illness of immediate family members if the illness is such that the presence of the employee is required. Immediate family includes any person in a family-like relationship with the employee, such as spouse, domestic partner, parent, child, or other legal dependent, child of domestic partner, or other member of the household who is dependent upon the employee for care. Such use of sick leave for absences due to illness in the family shall be granted to the extent reasonably authorized by supervisory authority up to a total of twelve weeks in any year of service, pursuant to the same standards as set forth under university FMLA guidelines and procedures.

The university reserves the right to require acceptable evidence of illness, injury or disability before allowing any sick leave. Any employee who is (or expects to be) absent from employment shall notify the appropriate university supervisor immediately, and, in cases where the absence will be for more than three days, the employee shall notify the supervisor of the anticipated length of absence so that arrangements can be made for the employee's duties to be assumed during said absence.

Bereavement Leave: Upon request, an employee shall be granted, without loss of salary, bereavement leave of up to three work days due to the death of a member of his or her immediate family or household, and up to one work day due to the death of a relative outside these relationships. Immediate family or household includes any person in a family-like relationship with the employee, such as spouse, domestic partner, parent, child, or other legal dependent, child of domestic partner, or other member of the household. Leaves beyond these amounts may be approved under special circumstances. However, such additional leave will be charged to applicable paid leave benefits. Substantiation of the reason for bereavement may be required.

Employee Assistance Program: Any family member, domestic partner or dependent of an employee may use the services of the university's Employee Assistance Program. There is no fee for services from this office. Services include short-term counseling, information and referral for mental health or wellness services, stress management, substance abuse consultation and coaching. The office also provides a variety of wellness

and work-life programs including a wellness fair, wellness related educational programming, smoking cessation and stress management programs, Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, (a fee is charged for administration of the Indicator) support and educational groups and classes, and eldercare consultations and groups.

University Libraries: Domestic partners and other family members are eligible to apply for a courtesy card to check out books from the University Libraries. All other library services are available.

Recreational Facilities: Membership in the Recreation Services and FIT Program are available at a fee to any member of the campus community. Fees, hours of operation and other information are available on their respective web sites.

STATE OF ILLINOIS SPONSORED BENEFIT:

Same-sex Domestic Partner Insurance Benefit: Unrelated same-sex individuals who reside in the same household and have a financial and emotional interdependence, consistent with that of a married couple for a period of not less than one year and continue to maintain such arrangement are eligible for medical, dental and vision benefits through the State of Illinois Group Insurance Program. The minimum age of a domestic partner is 19 years old. Neither partner may be married at the time of enrollment. If either partner gets married at any time after the enrollment, the domestic partner's coverage may be terminated. If both parties are State members (employees), one may not waive coverage as a member to become a dependent of the other member. Dependent children of the domestic partner cannot be added to the member's coverage unless the member legally adopts or obtains legal guardianship of the children (See www.benefitschoice.il.gov for enrollment packet and information.)

For application for the Same-sex Domestic Partner Health Insurance Program contact any of the Insurance and Benefits Counselors, or go directly to the State Employees Group Insurance web site at www.benefitschoice.il.gov for an enrollment packet.

Questions related to other possible benefits should be directed to the Director of Employee Relations and Benefits. (Deborah Haliczzer, 753-6039, or dhaliczer@niu.edu) or to the Manager of Insurance and Employee Benefits (Dennis Davito, 815-753-6035, or djdavito@NIU.edu, Julie Bowen, Benefits Counselor, 815-753-6047, or Maya Wilk-Siuba, 815-753-6036.

University Benefit Comparison Marital Status/Domestic Partnership

State of Illinois

| Benefits and Policies | Authority | Married Couple | Domestic Partnership |
|---|-------------------|---|--|
| Child Life Insurance (State) | State of Illinois | Any child that is the member's legal dependent may be covered with child life insurance in the amount of \$10,000 through the State of Illinois. | |
| DCAP | State of Illinois | DCAP may be used to reimburse eligible expenses incurred by the member's spouse, their qualifying child or qualifying relative as defined by the IRS. | Not eligible |
| MCAP | State of Illinois | MCAP may be used to reimburse eligible expenses incurred by the member, their spouse, their qualifying child or qualifying relative as defined by the IRS. | Not eligible |
| Medical (Health) Insurance (includes Rx and Mental Health) Dental and Vision | State of Illinois | Employees may cover their spouse in the same health, dental, and vision plan in which they are enrolled. They are required to pay a subsidized premium on a pre-tax basis for the coverage. | <p>Employees may cover their same sex domestic partner in the same health, dental, and vision plan in which they are enrolled. An affidavit of domestic partnership is required as a pre-condition of enrollment. If their domestic partner is an IRS tax dependent, they are required to pay the same subsidized premium on a pre-tax basis as an employee would to cover their spouse.</p> <p>Dependent children of a domestic partner are not eligible for group insurance coverage under the State Employees Group Insurance Program unless the member has legally adopted the children or is the legal guardian of the children. Any child that is the member's legal dependent may be added to insurance coverage.</p> |
| Spouse Life Insurance (State) | State of Illinois | Employees may cover their spouse with spouse life insurance in the amount of \$10,000. | Employees may not cover their same or opposite sex domestic partner in life insurance coverage through the State of Illinois. |
| SURS Survivor Benefits | State of Illinois | Policies vary depending on the particular plan the employee has elected. Under the Traditional Plan, only married spouses are eligible to receive survivor benefits in the event the employee dies. Under the Portable Plan, the employee may designate a survivor, either spouse or domestic partner. In the Self-Managed Plan, the employee can designate a survivor. | |
| Tuition Waivers (dependent child) | State of Illinois | Pursuant to State Statute, the university offers tuition waivers to legal dependent children, provided the employee meets the criteria defined in the statute and Board of Trustee Regulations. | The university offers tuition waivers to legal dependent children, provided the employee meets the criteria defined in the statute and Board of Trustee Regulations. In the case of domestic partnership the child must be the legal dependent or adopted to receive benefits. |
| Tuition Waivers (spouse/partner) | State of Illinois | The university does not offer tuition waivers for spouses or domestic partners. | |

University Benefit Comparison Marital Status/Domestic Partnership

Northern Illinois University

| Benefits and Policies | Authority | Married Couple | Domestic Partnership |
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| Accidental Death and Dismemberment (Aetna) | NIU/Aetna | Employees may cover their spouse in accidental death and dismemberment coverage in an amount of 50% of what they elect for themselves up to \$75,000. | Employees may not cover their same or opposite sex domestic partner in accidental death or dismemberment coverage through the Aetna Program. |
| Bereavement | NIU | Bereavement leave of up to 3 days is granted for the death of a member of the immediate family (spouse, child, parent, domestic partner, child of domestic partner, or other member of household). | |
| Credit Union | NIU | Any employee/Credit Union member can establish a joint account with a spouse, domestic partner, or other family member. | |
| Definition of Family | NIU | Individual who is a member of the same immediate family or immediate household. Immediate family includes an employee's spouse, parents, brothers, sisters, and children and domestic partner per university procedures. | |
| Dual Career | NIU | NIU recognizes dual career issues, and does not make a distinction between spousal or domestic partner relationships. | |
| Employee Assistance Program | NIU | Confidential EAP services are available to any university employee or annuitant, or their spouse or domestic partner or other dependent or family member. | |
| Employment Non-Discrimination Policy | NIU/Federal and State Regulations | Northern Illinois University is an equal opportunity institution and does not discriminate or engage in any employment or academic, or institutional decisions on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, physical or mental disability, marital status, veteran status, sexual orientation, political affiliation, or any other factor unrelated to professional qualifications. Discrimination on the basis of domestic partnership status is considered prohibited under NIU policies. | |
| Family Sick Leave | NIU | Family Illness Leave is available for employees to use paid or unpaid sick leave for the care of immediate family members if their presence is required. Immediate family includes any person in a family-like relationship with the employee, such as spouse, domestic partner, parent, child, child of domestic partner, or other legal dependent or member of the household who is dependent on the employee for care. | |
| Family Medical Leave Act | NIU/Federal Government | Under the Federal Family Medical Leave Act, employees are allowed to take leave to care for a spouse or child provided they meet the eligibility criteria set forth in the act. Pursuant to University policies, members of the immediate household (including domestic partners) are recognized for equivalent family medical leave entitlements under the same standards established under the FMLA. | |
| Human Resource Training Workshops | NIU | Human Resource Services professional and personal development workshops are available to all university employees. | |
| Non-Discrimination Policy | NIU/State of Illinois | NIU's non-discrimination policies prohibit discrimination on the basis of gender, sexual orientation, or marital status. | |

University Benefit Comparison Marital Status/Domestic Partnership

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| Recreational Facilities | NIU | Any employee, family member or domestic partner, or member of the community may purchase a membership at university Recreation Services, or the FIT Program. | |
| Term Life Insurance (Reliastar) | NIU/Reliastar | Employees may cover their spouse in term life insurance coverage up to \$95,000. Any child that is the member's legal dependent may be covered with child life insurance in the amount of \$10,000 through Reliastar. | Employees may not cover their same or opposite sex domestic partner in life insurance coverage through Reliastar. Any child that is the member's legal dependent may be covered with child life insurance in the amount of \$10,000 through Reliastar. |
| Tuition Waivers (survivor) | NIU | The university offers tuition waivers to spouses of employees who pass away while serving the university. | Tuition waiver benefits are not provided to the survivor in a domestic partnership. |
| University Libraries | NIU | Any university student, faculty, or staff member has library privileges, as do retirees. Any family member or domestic partner may apply for a courtesy card for library privileges at no cost. | |