



STATE OF MISSISSIPPI
GOVERNOR PHIL BRYANT

DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

KEVIN J. UPCHURCH
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

MEMORANDUM

TO: State Agency, Public Library, Public School District, Community College and University Executive Officers
FROM: Office of Insurance
DATE: July 10, 2014
SUBJECT: Supreme Court Decision - *Obergefell et al v. Hodges et al*

On Friday, June 26, 2015, the Supreme Court of the United States of America issued its opinion in the case of *Obergefell et al v. Hodges et al*. The Supreme Court's decision held that the U.S. Constitution guarantees same-sex couples the right to marry. Accordingly, all states must recognize same-sex marriages.

In recognition of and to comply with this ruling, the State and School Employees' Health Insurance Plan's definition of an eligible dependent includes, effective June 26, 2015, the same-sex spouse of an eligible employee and/or participating retiree. It has likewise been determined that for those eligible employees and participating retirees in same-sex marriages recognized by states as lawful before the date of the Supreme Court ruling, the date of the Qualifying Event for special enrollment in the Plan is June 26, 2015. For marriages performed on or after June 26, 2015, the date of marriage is the Qualifying Event date.

To enroll a spouse for coverage due to a Qualifying Event, an *Application for Coverage* form typically must be submitted within 60 days of the event, and appropriate premium payments must be made. In this instance due to the timing of this notice, applications received within 75 days of the June 26, 2015 ruling will not be rejected due to untimely submission. As part of the application process, the enrollee may be required to provide proof of the qualifying event. If these requirements are met, coverage under the Plan will take effect as of the date of the Qualifying Event.

For additional information regarding special enrollment of a spouse, please refer to the *2015 Plan Document's Special Enrollment Period as a Result of Gaining a New Dependent*, Pages 17 – 18, or Page 48 for retirees, or contact Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Mississippi at (800) 709-7881.