

**Harvard University's Wage and Benefit Parity Policy  
Frequently Asked Questions  
November 2007  
(for Calendar Year 2008)**

**General Information**

**1. Q: Which office is the central point of contact for vendors?**

**A:** The Office of Procurement Management remains as the key point of contact for vendors at (617) 495-5491. However, specific questions regarding wages, benefits and paid time off may be directed to the Office of Labor Relations at (617) 495-2786.

**2. Q: Where can a vendor find information regarding wages, benefits (health/dental/pension) and paid time off?**

**A:** The information is contained in the respective collective bargaining agreements between Harvard University and the unions representing custodial, security or dining service employees. If you would like to request a copy of any applicable collective bargaining agreement, please contact the Office of Labor Relations at (617) 495-2786 or view a copy online via the web at: <http://www.laborrelations.harvard.edu/>

**Wages**

**3. Q: What seniority date should a contractor use to determine employees' rate of pay, amount of vacation, sick or other paid time off accruals?**

**A:** The vendor should use the seniority that the employee has working for the vendor company.

**4. Q: Are vendor employees also eligible for any premium pay provisions which are included in the University's respective collective bargaining agreements?**

**A:** Yes, the vendor is required to pay all non-FLSA contractual premium pay such as shift differentials, furniture moving, overtime, and winter recess as well as all overtime pay mandated by the FLSA.

**Health and Dental Benefits**

**5. Q: What are the monthly health and dental benefits rates for calendar year 2008?**

**A:** Health and dental benefit rates for calendar year 2008 are set forth in Schedule "C" and are as follows:

- Health – Individual – \$365.00/month; Family - \$981.00/month
- Dental - Individual-\$29.11/month; Family - \$80.74/month

6. **Q: If there is a comparable health plan offered by the vendor, does the employee have the option of taking the monetary equivalent of the employer contribution if s/he does not elect the health care coverage?**

A: No, if there is a comparable vendor health plan offered and made readily available and an employee does not elect that coverage, the vendor is not obligated to pay to the employee the dollar amount that corresponds to the applicable contribution.

7. **Q: If there is a comparable health plan offered by the vendor which is lower in cost than the University's contribution, is the vendor obligated to pay the difference between the contribution amount to its plan and that of the University's contribution amount?**

A: Custodial vendors whose employees are represented by SEIU 615 are contractually obligated to pay the dollar amount equal to eighty-five percent of the respective costs of the University's lowest cost family and individual health plans (Harvard University Group Plan HMO for calendar year 2007). This dollar amount is set each year by the University's Benefits Services Group and will be distributed to vendors on an annual basis. All other vendors that offer a comparable plan, however, are not obligated to pay the difference in the contribution amounts.

8. **Q: If there is not a comparable health plan offered by the vendor, is a vendor obligated to pay an employee the contribution amount for health care coverage?**

A: Yes, the vendor pays to the employee the dollar amount that corresponds to the applicable Harvard University health and dental plan contribution.

9. **Q: If a vendor offers a health plan but one that is not comparable to the University's health plan, is the vendor obligated to pay to its employees enrolled in that vendor plan the difference between the contribution amount to its plan and that of the University's contribution amount?**

A: Yes, the vendor is obligated to pay the difference in the contribution amounts.

10. **Q: If the employee does not meet the vendor's current health care plan eligibility threshold, what is the vendor obligated to pay?**

A: The vendor is required to pay to the employee the dollar amount that corresponds to the applicable amount that Harvard University contributes for health and dental benefits.

11. **Q: If the employee decides not to participate in the vendor's health care plan, is the vendor still obligated to pay the contribution amount?**

A: The vendor must verify that the employee was offered to enroll in either a comparable health plan or a non-comparable plan and also receive a contribution amount

that equals the difference between the vendor's plan and the University's plan. If the vendor can demonstrate that the employee was given adequate notification of these benefits under the WBPP and the employee declined coverage, then the vendor is not obligated to pay additional funds to the employee.

### **Pension Benefits**

12. **Q: What is the vendor obligated to pay an employee if a pension plan is not available or the employee does not meet the eligibility threshold of an existing pension plan and when is the employee eligible for these payments?**

A: The vendor should pay to the employee the dollar amount that corresponds to the amount that the University contributes for its employees; i.e., 6% of his/her regular pay after the employee has completed one year of service.

13. **Q: What is the vendor obligated to pay if their employees are represented by SEIU Local 615?**

A: For SEIU represented employees, the MSEPF pension plan offered has been deemed comparable to the University's retirement plan for WBPP compliances purposes. Vendors are required to pay to the union 6% of an employee's regular pay.

14. **Q: What is the vendor obligated to pay to an employee if they offer a retirement savings plan such as a 401(k) that offers a matching benefit?**

A: The vendor should pay to the employee the difference between the vendor's contribution/match and 6% of the employee's regular pay.

15. **Q: What is the vendor obligated to pay to an employee if the employee declines participation in their employer's a retirement savings plan such as a 401(k)?**

A: If the vendor can demonstrate that the employee was given adequate notification of their additional benefits under the WBPP and the employee waives their participation in the plan, then the vendor is not obligated to pay additional funds to the employee.

### **Paid Time Off**

16. **Q: Is a vendor obligated to compensate an employee for sick and vacation time that the employee does not use?**

A: The employee is eligible for any carry-over provisions regarding sick and vacation time provided in the applicable Harvard University collective bargaining agreement.

17. **Q: Harvard's collective bargaining agreements provide for holiday pay as well as Winter Recess paid time off on days when a vendor must provide contracted services. Are the vendor's employees entitled to compensation for those holidays anyway?**

**A:** Yes, any vendor employee who is required to work on those days recognized as holidays or Winter Recess days under the applicable Harvard University collective bargaining agreement is eligible for any holiday premium or Winter Recess pay provided for in that agreement.

**18. Q: What dates should a contractor use to determine the amount of vacation, sick or other paid time off for which employees are eligible?**

**A:** The dates that contractors should use in determining the amount of paid time off for which employees are eligible are set forth in the applicable Harvard University collective bargaining agreements for the respective service groups.