

ORDINANCE NO. 6 1 5 6

**AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE
CITY OF AUBURN, WASHINGTON, ANNOUNCING
ITS INTENTION TO EXTEND ITS CURRENT
HEALTH CARE COVERAGE TO DOMESTIC
PARTNERS AND THEIR DEPENDENTS**

WHEREAS, the City of Auburn currently provides health care coverage to its married, regular employees and dependents: and

WHEREAS, the Auburn City Council has determined that the same health care benefits provided to spouses and to dependents of regular employees of the City Auburn should also be provided to domestic partners, as defined in RCW 26.60.020(1), and their dependents, of regular employees, except as may be otherwise required by law and subject to the requirement to collectively bargain such benefit changes with represented employees; and

WHEREAS, the Washington State legislature recently passed legislation providing for registration and recognition of domestic partnerships; and

WHEREAS, this trend of recognizing relationships which have many attributes of a civil marriage has been adopted by several employers throughout the state and Puget Sound region through the provision of domestic partner benefits; and

WHEREAS, the provision of domestic partner health benefits to employees in non-traditional relationships is consistent with these policies; and

WHEREAS, on July 22, 2007, legislation creating a state registry for domestic partners became effective; and

WHEREAS, the new legislation to enter into a state registered domestic partnership, a couple must meet the following requirements: 1) both persons must share a common residence; 2) both persons must be at least eighteen (18) years of age; 3) neither person may be married to someone other than the party to the domestic partnership and neither person may be in a state of registered domestic partnership with another person; 4) both persons must be capable of consenting to the domestic partnership; 5) both of the following must be true: (a) the persons may not be nearer of kin to each other than second cousins, whether of the whole or half-blood computing by the rules of civil law; and (b) neither person may be a sibling, child, grand child, aunt, uncle, niece, or nephew to the other person; and 6) either (a) both persons are the same sex; or (b) at least one of the persons is sixty-two years of age or older; and

WHEREAS, the legislature found that same sex couples, because they cannot marry in this state, do not automatically have the same access that married couple have to certain rights and benefits; and

WHEREAS, the primary intent and requirement of the recent legislation is to ensure that employees in non-traditional relationships have the same employment and healthcare opportunities as others and are protected as any other employee from discrimination; and

WHEREAS, the state registration process provided by the Office of the Secretary of State will streamline administrative processes needed to

implement an effective domestic partnership policy for the State and the City;
and

WHEREAS, the state legislation expressly provides that any subdivision of the State (such as the City of Auburn) which uses the statute's definition of the term "state registered domestic partner" must allow the state's certificate of domestic partnership" issued by the Office of the Secretary of State to satisfy any registration requirement that the City would otherwise apply; and

WHEREAS, the Association of Washington Cities Benefits Trust, which provides health care benefits to the City of Auburn provides for domestic partnership coverage.

NOW, THEREFORE, THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF AUBURN, WASHINGTON DOES ORDAIN AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. Health Care Benefits: Health care coverage, under Association of Washington Benefits Trust sponsored health care plans, is extended to City of Auburn regular employees, their spouses, dependents, or domestic partners, as defined in RCW 26.60.020(1), and to the dependents, of regular employees' domestic partners.

Section 2. Constitutionality or Invalidity: If any section, subsection, clause, phrase, or sentence of this Ordinance is, for any reason, held to be invalid or unconstitutional, the remaining portions of this ordinance shall remain in force and affect.

Section 3. Implementation: The Mayor is hereby authorized to implement such administrative procedures as may be necessary to carry out the directives of this legislation.

Section 4. Effective Date: This Ordinance shall take effect and be in force five (5) days from and after its passage, approval, and publication as provided by law.

INTRODUCED: _____

PASSED: _____

APPROVED: _____

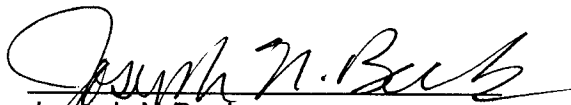
CITY OF AUBURN, WASHINGTON

Peter B. Lewis
Mayor

ATTEST:

Danielle E. Daskam,
City Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM:



Joseph N. Beck
Assistant City Attorney

Published: _____