

Section 125 Cafeteria Plan

Permitted Election Change Event Chart



2025 Edition

Section 125 Cafeteria Plan

Consistency Rule

For certain life events referred to as a "change in status," the election change generally must be consistent with the event. This means that the election change must be **on account of and correspond with the event that affects eligibility for coverage** under the employer's plan.

The six categories of change in status events subject to this consistency rule are as follows.

- Change in employee's legal marital status
- Change in number of dependents
- Change in employment status
- Dependent satisfies (or ceases to satisfy) dependent eligibility requirements
- Change in residence
- Commencement or termination of adoption proceedings

Section 125 Cafeteria Plan Rules for Administering Mid-Year Employee Election Change Requests

According to IRS guidelines (Treas. Reg. §1.125-4), participants can change their employee benefits elections under a Cafeteria Plan either (1) during an open enrollment period; or (2) mid-year pursuant to a permitted election change event.

The purpose of this chart is to identify examples of employee, spouse, or dependent life events that may create a permitted election change event. This chart does not address plan changes (e.g., change in plan design, change in plan costs) that may also create a permitted election change event. Furthermore, this chart assumes that the organization's Section 125 Cafeteria Plan Document is drafted to allow all of the available permitted election change events recognized by the IRS.

Most cafeteria plans provide that employees must make an election change request within 30 days of the event. The plan cannot accept any election change once the (typically 30-day) window has closed.

There is no requirement that a permitted election change event be substantiated with documentation (i.e., beyond the employee's certification of the event) unless the employer suspects fraud—however the plan may impose a documentation requirement on any or all events.

Status Event	Medical	Dental	Vision	Flexible Spending Accounts
Status Event	 Medical You may: Enroll yourself, your new spouse and any eligible dependent children Add your new spouse and any eligible dependent children to your plan Cancel your coverage if you enroll in your new spouse's group plan Coverage/Cancellation is generally effective as of the first of the month following your election change request. HIPAA Special Enrollment Event: Permits you to change medical plan options. 	 Dental You may: Enroll yourself, your new spouse and any eligible dependent children Add your new spouse and any eligible dependent children to your plan Cancel your coverage if you enroll in your new spouse's group plan Coverage/Cancellation is generally effective as of the first of the month following your election change request. 	 Vision You may: Enroll yourself, your new spouse and any eligible dependent children. Add your new spouse and any eligible dependent children to your plan. Cancel your coverage if you enroll in your new spouse's group plan. Coverage/Cancellation is generally effective as of the first of the month following your election change request. 	
				of the month following your election change request.

Status Event	Medical	Dental	Vision	Flexible Spending Accounts
Divorce, Legal Separation, or Death of Spouse Note: Legal Separation is a	You may: • Enroll yourself and any eligible dependent children if you have lost	You may: Enroll yourself and any eligible dependent children if you have 	You may: • Enroll yourself and any eligible dependent children if you have lost	You may: Health Care FSA • Decrease/Revoke your contributions for the remainder
legal status that requires a court document. See page 18 for provisions addressing termination of a domestic partnership.	 coverage under your former spouse's group plan Cancel your former spouse's coverage Cancel your dependent 	 lost coverage under your former spouse's group plan Cancel your former spouse's coverage Cancel your dependent 	 coverage under your former spouse's group plan Cancel your former spouse's coverage Cancel your dependent 	 of the plan year Enroll/Increase your contributions if you lose coverage under the former spouse's health plan
	children's coverage if they will enroll in former spouse's group plan coverage	children's coverage if they will enroll in former spouse's group plan coverage	children's coverage if they will enroll in former spouse's group plan coverage	 Dependent Care FSA Enroll/Increase your contributions for the remainder of the plan year, if expenses increase as result of divorce/legal separation Decrease/Revoke your
	Coverage/Cancellation is generally effective as of the first of the month following your election change request.	Coverage/Cancellation is generally effective as of the first of the month following your election change request.	Coverage/Cancellation is generally effective as of the first of the month following your election change request.	contributions if change eliminates need for care. Coverage/Cancellation is generally effective as of the first of the month following your

election change request.

Status Event	Medical	Dental	Vision	Flexible Spending Accounts
Birth/Adoption/Placement for Adoption	You may: • Enroll yourself, your spouse, and/or the child. • Cancel your coverage if you enroll in your spouse's group plan Coverage/Change is effective the date of birth, adoption, or placement for adoption. HIPAA Special Enrollment Event: Permits you to change medical plan options.	 You may: Enroll yourself, your spouse and the child. Cancel your coverage if you enroll in your spouse's group plan Coverage/Cancellation is generally effective as of the first of the month following your election change request. 	You may: • Enroll yourself, your spouse and the child. • Cancel your coverage if you enroll in your spouse's group plan. Coverage/Cancellation is generally effective as of the first of the month following your election change request.	You may: Health Care FSA • Enroll/Increase your contributions for the remainder of the plan year. • Decrease/Revoke your contributions if you enroll in your spouse's medical plan. Dependent Care FSA • Enroll/Increase your contributions for the remainder of the plan year. Coverage/Cancellation is generally effective as of the first of the month following your election change request.
Death of an Employee	 Surviving spouse and/or any covered dependents will be eligible for COBRA coverage for up to 36 months if the plan is timely notified of the qualifying event. 	 Surviving spouse and/or any covered dependents will be eligible for COBRA coverage for up to 36 months if the plan is timely notified of the qualifying event. 	 Surviving spouse and/or any covered dependents will be eligible for COBRA coverage for up to 36 months if the plan is timely notified of the qualifying event. 	Health Care FSA May be able to continue participation through the end of the plan year if COBRA applies. Dependent Care FSA May be able to continue participation through the end of the plan year depending on the plan terms.

Status Event	Medical	Dental	Vision	Flexible Spending Accounts
Dependent Child Status Change • Child loses eligibility under group plan, including death	You must: • Remove your ineligible dependent from your coverage The ineligible dependent will be eligible for COBRA if the plan is timely notified of the qualifying event. Coverage/Change will generally be effective the date the dependent no longer qualifies as an eligible dependent.		You must: • Remove your ineligible dependent from your coverage. The ineligible dependent will be eligible for COBRA if the plan is timely notified of the qualifying event. Coverage/Change will generally be effective the date the dependent no longer qualifies as an eligible dependent.	You may: Health Care FSA • Decrease/Revoke contributions for the remainder of the plan year for dependent who loses eligibility. Dependent Care FSA • Decrease/Revoke contributions for the remainder of the plan year for dependent who loses eligibility. Cancellation is generally effective as of the first of the month following your election change request.
 Child loses eligibility for student insurance 	You may: • Enroll the child Coverage is generally effective as of the first of the month following your election change request.	You may: • Enroll the child Coverage is generally effective as of the first of the month following your election change request.	You may: • Enroll the child Coverage is generally effective as of the first of the month following your election change request.	 Health Care FSA No changes permitted Dependent Care FSA No Changes permitted

Status Event	Medical	Dental	Vision	Flexible Spending Accounts
Employment Related Changes • Spouse or dependent becomes newly eligible for his/her employer- sponsored plan Coverage/Cancellation is generally effective as of the first of the month following your election change request.	 You may: Change your coverage to remove any individuals who enroll in the newly available plan through the spouse's or dependent's employer. Stop participating if you enroll in the spouse's new plan. 	 You may: Change your coverage to remove any individuals who enroll in the newly available plan through the spouse's or dependent's employer. Stop participating if you enroll in the spouse's new plan. 	 You may: Change your coverage to remove any individuals who enroll in the newly available plan through the spouse's or dependent's employer. Stop participating if you enroll in the spouse's new plan. 	You may: Health Care FSA • Decrease/Revoke your contributions for the remainder of the plan year if you gain eligibility for health coverage under your spouse's new plan • Enroll/Increase your contributions if you or your spouse/dependent lose coverage under a spouse's/parent's health plan
 If you and/or your spouse become ineligible for spouse or parent's employer-sponsored plan (e.g. termination of employment, reduction in hours, age 26 loss) Coverage/Cancellation is generally effective as of the first of the month following your election change request. 	You may: • Enroll yourself and your eligible dependents if you and your eligible dependents were covered under your spouse's plan HIPAA Special Enrollment Event: Permits you to change medical plan options.	You may: • Enroll yourself and your eligible dependents if you and your eligible dependents were covered under your spouse's plan	You may: • Enroll yourself and your eligible dependents if you and your eligible dependents were covered under your spouse's plan	 Dependent Care FSA Enroll if your spouse becomes employed or a FT student Increase/decrease your contributions for the remainder of the plan year to reflect changes in cost of coverage Stop participating if your spouse is no longer a FT student or employed Enroll/increase your contributions if your spouse loses dependent care FSA eligibility

Status Event	Medical	Dental	Vision	Flexible Spending Accounts
Employment Related Changes Continued • Spouse's or Parent's Annual Open Enrollment Period (Different Plan Year) Coverage/Cancellation is generally effective as of the first of the month following your election change request.	 You may: If your spouse/parent cancels medical coverage for you, themself, or children, you may enroll yourself (including as needed to enroll a dependent), your spouse, and children whose coverage was cancelled. Cancel medical coverage for yourself and any dependents who enroll in your spouse's/parent's plan at OE. 	You may: • If your spouse/parent cancels dental coverage for you, themself, or children, you may enroll yourself (including as needed to enroll a dependent), your spouse, and children whose coverage was cancelled. • Cancel dental coverage for yourself and any dependents who enroll in your spouse's/parent's plan at OE.	You may: • If your spouse/parent cancels vision coverage for you, themself, or children, you may enroll yourself (including as needed to enroll a dependent), your spouse, and children whose coverage was cancelled. • Cancel vision coverage for yourself and any dependents who enroll in your spouse's/parent's plan at OE.	You may: Health Care FSA • No changes permitted Dependent Care FSA • Enroll/Increase your contributions for the remainder of the plan year if your spouse decreases/revokes dependent care FSA election
 You become newly eligible for the employer- sponsored plan or additional plan options (Including part-time to full- time, transfer to a new position, or any other employment status change that affects plan eligibility) 	You may: • Enroll yourself and your eligible dependents in a plan option for which you have become newly eligible as a result of the change in employment status.	You may: • Enroll yourself and your eligible dependents in a plan option for which you have become newly eligible as a result of the change in employment status.	You may: • Enroll yourself and your eligible dependents in a plan option for which you have become newly eligible as a result of the change in employment status.	 Health Care FSA Enroll if you became newly eligible as a result of the change in employment status Dependent Care FSA Enroll if you became newly eligible as a result of the change in employment status

Status Event	Medical	Dental	Vision	Flexible Spending Accounts
Change of Residency/Moving (must affect eligibility) Coverage/Cancellation is generally effective as of the first of the month following your election change request.	 You may: Enroll in a plan option available in new location if your current plan is not Enroll in newly available plan option (regional HMO) If you are enrolled in an HMO, and your covered dependent moves, you may enroll yourself and your eligible dependents in another option that provides coverage for you and your eligible dependents 	No impact (unless enrolled in a Dental HMO)	No impact	You may: Health Care FSA • No changes permitted Dependent Care FSA if move affects DC expenses: • Enroll • Increases/Decrease your contribution for the remainder of the plan year • Stop participating
Enrollment in Medicare or Medicaid (Employee, Spouse, or Dependent)	You may: • Cancel your, your spouse's or your dependent's coverage, as applicable Cancellation is generally effective as of the first of the month following your election change request	You may: • Cancel your, your spouse's or your dependent's coverage, as applicable Cancellation is generally effective as of the first of the month following your election change request	You may: • Cancel your, your spouse's or your dependent's coverage, as applicable Cancellation is generally effective as of the first of the month following your election change request	You may: Health Care FSA • Decrease/Revoke your contributions for the remainder of the plan year Dependent Care FSA • No Changes permitted Election change is generally effective as of the first of the month following your election change request.

Status Event	Medical	Dental	Vision	Flexible Spending Accounts
Loss of Eligibility for Medicare or Medicaid/CHIP (Employee, Spouse, or Dependent)	You may: • Enroll yourself and/or the spouse or dependent who lost Medicare/Medicaid/CHIP HIPAA Special EnrolIment Event: Loss of Medicaid/CHIP permits you to change medical plan options and creates a 60-day election window.	You may: • Enroll yourself and/or the spouse or dependent who lost Medicare, Medicaid, CHIP	You may: • Enroll yourself and/or the spouse or dependent who lost Medicare, Medicaid, CHIP	You may: Health Care FSA • Enroll/Increase your contributions for the remainder of the plan year Dependent Care FSA • No changes permitted
Eligibility for Medicaid/CHIP Premium Assistance	You may: • Enroll yourself and/or the spouse or dependent who lost Medicare /Medicaid/CHIP HIPAA Special EnrolIment Event: Gaining Medicaid/CHIP premium assistance eligibility permits you to change medical plan options and creates a 60-day election window.	You may: • No changes permitted	You may: • No changes permitted	You may: Health Care FSA • Decrease/Revoke your contributions for the remainder of the plan year Dependent Care FSA • No Changes permitted Election change is generally effective as of the first of the month following your election change request.

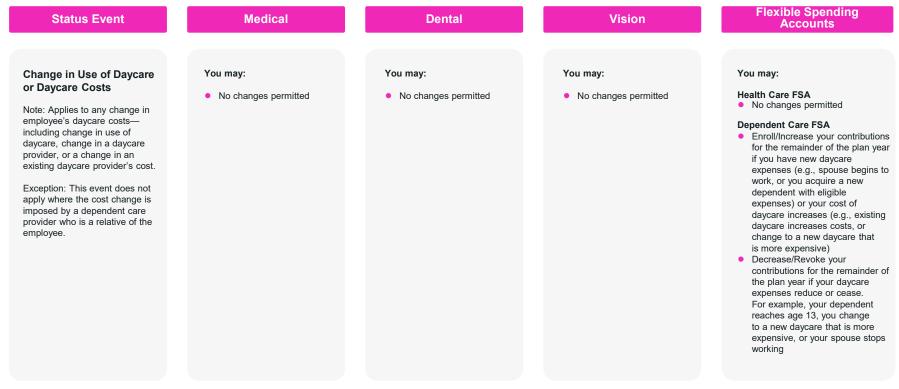
Status Event	Medical	Dental	Vision	Flexible Spending Accounts
Judgment, Decree, or Court Order (Including Qualified Medical Child Support Orders and National Medical Support Notices–QMCSO/NMSN)	 You must: Enroll yourself, and eligible dependent children covered by the judgment, decree or court order. Change your coverage from "EE only" to "EE + Family or Dependents", consistent with the judgment, decree or court order Changes will generally be effective as of the date of the judgment, decree or court order 	 You must: Enroll yourself, and eligible dependent children covered by the judgment, decree or court order. Change your coverage from "EE only" to "EE + Family or Dependents", consistent with the judgment, decree or court order Changes will generally be effective as of the date of the judgment, decree or court order 	 You must: Enroll yourself, and eligible dependent children covered by the judgment, decree or court order. Change your coverage from "EE only" to "EE + Family or Dependents", consistent with the judgment, decree or court order Changes will generally be effective as of the date of the judgment, decree or court order 	You may: Health Care FSA • Enroll/Increase contributions for the remainder of the plan year Dependent Care FSA • No changes permitted Coverage is generally effective as of the first of the month following your election change request.
Pre-Tax HSA Contributions May be Changed Monthly (No Event Needed–Employer Must Allow the Change)	You may: No changes permitted to the medical plan election (HDHP), but changes to employee HSA contribution amount permitted monthly (no event required)	You may: No changes permitted 	You may: No changes permitted 	You may: Health Care FSA • No changes permitted Dependent Care FSA • No Changes permitted

Status Event	Medical	Dental	Vision	Flexible Spending Accounts
COBRA Events: Employee COBRA (or state mini-COBRA) event when an employee remains eligible for the Cafeteria Plan–the employee is still on payroll receiving pay from the employer, such as: • Reduction in work hours resulting in employee no longer eligible for benefits;	Medical You may: • Increase employee's contribution to cover the COBRA premium rate (generally 102% of the cost of coverage)	Dental You may: • Increase employee's contribution to cover the COBRA premium rate (generally 102% of the cost of coverage)	Vision You may: • Increase employee's contribution to cover the COBRA premium rate (generally 102% of the cost of coverage)	Flexible Spending Accounts You may: Health Care FSA • Increase employee's contribution to cover the COBRA premium rate (generally 102% of the cost of coverage) Dependent Care FSA • No changes permitted
or • Dependent reaching maximum age under group plan and employee continues coverage for dependent under COBRA (Note: Adult child's COBRA coverage will qualify for pre-tax payment only through the end of the year in which the child turns age 26)				

Status Event	Medical	Dental	Vision	Flexible Spending Accounts
Status Event ACA-Related Event: Reduction in Hours Note: To qualify for this event, you must meet both of the following two requirements: 1. You must have had a change in employment status so that you will reasonably be expected to average less the	Medical You may: • Cancel coverage Cancellation is generally effective as of the first of the month following your election change request.	Dental You may: • No changes permitted	Vision You may: • No changes permitted	
30 hours of service per week; AND 2.You must enroll in another plan that provides minimum essential coverage no later than the first day of the second month following the month in which you drop coverage.				

Status Event	Medical	Dental	Vision	Flexible Spending Accounts
ACA-Related Event: Exchange Enrollment Note: To qualify for this event, you must meet either of the following two events: 1.If your employer plan is non- calendar year, you may drop coverage at the end of the calendar year OR 2.If you experience a Special Enrollment Period (SEP) on the Exchange/Marketplace (e.g., Covered California, Healthcare.gov)	You may: • Cancel coverage You must enroll in the Exchange/Marketplace (e.g., Covered California, Healthcare.gov) no later than the day immediately following the last day of the employer coverage being cancelled. Cancellation is generally effective as of the first of the month following your election change request.	You may: • No changes permitted	You may: • No changes permitted	You may: Health Care FSA • No changes permitted • No changes permitted

Status Event	Medical	Dental	Vision	Flexible Spending Accounts
 ACA-Related Event: "Family Glitch" Fix to Revoke Coverage for Family Members Note: To qualify, you must meet both of these two requirements: 1. Your family member is eligible for a Special Enrollment Period (SEP) on the Exchange/Marketplace (e.g., Covered California, Healthcare.gov) or seeking to enroll in the Exchange /Marketplace during its open enrollment period; AND Your family member must enroll in Exchange / Marketplace coverage no later than the day immediately following the last day employer coverage is in place for the family member 	You may:• Cancel coverage for the family member(s)Cancellation is generally effective as of the first of the month following your election change request.	You may: • No changes permitted	You may: • No changes permitted	You may:Health Care FSA• No changes permitted• No changes permitted



Status Event	Medical	Dental	Vision	Flexible Spending Accounts
Status Event Establishment of a Domestic Partnership: Note: Plans that cover domestic partners should generally follow the same guidelines as for marriage in page 3. However, unless the domestic partner is a tax dependent, these Section 125 Cafeteria Plan rules technically do not apply because the employee pays for domestic partner coverage on an after-tax basis. Adding a domestic partner is not a HIPAA Special Enrollment event.	 Hedical Pour may: Enroll yourself, your new domestic partner and any eligible dependent children Add your new domestic partner and any eligible dependent children to your plan Cancel your coverage if you enroll in your new domestic partner's group plan Coverage/Cancellation is generally effective as of the first of the month following your election change request. 		 Vision You may: Enroll yourself, your new domestic partner and any eligible dependent children Add your new domestic partner and any eligible dependent children to your plan Cancel your coverage if you enroll in your new domestic partner's group plan Coverage/Cancellation is generally effective as of the first of the month following your election change request. 	

Status Event Medical	Dental	Vision	Flexible Spending Accounts
Status EventMedicalTermination of Domestic Partner Coverage: (Non- Tax Dependent) Upon RequestYou may:Note: Unless the domestic 	or the and children Cancel coverage for the domestic partner and domestic partner's children upon request ally c of the effective as of the first of the	You may: • Cancel coverage for the domestic partner and domestic partner's children upon request Cancellation is generally	

Content Disclaimer

Section 125 Cafeteria Plan Permitted Election Change Event Chart

The intent of this analysis is to provide the recipient with general information regarding the status of, and/or potential concerns related to, the recipient's current employee benefits issues. This analysis does not necessarily fully address the recipient's specific issue, and it should not be construed as, nor is it intended to provide, legal advice. Furthermore, this message does not establish an attorney-client relationship. Questions regarding specific issues should be addressed to the person(s) who provide legal advice to the recipient regarding employee benefits issues (e.g., the recipient's general counsel or an attorney hired by the recipient who specializes in employee benefits law).

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