



## City of Columbus Domestic Partnership Registry

### FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS, APPLICATION CHECKLIST & FORMS

(Effective date August 29, 2012)

Thank you for your interest in the City of Columbus' Domestic Partner Registry. Attached are Declaration of Domestic Partnership and Notice of Termination of Domestic Partnership forms, application procedures and answers to frequently asked questions about this public registry of domestic partnerships. For additional information, please contact the City Clerk's office at (614) 645-7380.

As a record of the City of Columbus, the Domestic Partner Registry is a public record and subject to full disclosure under State laws regarding public records.

Applications for the Domestic Partner Registry are available at the Columbus City Council Website at [www.columbuscitycouncil.org](http://www.columbuscitycouncil.org) or by request through the City Clerk's office at (614) 645-7380. Applications may be submitted in person or via mail. Because original signatures are required for the registry, applications may **not** be submitted electronically.

### FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

#### WHAT ARE THE QUALIFICATIONS FOR THE REGISTRY?

To establish a domestic partnership, two adult individuals must file a Declaration of Domestic Partnership with the Columbus City Clerk affirming that they share a government-issued marriage license not recognized by the State of Ohio, or that they meet all of the following eligibility requirements as set forth below.

- (1) Are not currently married to another adult as recognized by Ohio law; and
- (2) Are not legally separated from another person either under statutory or common law; and
- (3) Shares responsibility for each others' common welfare; and
- (4) Are at least eighteen (18) years of age and mentally competent to consent to contract; and
- (5) Are financially interdependent, as demonstrated by at least four (4) of the following:
  - a) Joint ownership of real estate property or joint tenancy on a residential lease; or
  - b) Joint ownership of an automobile; or
  - c) Joint bank or credit account; or
  - d) Joint liabilities (e.g., credit cards or loans); or
  - e) A will designating the interdependent adults as primary beneficiaries; or
  - f) A retirement plan or life insurance policy beneficiary designation form designating the interdependent adults as primary beneficiaries; or
  - g) A durable power of attorney signed to the effect that the two interdependent adults have granted powers to one another.

#### HOW DO I REGISTER MY DOMESTIC PARTNERSHIP?

**Please Note: Applicants must complete the application and have the form notarized prior to submission.**

##### Applying By Mail

Forward the original notarized form and \$50.00 registration fee payable by check or money order made payable to "Columbus City Treasurer" to: Office of the City Clerk, Attn: Domestic Partner Registry, 90 West Broad Street, Columbus, Ohio 43215. After processing, applicants will be mailed a personalized certificate, two business card sized certificates, and a copy of the notarized application (allow up to 30 days for processing).

##### Applying In Person

Applicants must submit their original notarized application to the Office of the City Clerk, located on the Second Floor of Columbus City Hall, 90 West Broad Street, Rm. 231, Columbus, Ohio, 43215 during regular business hours, which are Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. (holidays may affect this schedule). The

application will be time-stamped and reviewed, and a receipt will be issued. Applicants will then pay the \$50.00 registration fee in the Columbus City Treasurer's office on the First floor of City Hall, Rm. 111, Monday through Friday 8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. Payments must be made by cash, check or money order **ONLY (credit cards not accepted)**. Checks should be made payable to "Columbus City Treasurer".

Applicants will be mailed a personalized certificate, two business card sized certificates and a copy of the notarized application (allow up to 30 days for processing).

#### **WHAT DOES THE REGISTRATION FEE PROVIDE?**

Accepted applications will receive a certificate, two business card sized certificates and will be listed in the City's domestic partner registry. (This registry is a public record and may be requested by outside parties. If requested, all of the information, including name and address, is part of the public record.)

Additional questions may be directed to the City Clerk's office at (614) 645-7380 or by e-mail at: [cityclerkrequests@columbus.gov](mailto:cityclerkrequests@columbus.gov).

#### **HOW TO TERMINATE A REGISTERED DOMESTIC PARTNERSHIP?**

Once registered, each member of the Domestic Partnership has a responsibility to report the end of the Domestic Partnership to the City of Columbus so that the registration may be terminated. This may be done by completing the Notice of Termination of Domestic Partnership form which is available at the Columbus City Council Website at [www.columbuscitycouncil.org](http://www.columbuscitycouncil.org) or upon request at the City Clerk's office at (614) 645-7380.

There is no cost to file a Notice of Termination of Domestic Partnership, which can be submitted by mail (Office of the City Clerk, Attn: Domestic Partner Registry, 90 West Broad Street, Columbus, Ohio 43215) or in person at the same address. Only one party is required to sign the Notice of Termination; however that party is responsible for sending a copy of the form to the other party, if the other party is still living.

In the event one of the partners is deceased and at such time the remaining partner should wish to register another partnership, a copy of a death certificate or published obituary from a periodical/newspaper is sufficient documentation for the Clerk's office to list the partnership as terminated in the registry.

#### **IS EITHER PARTY REQUIRED TO LIVE OR WORK IN CITY OF COLUMBUS TO REGISTER A DOMESTIC PARTNERSHIP? IS THERE A GEOGRAPHIC RESTRICTION FOR REGISTERING A DOMESTIC PARTNERSHIP?**

There is no requirement that either party live or work in the City of Columbus. Any Domestic Partnership that meets the City of Columbus' criteria may be registered.

#### **IS THERE A FEE TO REGISTER A DOMESTIC PARTNERSHIP?**

There is a \$50 fee to register a Domestic Partnership with the City of Columbus. Fees must be submitted by check or money order made payable to "Columbus City Treasurer"

#### **WILL DOMESTIC PARTNERSHIP INFORMATION BE SHARED WITH OTHERS? HOW CAN PERSONAL INFORMATION SUBMITTED TO THE CITY OF COLUMBUS BE KEPT CONFIDENTIAL?**

As a government, the City of Columbus is bound by State laws regarding the disclosure of public records. Information submitted to register a Domestic Partnership is a public record and the City is generally required to provide this information to any media outlet, business, organization or individual that requests it. Except as allowed by State law, there is no method to remove any of the information including an applicant's name or address from the public record. Individuals may choose to not register their Domestic Partnership and not to share personal information with the City if they wish to limit public access to an applicant's personal information.

#### **WHEN WILL A DOMESTIC PARTNERSHIP REGISTRATION BECOME VALID? IS THERE A WAITING PERIOD FOR A DOMESTIC PARTNERSHIP?**

The City of Columbus Domestic Partnership Registry will go into effect on August 29, 2012. No Domestic Partnerships can be registered before that date. After that date, a Domestic Partnership is considered registered when the Clerk enters information into the registry. A Domestic Partnership is valid until a Notice of Termination of Domestic Partnership is received and filed by the Office of the City Clerk, or upon the death of one of the partners.

### **ARE APPLICANTS REQUIRED TO LIVE AT THE SAME ADDRESS FULL-TIME TO QUALIFY SHARING A COMMON ADDRESS?**

Applicants are required to share a common address, but are not required to have only one address. Applicants may have a separate vacation home, investment property, or a second address used in order to live closer to a work site and this does not disqualify applicants from sharing a common address.

### **HOW DO I RECEIVE BENEFITS ONCE A DOMESTIC PARTNERSHIP HAS BEEN REGISTERED?**

You should speak directly to the organization from which you seek to receive a discount or benefit. By itself, the Domestic Partner Registry does not provide any special discounts or access to benefits. It is a tool that domestic partners can choose to show that they are eligible for domestic partner benefits offered by employers or family discounts provided by businesses and organizations. The registry is seen as a way for domestic partners to record their relationships and for businesses and organizations to have a neutrally administered means of qualifying person for benefits or discounts that they may choose to offer. The registry is entirely optional for all parties. No domestic partnership is required to be registered. No company is required to provide discounts or benefits. No company is required to recognize the domestic partner registry as qualification for whatever discounts they may choose to offer.

### **DOES THE DOMESTIC PARTNER REGISTRY TAKE THE PLACE OF A POWER OF ATTORNEY FOR LEGAL MATTERS?**

No, the two are not related and one does not take the place of the other for either intended purpose.

### **DO I NEED TO INCLUDE ANY OTHER DOCUMENTS WITH MY APPLICATION TO ESTABLISH PROOF?**

No, all you need to forward to the office of the City Clerk is the completed, notarized application and fee. Please do not forward additional documentation.

### **MY QUESTION IS NOT ANSWERED HERE--HOW CAN I GET MORE INFORMATION?**

Please contact the Office of the City Clerk by phone at (614) 645-7380, or by email at [cityclerkrequests@columbus.gov](mailto:cityclerkrequests@columbus.gov).

## **APPLICATION CHECKLIST**

### **DO:**

- ☐ **DO**, along with an adult co-applicant, complete in full the "Declaration of Domestic Partnership."
- ☐ **DO**, along with the co-applicant, appear together in the presence of a Notary Public with completed "Declaration of Domestic Partnership" and any/all necessary documents of criteria proof.
- ☐ **DO**, mail original notarized form and \$50.00 check or money order made payable to "Columbus City Treasurer" (if not applying in person) to:  
Office of the City Clerk  
Attn: Domestic Partner Registry  
90 West Broad Street  
Columbus, Ohio 43215

### **DO NOT:**

- ☐ **DO NOT** send documents of criteria proof to the Office of the City Clerk.
- ☐ **DO NOT** send cash for payment of registration fee to the Office of the City Clerk.

## **FORMS on following pages**