

Frequently Asked Questions

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Q: What is the difference between Member and Non-Member status within the bargaining unit?

A: Employees who have not signed a union membership card are non-members. You can tell if you are union member by looking at your [Pay Stub](#). The "After Tax Deductions" box will indicate if you are a "UUP Member".

If you are not a UUP member, you:

- Cannot vote on the UUP contract
- Cannot hold union office
- Cannot elect union leaders on your campus
- Cannot choose your union representatives at the state and national levels
- Have no voice regarding union resolutions or policies of UUP, of the New York State United Teachers, or of the American Federation of Teachers
- Since you are not permitted to join UUP or NYSUT after retirement, it also means that when you retire, you will no longer receive any union member benefits provided to you by UUP, NYSUT, or AFT (e.g. Davis vision, dental care, various discounts, auto insurance, life insurance, long term care, catastrophic care, etc.).

If you want to become a UUP member, or if you are unclear as to your status, please email Chapter Assistant Kerry Osterwald at oneuup@oneonta.edu for a form or go to uupinfo.org/join to sign up online.

Q: Why can't Statewide UUP send out emails to my .edu address?

A: SUNY does not allow UUP to send any politically sensitive information of any kind to our members' .edu email addresses. In order to keep our members informed as to all of our activities and current issues, including political action, we are asking for a personal (non.edu) email address from our members. To give us your personal (non.edu) email address, please [click here](#).

Q: Can I get compensation to attend UUP events?

A: Through the collective negotiating process, the State has agreed to make available a specified block of time for use by the union's designees to participate in the internal affairs of the union. This time, called Employee Organization Leave (EOL), is typically used for such activities as attendance at board meetings, committee meetings, and delegates' meetings. Absences of individual employees to participate in such activities, with the time charged to the union's block of EOL days, are subject to several restrictions. Forms can be obtained from [Jeri O'Byran-Losee](#), Statewide Secretary/Treasurer.

Q: Will my supervisor be told about communications and correspondences I have with my Grievance Officer?

A: Any communications and correspondences with your Grievance Chair, whether an official grievance or not, are made in strict confidence and your name and details will only be used if you give specific permission for us to do so.

Q: How do I get my dental and vision cards?

A: During your campus orientation you will receive a [Benefit Trust Fund Enrollment Card](#). Once this card has been filled out and received by the Fund we will contact both Delta Dental and Davis Vision with your information. Your dental and vision cards will then be mailed to your address on record in approximately two weeks.

Q: How do I add my dependents?

A: During the initial orientation process, dependents are simply listed on the Benefit Trust Fund Enrollment card. If dependents are added later, the Benefit Trust Fund [Change of Marital or Dependent Status Form](#) needs to be used. Additionally, the appropriate legal documents (birth or marriage certificate, etc.) will need to be provided to add dependents outside of the original orientation period.

Q: Can my supervisor expect me to work over 40 hours/week without compensation?

A: The SUNY/UUP Contract does not define the length of the "work week" for professionals. In the contract, the work one must complete is known as your "professional obligation," and is defined by your Performance Program. There have been discussions at the state level between SUNY and UUP, however, about the idea that a professional employee's work week should, on average, amount to approximately 37.5 hours/week. The State has stated this understanding in legal documents in the past, so this is not just a UUP stipulation, but a *SUNY stipulation*. You are required to do what is commonly assumed to be your job – the duties, tasks and responsibilities spelled out in your Performance Program.

Completing your professional obligation may require more hours in some weeks than in others, but when you work extra hours regularly (ex. 41.5 hours *every* week, which equals one extra work day every two weeks), or a lot of extra hours (ex. 50 hours) in a specific week, you must be permitted to work fewer hours at other times.

Q: Does the UUP Benefit Trust Fund cover dependents up to age 26 for dental and vision benefits?

A: Yes, your children are eligible until the end of the month in which they reach 26 years of age. Please see [click here](#) for more information.

Q: Can I list more than one beneficiary for my Group Life Insurance policy?

A: Yes, you simply need to include all your requested beneficiaries on the [UUP Group Life Insurance Beneficiary Card](#) and send the card to the UUP Benefit Trust Fund.

Q: How long can I expect to have the COBRA coverage once I go off of payroll?

A: COBRA coverage is for 18 months for UUP members who leave employment.

Q: Can my supervisor ask for a doctor's note to account for my absence from work?

A: Your medical information is confidential and protected by [HIPAA](#) (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act). *Your supervisor is not entitled to know your medical information, or even who is treating you.* If a supervisor asks you to provide medical documentation for an absence, just tell your supervisor that you will provide the medical documentation to ER (Employee Relations) or HR (Human Resources). Your supervisor will then be advised by ER or HR only that you provided sufficient documentation, not any detail on what you are being treated for, or by whom.

Q: How I can change my address and telephone number?

A: You just need to fill out the [Change of Address Form](#). Fill it out and send it into the UUP Benefit Trust Fund and we will make sure that your new information is sent to Delta Dental and Davis Vision.

Q: Can contacting or becoming active in UUP hurt my standing for tenure?

A: UUP consults with our members every day. Reaching out to the union for information or assistance does not make an employee guilty of creating a confrontational situation. He or she is using a resource *guaranteed to them by law*. In addition, both the UUP contract and [The Taylor Law](#) *prohibit anyone from retaliating against an employee for exercising his or her right to consult with the union.* It is therefore completely improper for any colleague or supervisor to tell an employee that he or she “should not go to the union” or “should not have gone to the union,” or to retaliate against an employee either directly or subtly for exercising this contractual right.

Q: Can I purchase additional life insurance through the UUP Benefit Trust Fund?

A: No, but you can purchase additional life insurance through our affiliate – NYSUT. Call 800-626-8101 and they will be able to answer all of your questions.

Q: How do I add my domestic partner to my dental and vision benefits?

A: Please call the UUP Benefit trust Fund at 1-800-887-3863