Spousal Surcharge Definition

1. What is a spousal surcharge?
A spousal surcharge is an extra charge that an Archdiocesan employee pays for electing to insure a spouse who has subsidized health insurance coverage available to them through his/her own employer.

The spousal surcharge is an added charge of $125 per month to the usual employee contribution for health insurance.

2. If you already have your spousal surcharge fee or exemption in place prior to July 1, 2019, will I need to do anything?
First please review your spouse’s employment status and eligibility for coverage at this time. You do not need to make a change unless you have an exemption status change.

• If your appropriate spousal surcharge fee or exemption is not changing, no action is required of you.
• If you need to make a spousal surcharge change, you need to go online to Employee Self-Service at http://archstl.org/openenrollment to change your spousal surcharge to the appropriate fee or exemption.

3. When is the spousal surcharge applicable?
The spousal surcharge is applicable when your employed spouse is eligible for subsidized health insurance coverage (meaning their employer contributes to the cost of the coverage) through his/her employer and he/she is covered as a participant of the Archdiocesan health insurance plan. During each year’s benefit Open Enrollment between May 1 and May 15th, the employee seeking a spousal surcharge exemption will need to go online to Employee Self Service to select or change an exemption.

4. What are the exemptions to the spousal surcharge?
In general, the spousal surcharge fee would not be added if the Spousal Surcharge Exemption was submitted on time and the enrolled spouse is one of the following:

• My spouse is not employed.
• My spouse is self-employed, without employer-subsidized health insurance coverage, and is not eligible for employer-subsidized health insurance.
• My spouse is employed with an Archdiocese of St. Louis parish, agency, or school.
• My spouse is employed and is not eligible for his/her employer’s health insurance coverage.
• My spouse is employed and my spouse’s employer does not offer health insurance coverage.
• My spouse is employed and is not eligible for his/her employer’s health insurance coverage.
• My spouse is employed and is eligible for his/her health insurance coverage but the full premium cost is paid by the employee. There is NO employer contribution toward the cost of the health insurance.

5. What happens if I enroll my spouse in the Archdiocesan plan even though my spouse is eligible or covered through his/her employer?
The $125 monthly spousal surcharge is added to your health insurance cost.

Why a Spousal Surcharge?

6. Why did the Archdiocese of St. Louis implement a spousal surcharge policy?
The spousal surcharge encourages those who have medical coverage available through their employer to take advantage of that coverage. The Archdiocese Employee Benefit Plan is self-insured and helps pay the cost of each member’s healthcare coverage and actual claims. If the employee’s spouse moves to his/her employer’s plan and uses that benefit instead, it saves the Archdiocese the cost of the claims and will help keep our medical plans more affordable. The Archdiocese establishes its premiums on the basis of the cost of the actual claims which ultimately makes the plan more affordable to the employee.
Effective Dates of the Spousal Surcharge

7. When is the Archdiocese of St. Louis Open Enrollment?
May 1st – May 15th. If you elect to cover your spouse, you will need to review your spouse’s surcharge eligibility every Open Enrollment period (May 1st – May 15th). If applicable to make a spousal surcharge fee or exemption change, you will need to go online to Employee Self Service to make a change. Throughout the year, if your spouse experiences a qualified event change in insurance eligibility at his/her employment, you will be able to change your exemption status. Changes during the annual Open Enrollment are effective July 1.

8. When does the spousal surcharge go into effect as a new hire?
If you are a new hire, not exempt from the surcharge, and you and your spouse enroll in the Archdiocese Health Insurance plan, the effective date of the surcharge would be the same as the effective date of your health insurance coverage. For your payroll deduction, the rule for the spousal surcharge would be the same as the rule for the employee contribution to the health insurance premium:
- If the effective date of your health insurance enrollment is prior to the 16th of any given month, you owe the full health premium and spousal surcharge for that month.
- If the effective date of your health insurance enrollment is on or after the 16th of any given month, you do not owe any health insurance premium or spousal surcharge for that month.
- There is no prorating of the health insurance premium or the surcharge.
- The Archdiocese will not be retroactively reimbursing anyone for surcharge amounts already paid.

9. When is the spousal surcharge effective for a health insurance qualifying event?
If you have a qualifying event for your Archdiocesan health insurance coverage, the effective date of the employee spousal surcharge would be the date of the qualifying event. A few of the more common qualified events include: marriage, divorce, birth of a baby, change in status such as part-time to full-time, etc. (For example, marriage is a qualifying event where the effective date of the surcharge is the date of the marriage.) The surcharge payroll deduction rules listed above in question #8 would apply.

Spousal Surcharge Exemption Online Action

10. Who must go online to Employee Self Service to complete the Spousal Surcharge Exemption?
- If your appropriate spousal surcharge fee or exemption is not changing, no action is required of you.
- If you need to make a spousal surcharge change, you need to go online to Employee Self-Service at http://archstl.org/openenrollment to change your spousal surcharge to the appropriate fee or exemption.

11. When is the online Spousal Surcharge Exemption action due if I need to make a fee or exemption change?
May 15, 2019.
12. What do I need to do to get ready for this change?
You should start by obtaining information about your spouse’s employer group medical plan. Determine when their employer’s annual enrollment period occurs. Read the Employee Spousal Surcharge Exemption information to determine if you are exempt from the surcharge.
- If your appropriate spousal surcharge fee or exemption is not changing, no action is required of you.
- If you need to make a spousal surcharge change, you need to go online to Employee Self-Service at http://archstl.org/openenrollment to change your spousal surcharge to the appropriate fee or exemption.

13. How do I submit the Spousal Surcharge Exemption?
You can access the Employee Self Service at http://archstl.org/openenrollment. Click on the Employee Self Service button to proceed.
If you do not have internet or online access, an exemption form can be mailed to you by contacting the Office of Human Resources at 314.792.7546. Once you print the form and complete the requested fields, your signed form can be submitted by mail or fax to:

Archdiocese of St. Louis
Office of Human Resources
20 Archbishop May Drive
St. Louis, MO 63119
Fax: 314.792.7548 or
Email: benefits@archstl.org

14. If I am canceling my spouse’s coverage on the Archdiocese health insurance plan during Open Enrollment, do I need to do anything in regards to canceling the Spousal Surcharge?
If you are removing your spouse from your health insurance plan effective 7/1/2019, you would continue through the online Open Enrollment screens and click on “decline coverage” in the spousal surcharge screen.

15. What happens if I fail to go online and elect the Spousal Surcharge Exemption?
Your payroll deduction automatically includes the $125 monthly spousal surcharge for your spouse’s Archdiocesan health care plan coverage. Additionally, in the event employees who do not complete the Employee Self Service Spousal Surcharge election accurately, may be subject to their coverage under the plan being terminated or they may be subject to other disciplinary actions up to and including termination.
- If your appropriate spousal surcharge fee or exemption is not changing, no action is required of you.
- If you need to make a spousal surcharge change, you need to go online to Employee Self-Service at http://archstl.org/openenrollment to change your spousal surcharge to the appropriate fee or exemption.

Cost of the Spousal Surcharge

16. Is the $125 employee payroll deduction pre-tax or after-tax?
The surcharge would be deducted on a pre-tax basis unless you have elected an after-tax election for your health insurance premium. If you have a pre-tax election for your health insurance contribution, you will have a pre-tax spousal surcharge. If you have an after-tax election for your health insurance contribution, you will have an after-tax spousal surcharge.

17. Excluding the $125 monthly spousal surcharge, what is the monthly cost of health insurance for a full-time employee?
Please see page 15 for more detailed premium information.
18. What if I submit documentation later in the plan year that shows my spouse was exempt?
The Archdiocese will not be retroactively reimbursing for surcharge amounts already paid. You will be exempt from
the surcharge after receipt of the Employee Health Insurance Form marking the spousal surcharge exemption and
according to the payroll deduction rules outlined in question #8 of this document.

**Spouse’s Employment Status and Employer’s Medical Coverage**

19. My spouse is currently between jobs. Can I enroll my spouse while they are job searching?
Yes, you can enroll your spouse in the Archdiocesan health plan without a spousal surcharge while he/she is
unemployed. However, if at any time your spouse becomes eligible for coverage through a new employer, you must
notify the Office of Human Resources at 314.792.7546 or via an email to benefits@archstl.org within 31 days of their
eligibility on their new employer’s plan.

20. What happens if my spouse finds a new job and I forget to notify the Office of Human Resources and he/she
remains enrolled in the Archdiocese Plan with the spousal surcharge exemption?
In addition to the points in question #15, you owe your employer the cost of the spousal surcharge for however many
months your spouse was enrolled while he/she was eligible for insurance through his/her own employer. It is the
responsibility of each parish/school/agency to resolve issues such as these.

21. What if my spouse is going to school and is eligible for a student health plan from the school?
The spousal surcharge only applies to spouses who are actively employed and eligible for group medical coverage
through their employer. If your spouse is eligible for coverage as a student, they would be eligible for the
Archdiocesan health care plan and you are eligible for an exemption. If you previously elected an exemption, no
action is required of you. If your spouse’s student status has changed and now you want to apply for an exemption or need
to pay the fee, please go online to Employee Self Service.

22. What if my spouse and I are both Archdiocesan employees?
If you are married to a benefit eligible Archdiocesan employee, you are eligible for an exemption. If you previously elected
an exemption, no action is required of you. If your spouse’s employment status has changed and now you want to apply
for an exemption, please go online to Employee Self Service.

23. What if my spouse works for a non-Archdiocesan private Catholic employer or I work for a non-Archdiocesan private
Catholic employer and my spouse works for the Archdiocese of St. Louis?
In either employee situation if your spouse is eligible or covered for employer subsidized health insurance and your
private Catholic employer participates in our Archdiocese of St. Louis UnitedHealthcare health insurance plan, you are
exempt from the monthly spousal surcharge. If you previously elected an exemption, no action is required of you. If your
spouse’s status has changed and now you want to apply for an exemption, please go online to Employee Self Service.
24. What if my spouse has to pay 100% of his insurance where he/she works?
You are eligible for an exemption. If you previously elected an exemption, no action is required of you. If your spouse’s status has changed and now you want to apply for an exemption, please go online to Employee Self Service. You will only have to pay the $125 monthly spousal surcharge if your spouse has access to employer-subsidized coverage, where the employer is paying part or all of the insurance plan costs.

To find out if your spouse’s employer is paying part of the plan cost, your spouse should ask his or her HR/benefits representative.

25. Is my spouse required to enroll other family members into his/her employer sponsored group medical coverage?
No. Dependent children up to the age of 26 years old are still eligible to enroll in the Archdiocesan health insurance plan without the additional surcharge.

26. Whose health insurance plan will cover my children, the Archdiocesan plan or my spouse’s employer’s plan?
If your spouse’s employer provides coverage for children and your children meet the eligibility requirements for both plans, you and your spouse will need to decide as to which plan(s) to enroll in. We recommend comparing the key features of both plans, to help with your decision.

27. My spouse’s employer holds open enrollment at a different time of the year. What should we do?
The Archdiocese of St. Louis Open Enrollment may be a qualifying life event for your spouse to enroll in his/her employer’s health insurance plan. Your spouse should ask his/her employer’s HR/Benefits representative if he/she can enroll due to the Archdiocesan Open Enrollment or due to this significant cost change, effective July 1, 2019. You may contact the Archdiocese Office of Human Resources by calling 314.792.7546 or emailing benefits@archstl.org for additional information and assistance.

28. What happens if my working spouse’s group medical coverage is terminated because he/she loses their job? Does my spouse have to elect and exhaust COBRA/Continuation of Coverage before being eligible for enrollment in the Archdiocesan health plan?
A spouse is not required to elect COBRA/Continuation of Coverage. If a spouse loses other coverage due to losing his/her job, that qualifies as a “life event”, and the spouse can be enrolled in the Archdiocesan plan. To enroll and be exempt from the surcharge the employee must complete the Employee Health Insurance Enrollment/Change Form and within the health insurance form mark the Spousal Surcharge Exemption and submit it to his/her employer benefits administrator within 31 days of the spouse losing coverage.

29. Does my spouse’s Medicare coverage have any bearing on the Spousal Surcharge?
No, Medicare eligibility or coverage is neither a reason for a spousal surcharge exemption nor a cause for the surcharge fee. Medicare has no bearing on the Spousal Surcharge Policy.

30. If I am in the Archdiocesan Early Retiree Plan or the Continuation of Coverage Plan, am I subject to the Spousal Surcharge?
You are exempt from the spousal surcharge since you pay the full premium.

Questions?
Contact the benefits administrator at your parish/school/agency or the Archdiocese Office of Human Resources:
Email: benefits@archstl.org
Phone: 314.792.7546

You can access more information on the Spousal Surcharge on the Archdiocese website at http://archstl.org/spousalsurcharge.