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**Application for exemption from having to participate in Stellenbosch University’s chosen/approved medical schemes**

**BACKGROUND**

On 19 October 2021, the Rectorate approved the following proposal from the Stellenbosch University Healthcare Committee (SUHCC):

Permanent employees at post levels 1 to 10 who fall within the ambit of having to participate in SU’s chosen medical schemes may apply for exemption from participating in the chosen schemes by providing the SUHCC with a written motivation, explaining why they wish to be exempted. The application, therefore, is not for the employee not to belong to any registered South African medical scheme, but only to be exempted from participating in SU’s chosen medical schemes. Permanent employees at post levels 1 to 10 are still required to belong to a registered South African medical scheme.

Employees who qualify for post-retirement healthcare benefits will forfeit these if they do not participate in the University’s chosen medical schemes.

As from 2022, the SUHCC will meet regularly to review exemption applications received, and will decide each application on merit.

 **KEY FACTORS TO CONSIDER**

The University feels strongly that our employees should belong to a reputable medical scheme so as to be adequately covered in the event of a life-threatening medical emergency or severe illness. Our current healthcare consultants will gladly help you compare the different medical schemes they are licensed to promote.

Before you decide to cancel or change your medical scheme, however, keep in mind that your current scheme may impose waiting periods or penalties if you decide to rejoin later in life or have had a break in cover. Be sure that you understand how the rules of the scheme may affect you before you decide to cancel your cover.

Medical schemes are entitled to impose **waiting periods** and **late joiner penalties** (both terms defined below) on all members who:

* have not been on a registered medical scheme;
* have had a break in cover for more than 30 days; and
* have changed medical schemes on a voluntary basis.

Late joiner penalties may also be imposed on all persons over the age of 35.

**What is a waiting period?**

A waiting period can be either three or twelve months, during which the member is still required to pay the full monthly contribution. During a three-month general waiting period, for instance, the member will not have cover, unless they can provide proof of continuous, uninterrupted cover for two years. Specific pre-existing conditions may also be excluded for twelve months.

**What is a late joiner penalty?**

A late joiner penalty is a life-time penalty. It is a fee that is added to your monthly premium for the rest of your life, unless you join a group scheme, in which case the late joiner penalty might fall away. The penalty is determined by the number of years you haven’t been covered on a registered South African medical aid from the age of 35.

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| --- | --- |
| **Years not on a medical scheme after the age of 35** | **Percentage added to monthly premium** |
| 0–4 | 5% |
| 5–14 | 25% |
| 15–24 | 50% |
| 25+ | 75% |

The late joiner penalty is transferable to other schemes as well.

**EMPLOYEE’S PERSONAL DETAILS**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Full name and surname |  |
| Employee number |  |
| Contact number Office |  |
| Contact number Cellphone |  |
| Email address |  |

I have read the information above and understand the consequences of my request to leave the University’s preferred medical schemes. I will not hold the University or any of its employees or consultants liable for my decision.

Employee signatureDate

**Approval by Healthcare Committee**

Signed Date