

University of California

Affordable Care Act & UC Benefits

September 22, 2022

Presented by Angelin Barrios



Affordable Care Act Goals

- Required certain employers to offer medical insurance to employees
 - UC is considered an “applicable large employer” (ALE)
- Set minimum standards for employers determining eligibility for medical insurance

UC's Interpretation of ACA

- Required UC to revamp eligibility for medical insurance effective 1/1/15
- UC did not limit eligibility changes to apply only to medical insurance
 - Eligibility changes applied to all benefits
 - Dental Insurance, Vision Insurance, Life Insurance, etc.



What Are the GIRs?

- Group Insurance Regulations (GIRs) Govern Eligibility for UC's Health & Welfare Plans
- GIRs For Active Employees, Annuitants, and Postdoctoral Scholars

Where Can I Find Them?

Leaves of Absence

Employment

Form I-9

Administrative Documents
& Other Information

Guidelines for Rehire of
UC Retirees

Vacation Credit Tables

Patent Amendment Signature
Lookup

[-] Group Insurance Regulations

- Part I — Introduction [\[PDF\]](#) (Preface, Definitions and Abbreviations)
 - Administrative Supplement to Part I
 - I-A Appeal Procedures [\[PDF\]](#)
- Part II — General Eligibility Provisions [\[PDF\]](#)
 - Administrative Supplements to Part II
 - II-A Eligibility Requirements [\[PDF\]](#)
 - II-B Qualifying Retirement Plans for Employee Health & Welfare Eligibility [\[PDF\]](#)
 - II-C Direct Payment of Premiums [\[PDF\]](#)
 - II-D Continuation of Coverage — Overage Disabled Children [\[PDF\]](#)
 - II-E Break in Service [\[PDF\]](#)
 - II-F DepCare FSA Program for Academic Student Employees and Graduate Student Researchers [\[PDF\]](#)
 - II-G Health Insurance Assignment Orders and National Support Notices [\[PDF\]](#)
- Part III — Faculty/Staff Health and Welfare Benefits [\[PDF\]](#)
 - Administrative Supplements to Part III
 - III-A Medical Plan Contingency Fund for Worker's Compensation [\[PDF\]](#)
 - III-B Medical Contribution Base [\[PDF\]](#)
- Part IV — Annuitant Health & Welfare Benefits
 - Medical & Dental (Section 6000) [\[PDF\]](#)
 - Medicare Coordinator Program [\[PDF\]](#)
 - Legal [\[PDF\]](#)
 - Vision [\[PDF\]](#)
 - AD&D [\[PDF\]](#)
- Part V – Postdoctoral Scholar Health and Welfare Benefits [\[PDF\]](#)

Where Can I Find Them?

<https://ucnet.universityofcalifornia.edu/tools-and-services/administrators/health-welfare-benefits.html>



GIR Changes

- Eligibility for Health & Welfare benefits based on the ACA
 - Initial Eligibility
 - Continuing Eligibility
- ACA Terms Added to GIRs

Initial Measurement Period	Stability Period
Beginning Benefits Eligibility	Average Weekly Hours of Service
Standard Measurement Period	Administrative Period

Initial Eligibility

- ACA Requirements

- Employees who are considered “full-time” at Date of Hire (DOH) must be offered health insurance within 90 days of hire

- GIR Interpretation

- Initial eligibility unchanged for “Group A Employees”
 - Full, Mid-level, Core Benefit Eligible Employees, awarded at DOH

Initial Eligibility

- ACA Requirements
 - Employees who are considered “full-time” at Date of Hire (DOH) must be offered health insurance within 90 days of hire
- GIR Interpretation (cont.)
 - Initial eligibility changed for Postdoctoral Scholars
 - Pre-ACA, 100% for 3 months OR 50% for 1 year or more, awarded at DOH
 - Post-ACA, 75% for 3 months or more, awarded at DOH

Initial Eligibility

- ACA Requirements

- Employees who are considered “full-time” at Date of Hire (DOH) must be offered health insurance within 90 days of hire

- GIR Interpretation (cont.)

- Initial eligibility changed for “Group B Employees”
 - Pre ACA, employees categorically ineligible for benefits
 - Post ACA, Core Benefits offered if 75% for 3 months or more, awarded at DOH

Initial Eligibility

- Group B Employees
 - Graduate Students
 - Undergraduate Students
 - UNEX
 - Seasonal Employees
 - Employees paid “by-agreement”

Initial Eligibility

- Beginning Benefits Eligibility (BBE)
 - A period of time between the employee's or postdoc's start date at UC until December 31, following the completion of a Standard Measurement Period
 - Applies to employees or postdocs who are **eligible** for employee or postdoc benefits based on initial appointment percentage and duration

Initial Eligibility

- Initial Measurement Period (IMP)
 - A period of time between an employee's or postdoc's start date at the UC and the employee's or postdoc's one year start date anniversary
 - Applies to employees or postdocs who are **ineligible** for benefits based on initial appointment percentage and duration

Initial Eligibility – BBE

Postdoc Hired at 50% for 2 years on 2/1/2019, initially eligible for postdoc benefits





Reassessment

- ACA: All employees must have their eligibility for benefits re-evaluated
- Re-evaluations occur at end of IMP or Standard Measurement Period (SMP)
 - Employees with BBE measured at SMP
- On-going eligibility will be solely based on results of re-evaluation

Reassessment

- Standard Measurement Period (SMP)
 - A period of time lasting one year; the measurement results determine on-going eligibility or ineligibility for benefits
 - Takes place annually from November 1 to October 31 of the following year
 - Note: Bi-weekly Employees Dates Change Every Year

Reassessment

- IMP and SMP calculate an employee's or postdoc's Average Weekly Hours of Service (AWHS)
- Average Weekly Hours of Service
 - The total amount of “hours worked” by the employee or postdoc during the IMP or SMP, divided by the number of weeks in a year



Reassessment

- Group A: 17.5 AWHS
- Group B: 30 AWHS
- Postdocs: 17.5 AWHS

Reassessment

- If employee or postdoc does not meet IMP or SMP threshold:
 - Benefits terminated, or
 - Remains ineligible for benefits
- If employee or postdoc meets or exceeds IMP or SMP threshold
 - Benefits newly awarded, or
 - Benefits continued

Reassessment

- Stability Period

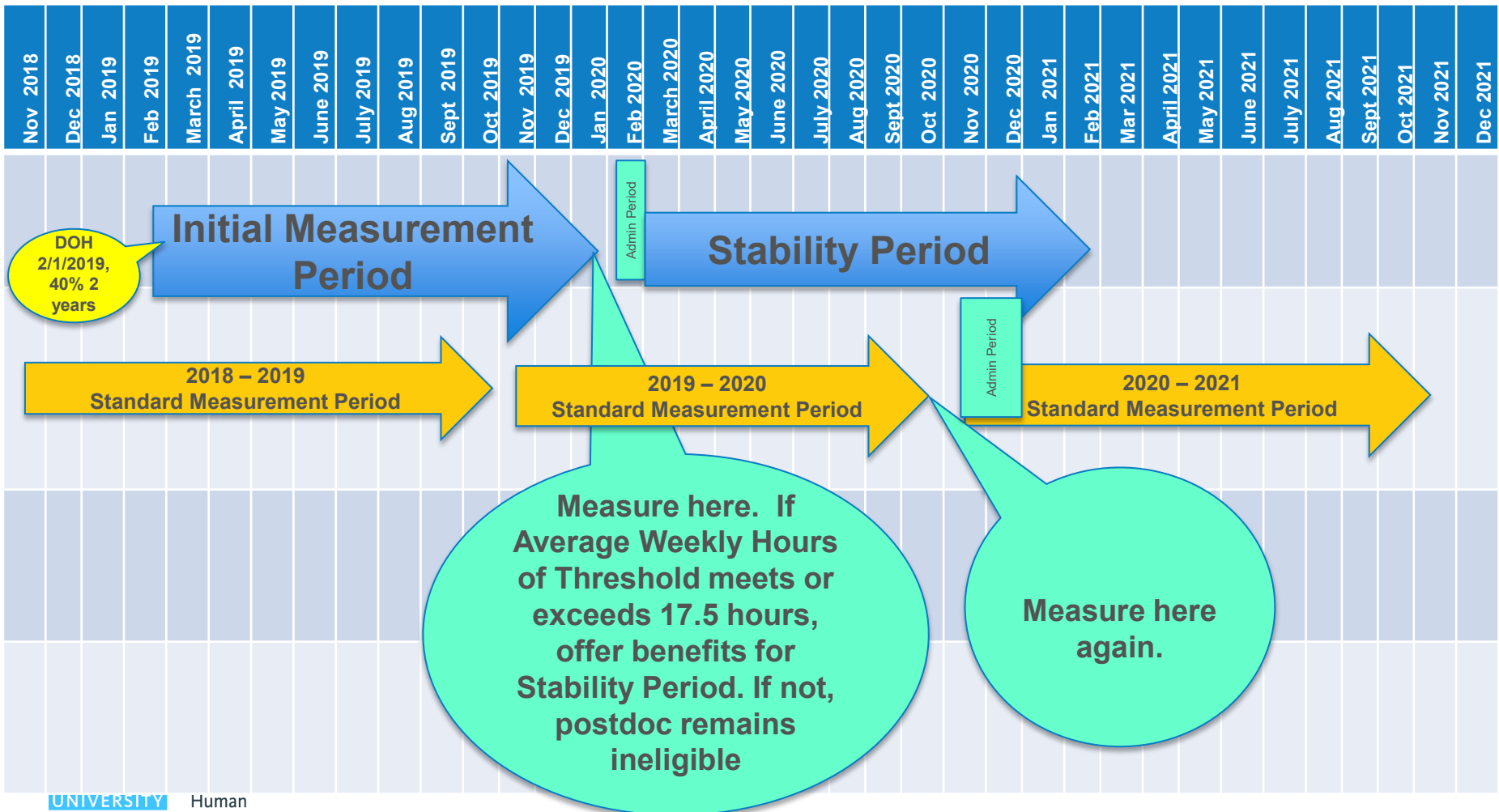
- A period of time lasting one year for which employees or postdocs remain either eligible or ineligible for benefits, based on IMP or SMP results
- Employees and postdocs who clear AWHS threshold deemed eligible for Stability Period
- Employees and postdocs who do not clear AWHS deemed ineligible for Stability Period

Continuous Eligibility/Ineligibility

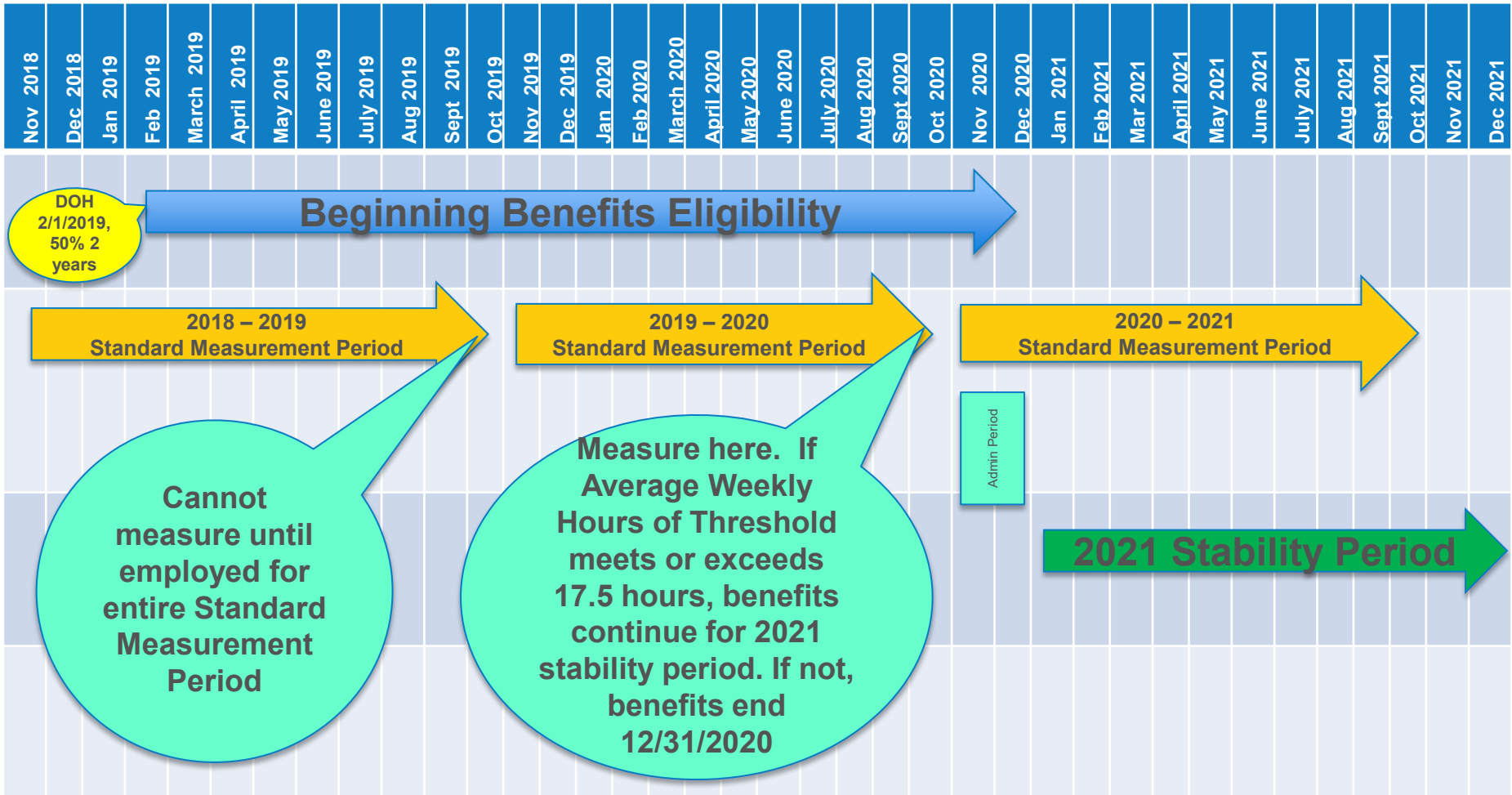
- Administrative Period

- A period of time between the conclusion of the IMP or SMP and corresponding Stability Period
- During this time, UC reviews employee's or postdoc's record to determine AWHS and notifies the employee or postdoc of eligibility or ineligibility.

Initial Measurement Period & Stability Period



Standard Measurement Period & Stability Period



Questions?

Changes to Appointment After Hire

- Reduction in FTE and/or Duration
 - Reduction in FTE and/or duration for employees or postdocs who are in a BBE or Stability Period **will not affect current eligibility**
 - HOWEVER, the reduction in FTE should lead to a reduction in working hours that count towards AWHS, making it harder to clear threshold and keep benefits

Changes to Appointment After Hire

- Increase in FTE and/or Duration
 - Increase in FTE and/or duration for employees or postdocs who are **currently ineligible** will have their eligibility re-evaluated based on increased appointment
 - Increase in FTE and/or duration **that result in a new or higher benefit package** will be awarded to employee or postdoc
 - Ex. Employee acquires another appointment, employee has their current FTE increased

Changes to Appointment After Hire

- Increase in FTE and/or Duration (cont.)
 - Increase in FTE and/or duration **that do not result in a new or higher benefit package** will have no effect on the employee's or postdoc's current eligibility
 - Ex. Full Benefits eligible employee with .5 FTE indefinite appointment. Employee has their FTE increased to 1. This will have **no impact** on the employee's eligibility. But employee will gain additional hours that will count towards meeting AWHs threshold and retaining benefits.

Separations and Rehire

- Pre-ACA

- Eligibility based on rehire appointment FTE and duration

- Post-ACA

- If time between separation and rehire is 26 weeks (6 months) or more, evaluate eligibility based on rehire appointment FTE and duration

Separations and Rehire

- Post-ACA (cont.)
 - If time between separation and rehire is less than 26 weeks (6 months), evaluate eligibility based on:
 - Active Stability Period or BBE at Rehire,
 - Rehire Appointment FTE and Duration,
 - AND
 - Rehire Appointment Group (Group A vs. Group B)

Separations and Rehire

- Post-ACA (cont.)
 - Ex. A Full Benefits Eligible Employee is separated on 1/31/22, rehired on 7/1/22 at 33% for a year
 - Rehire appointment does not meet eligibility
 - Employee retains eligibility during 2022 Stability Period
 - Employee is offered **Core Benefits Package** at rehire

Questions?