

CIVIL UNION LAW

On February 1, 2011, Governor Quinn signed the Illinois Religious Freedom Protection and Civil Union Act [Public Act 096-1513](#) into law. The law, which went into effect June 1, 2011, allows for two persons of either the same or opposite sex to enter into a legal relationship called civil union. Persons entering into a civil union would have the same obligations, responsibilities, protections and benefits afforded by Illinois law to married spouses.

As a result of this law, a civil union partner of a MEAB Fund member would, upon the death of the member, be afforded the same benefits provided for a spouse of a married member. The same eligibility requirements for benefits would need to be met by the civil union partner as that required for a married spouse.

References to spouse and widow in the Fund's literature and forms will now also apply to civil union partners.