



Who qualifies to receive  
**medical cover from  
Bankmed?**

## **THINKING OF ADDING OR REMOVING A DEPENDANT? THIS DOCUMENT OUTLINES:**

- Who is eligible to become a member/dependant
- Documentation required
- How to add and remove dependants
- How to withdraw your membership
- Underwriting for joining

# DEPENDANTS ON YOUR MEMBERSHIP

*As a Principal Member, you can add the following qualifying dependants on your membership:*

## Spouse

Your spouse to whom you are legally married or a person with whom you have entered into a civil union under the Civil Union Act 17 of 2006.

## Partner

A person with whom you have a committed and serious relationship, like a marriage. This is based on objective criteria of mutual dependency and a shared and common household, irrespective of the gender of either party.

## Adult dependants between the ages of 23 and 26

Dependants are considered adult dependants from the age of 23. You will receive a notification within three months of the dependant's 23rd birthday to inform you that the dependant's status will change to 'adult' and that the contribution will increase to adult rates. We do not require proof for an adult dependant to remain on the membership if they are between the ages of 23 and 26.

## Adult dependants turning 27 or older

We send notifications about eligibility requirements for continued membership within three months of the dependant's 27th birthday. Dependants turning 27 years or older, must provide proof that they remain eligible for cover on the membership as an adult dependant. If this proof is not provided, we will end the dependant's membership at the end of the month in which they turn 27.

The proof required may include the following:

- If your dependant is disabled, you must provide proof of disability or a report from the treating Healthcare Professional confirming your dependant's condition
- If your dependant is a student, you must provide proof of financial dependency and proof of registration from a tertiary institution in the form of a registration certificate. A student card is not acceptable
- If your dependant is unemployed or financially dependent on you, then you must provide documents to support this claim. You will be asked to provide your dependant's bank statements for the last 90 days and an affidavit confirming financial dependency or unemployment

## Child dependants

'Dependant' in relation to children\* (including grandchildren), means they are:

- Dependent on you for family care and support (financially dependent)
- Dependent on you due to physical or mental disability
- Full-time students at a registered tertiary institution

*\*Means your child, stepchild, legally adopted child, foster child, grandchild or a child who has been placed (or is in the process of being placed) in your custody or the custody of your partner or spouse.*

## Special dependants

A special dependant is a parent, parent-in-law, parent of a civil union partner, brother or sister for whom you are liable for family care and support.

**Please note:** Family members do not automatically qualify as your dependants. Bankmed needs to verify that your special dependants are indeed dependant on you for family care and support, as opposed to taking a decision to care for them as they are unable to take care of themselves.



# HOW TO ADD OR WITHDRAW DEPENDANTS

Ask your HR department or employer representative for further details.

## WITHDRAWING

Withdrawing from the Scheme means that you are cancelling your membership or that you are cancelling the membership of a dependant. As a result, you/your dependant will no longer receive benefits from the first day after the effective date of the withdrawal.

Instructions to withdraw yourself or your dependants must be submitted directly to Bankmed if you are responsible for paying your contributions or to your HR department if your employer subsidises your contributions. You must notify Bankmed or your HR department 30 days in advance (one month's notice).

## UNDERWRITING

This is a process used by medical schemes to determine the applicant's health risk status and verify their previous medical scheme membership history when they apply for medical scheme cover. We use this information to determine waiting periods applicable and late-joiner penalties. Underwriting involves the use of medical or health information in the evaluation of an applicant for medical scheme membership or coverage. As part of the underwriting process, an individual's health information may be used in making decisions about waiting periods and penalties.

### Regulations

The Medical Schemes Act 131 of 1998 and amendments to waiting periods, allow schemes to apply the following penalties to those who apply to join a medical scheme:

- A general waiting period not exceeding three months
- A condition-specific waiting period not exceeding 12 months
- A late-joiner penalty

### Waiting periods

A waiting period is a fixed period during which contributions must be paid, but some or all claims may be excluded from benefits.

Bankmed's Rules provide for two types of waiting periods when a member or dependant joins:

- A general waiting period of three months
- A condition-specific waiting period of 12 months for pre-existing conditions

Applicants who want to join Bankmed as new members can be grouped into three categories for the purpose of underwriting:

### Category A

- Applicants who have not belonged to a registered South African medical scheme before, or have allowed a break in membership of more than 90 days since they had terminated their previous membership

The following underwriting can be applied to Category A:

- A three-month mandatory general waiting period
- 12-month condition-specific waiting period
- A late-joiner penalty

### Category B

- Applicants who have previously belonged to a registered South African medical scheme for less than 24 months and have applied to join Bankmed less than 90 days since they had terminated their membership of their previous scheme

The following underwriting can be applied to Category B:

- 12-month condition-specific waiting period
- A late-joiner penalty
- If the previous medical scheme placed a general or condition-specific waiting period on your membership, which has not expired at the date of termination from that scheme, the same waiting period may be applied but only for the remaining duration of the waiting period. A copy of the membership certificate will be required for us to apply the balance of an existing unexpired waiting period

### Category C

- Applicants who have previously belonged to a registered South African medical scheme for 24 months or more and have applied to join Bankmed less than 90 days since they had terminated their membership of their previous scheme

The following underwriting can be applied to Category C:

- A three-month mandatory general waiting period
- A late-joiner penalty

We will notify you, when you join Bankmed, of any waiting periods that may apply to you or your dependants.



## Late-joiner penalties

A 'late joiner' is a member or dependant who, at the date of application to a medical scheme:

- Is 35 years or older
- Whose date of employment and date of registration is not the same; OR
- Whose date of registration at a registered Employer Group is the first day of the month following the date of employment; AND
- Did not belong to a registered South African medical scheme since 1 April 2001; OR
- Belonged to a registered medical scheme on or before 1 April 2001, but has allowed more than 90 consecutive days' break in membership since 1 April 2001

The penalty does not affect benefits but will increase contributions for the duration of the membership. The penalty

is only calculated on the Principal Member or dependant's portion of the contribution, excluding the employer's portion and excluding the Medical Savings Account contribution (if applicable). The table below stipulates the percentage increase in contributions based on the number of uncovered years:

PENALTY BANDS	
PENALTY BANDS	MAXIMUM PENALTY
One to four uncovered years	5%
Five to 14 uncovered years	25%
15 to 24 uncovered years	50%
25+ uncovered years	75%

Note that the penalty is permanent, which means that the penalty will apply for the duration of the membership. Late-joiner penalties apply at a beneficiary level.

# WHICH WAITING PERIODS OR PENALTIES MAY APPLY

## New employees

No waiting periods and late-joiner penalties will apply to new employees who apply to Bankmed and meet the following criteria:

- If you join Bankmed within 30 days of your date of employment
- No waiting periods and late-joiner penalties apply to you as the Principal Member, your spouse or life partner and eligible dependants who meet the eligibility criteria and join within 30 days of your date of employment
- Underwriting will be applied if you join Bankmed, voluntarily withdraw at a later stage and then wish to re-join for a second opportunity
- Underwriting penalties will be applied if you choose not to join Bankmed within 30 days of your date of employment, and you join at a later date, but you have had a break in cover during that time. This also applies if you choose not to register your spouse within 30 days of marriage or newborn within 30 days of birth

## Spouse

If you would like to add your spouse as a dependant, an application must be made within 30 days of the date of marriage

- No underwriting and late-joiner penalties will apply if your marriage, according to the marriage certificate, is within 30 days of when the application is received
- Underwriting and late-joiner penalties will be applied if your application is received more than 30 days from date of marriage

## Newborn

If you would like to add your newborn as a dependant, an application must be made within 30 days from date of birth.

- No underwriting penalties will apply if your newborn baby registration form is received within 30 days from the date of birth
- Underwriting will be applied if a request to add your newborn is made after 30 days from date of birth or if the date of commencement is not the same as the date of birth

## Special Dependants

Special dependants are subject to full underwriting and late-joiner penalties, in all instances.

