

What to Consider During the Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) Open Season for Tribal Employees (November 13 – December 11, 2017)

Open Season is the time of year when you have the opportunity to make decisions about your benefits under the Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) Program for the upcoming calendar year. The FEHB Open Season for Tribal Employees will be held every year from the Monday of the second full work week in November to the Monday of the second full work week in December. This year, Open Season will run from Monday, November 13, 2017 through Monday, December 11, 2017.

If you are a tribal employee in a position that makes you eligible for FEHB, you can decide to enroll in the FEHB Program; change your FEHB enrollment from Self Only to Self Plus One or Self and Family and from Self and Family to Self Plus One or Self Only; change your FEHB enrollment from one FEHB plan or option to another; or cancel your existing FEHB enrollment. Note that if you are not participating in premium conversion, (i.e., paying your share of FEHB premiums with pre-tax dollars), you may decrease or cancel your enrollment at any time. You may make changes during Open Season even if you have been enrolled in an FEHB plan for less than one year.

The FEHB Open Season for Tribal Employees is an annual opportunity for you to consider whether your current health plan will be the best choice for you during the upcoming 2018 calendar year. It is an opportunity for you to look at:

- benefit changes including changes in deductibles, copayments, coinsurance, or other out-of-pocket costs,
- changes in plans' premium rates, and
- service area changes if enrolled in an HMO

If you take no action, your current FEHB enrollment will continue automatically for 2018 and you will be subject to any 2018 changes in premiums, benefits, and HMO service areas.

We recommend that you evaluate your current FEHB enrollment status and we have listed some basic questions to ask yourself. Please carefully consider all of the following questions as they are equally important:

1. What are my and/or my family's expected health care needs for 2018?

- Am I expecting a new baby?
- Do I need surgery?
- Will my medication needs change?

2. What benefits are available in 2018?

Do not rely solely on this fact sheet. Always refer to the individual plan brochures before making your final decision.

- Are there plan limitations (i.e., number of visits or dollar maximums) which will result in out-of-pocket expenses?
- Are there any services I may need (such as chiropractic care or acupuncture) that are not covered?
- What is my share of the cost of prescription drugs?
- What deductibles, copays, and coinsurances must I pay?

The next step is to determine what benefits the FEHB plans provide in 2018. **If you are already enrolled, please review the “Changes for 2018” section of your 2018 FEHB plan brochure for any benefit changes.**

3. How much will it cost?

The third consideration is cost. Look at the 2018 premiums for the FEHB plan you are already enrolled in or considering enrolling in. You can find the premiums in the 2018 FEHB brochures and on our website at www.opm.gov/insure/tribalprograms.

4. What do I do now?

Now that you have considered these questions, you are on your way to making a more informed decision about your FEHB benefit choices for 2018. If you are satisfied with your FEHB plan, you do not have to do anything. Your FEHB enrollment will continue for 2018. However, if you do nothing during this Open Season and you are later unhappy with your 2018 FEHB premiums or benefits, you cannot change your FEHB enrollment until the next Open Season or if you experience an FEHB qualifying life event.

If you are not satisfied with your current FEHB enrollment status, please visit our website and your Tribal Benefits Officer and look at the following resources OPM provides to assist you in making decisions:

- FEHB Brochures at www.opm.gov/healthcare-insurance/tribal-employers/plan-information
- OPM’s plan comparison tool at www.opm.gov/fehcompare
- Health Benefits Election Form, the Standard Form 2809, at www.opm.gov/forms/pdf_fillsf2809.pdf
- Guidance for you on how to complete the SF 2809 to enroll, change, or cancel your FEHB enrollment at www.opm.gov/healthcare-insurance/tribal-employers/reference-materials/#FormGuidance

If you have any questions, please contact your Tribal Benefits Officer.

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