



Benefits Administration Letter

Number: 05-402

Date: 6/28/05

Subject: Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) Program: Delayed Reinstatement of FEHB for Employees and Annuitants with Transitional TRICARE

PURPOSE

The National Defense Authorization Act for 2005 (P.L. 108-375), signed by President Bush on October 28, 2004, permanently provides up to 180 days of transitional TRICARE benefits for members of the military who are discharged from active duty. As a result, these returning members may ask you to postpone reinstating their FEHB enrollment until their TRICARE coverage expires. This Benefits Administration Letter explains how to honor those requests.

Employees may ask their agencies to postpone reinstatement of their FEHB enrollment from the date they are restored to their civilian positions until the day after their transitional TRICARE ends, or any date within this timeframe.

Annuitants may ask their retirement office to postpone reinstatement of their FEHB coverage from the date they are separated from the uniformed services until the day after their transitional TRICARE ends, or any date within this timeframe.

PROCESSING REQUESTS

In order to process any requests to postpone reinstatement of their FEHB enrollment, you must obtain a waiver of FEHB coverage from the employee or annuitant. Attached is a Waiver of Immediate Reinstatement of FEHB that you may use for this purpose. The waiver should be completed at the earliest opportunity following the employee's return to their civilian position, or following the annuitant's separation from the uniformed services.

Employees and annuitants may revoke the waiver and return to FEHB coverage at any time before the transitional TRICARE ends. If they revoke the waiver, they must sign and date the revocation request at the bottom of the waiver form, and FEHB coverage becomes effective immediately.

The waiver automatically terminates upon the death of the employee or annuitant if the employee or annuitant dies before the transitional TRICARE ends. If the employee or annuitant postponed reinstatement of a Self and Family FEHB enrollment and his or her survivors would otherwise meet all requirements to continue FEHB as survivor annuitants, the FEHB entitlement for the survivor annuitants is immediate.

Please assist your employees or annuitants who return from military service to avoid any breaks in health insurance coverage between the end of their transitional TRICARE and the reinstatement of their FEHB.

If you have further questions about the FEHB Program and transitional TRICARE, please contact Ronald Brown at 202.606.0004 or by e-mail at Ronald.Brown@OPM.gov. As we develop questions and answers about this topic, we will add them to the Frequently Asked Questions section on our FEHB webpage at www.opm.gov/insure/health.

Attachment

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