NATIONAL GUARD BUREAU
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9 DEC 2009

MEMORANDUM FOR See Distribution

FROM: NGB/A1

SUBJ: NGB/A1 Guidance on Early TRICARE Benefits for Air National Guard (ANG) Members and Their Families

REFERENCE: NGB/CF Memorandum, Early TRICARE for Air National Guard Members, that superseded NGB/CF dated 30 Jun 08

FSS ACTION OFFICES: Customer Service and Installation Personnel Readiness (IPR)

References:

a. USD (P&R) memo, dated 7 Jan 04, SUBJ: Health Care Benefits for Reserve Component Members and Their Dependents: Second Addendum to Mobilization/Demobilization Personnel and Pay Policy for Reserve Component Members Ordered to Active Duty in Response to the World Trade Center and Pentagon Attacks

b. ASD (RA) memo, dated 16 Jun 04, SUBJ: Enhanced Health Care Benefits for Reserve Component Members and Their Dependents

This memo is in eight parts:
Part I: Background
Part II: Eligibility
Part III: Program specifics
Part IV: Medical Coverage/Enrollment
Part V: MILPDS updates
Part VI: Orders information
Part VII: Definitions
Part VIII: Point of Contacts (POC)

Part I: Background

1. The FY2010 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) amended 10 U.S.C. 1074 to increase the amount of time a Reserve Component (RC) is eligible for TRICARE coverage prior to mobilization from 90 to 180 days. Members activated in support of a contingency operation for more than 30 days are eligible for this program, which also extends to eligible family members.

Part II: Eligibility

2. An RC member who is issued a delayed-effective-date active-duty order, or is covered by such an order, that is for a period of active duty of more than 30 days, in support of a contingency operation, as defined in 10 USC. 101(a)(13)(B), shall be eligible, along with eligible family members, for TRICARE, on either the date of notification of such order, or no more than 180 days prior to the effective date of active duty prescribed in the order, whichever is later.

NOTE: DoD further defines a "delayed-effective-date active-duty order" as either a) individual mobilization orders or b) a unit **alert** order, with an annex approved by a senior authorized individual for the unit or higher headquarters that contains the identification of all individuals to whom individual mobilization orders will be issued. For ANG members, the latter means matching a notification message that contains a gaining Major Command's (MAJCOM) validated requirement to support a contingency operation as defined in 10 U.S.C. 101(a)(13)(B) with a list of personnel approved by a unit commander or a senior authorized individual in the unit.

3. Eligibility must also be shown on the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS). Once DEERS has been updated, RC members can verify their eligibility on the Guard and Reserve Web Portal at https://www.dmdc.osd.mil/Guard-ReservePortal. In the event a member or family member has an emergency situation warranting immediate attention, he/she will be treated even if the orders are not available or the family member's identification card is not current. Normal procedures to validate eligibility after emergency medical treatment will apply. Nonetheless, members should take great effort to ensure their family members have current identification cards and are enrolled in the DEERS.

4. Eligibility ends immediately if the active-duty orders are rescinded prior to the effective date of the active-duty order. TRICARE benefits end on the date the delayed-effective-date active-duty orders are cancelled. Since members are not covered under the Uniformed Services Employment Reemployment Rights Act until they actually report for active duty; ANG members are strongly encouraged to consider retaining their employer health plan coverage.

Part III: Program Specifics

5. Eligible members will be provided health care by military hospitals and clinics, or by TRICARE-authorized providers, reimbursed through supplemental care rules. RC members will not be enrolled into TRICARE Prime unless, and until, they reach their final duty station. Family members may choose to enroll in TRICARE Prime Remote (TPR) for Active Duty Family Members (TPRADFM) if they reside in a TPR zip code. Family members who reside outside the 50 states will follow the appropriate enrollment procedures for the overseas program.

6. Members who are enrolled in the TRICARE dental program (TDP) and issued delayed-effective-date active-duty orders will be automatically disenrolled and will become eligible for care at dental treatment facilities or through the tri-service remote dental program. Family

members enrolled in TDP will continue to be enrolled; however, they will be charged the lower active-duty family member shared premium rate. Those family members not enrolled in TDP are eligible to enroll under this program.

7. The TRICARE Management Activity (TMA) recommends all eligible members and their family members retain any bills for health and dental services provided until the benefit is fully implemented. Upon full implementation, they can submit claims for TRICARE reimbursement if eligible.

Part IV: Medical Coverage/Enrollment

8. TRICARE Reserve Select (TRS) is a premium-based health plan that qualified National Guard and Reserve members may purchase. Monthly premium rate is determined by the type of coverage you purchase: TRS member-only or TRS member-and-family (Visit www.tricare.mil, enter profile, and click on "Costs.")

Disenrollment Due to Change in Status: When an ANG member is called to active-duty service for more than 30 days, the member and their family becomes eligible for non-premium TRICARE plans (*e.g., TRICARE Prime*). At this time, TRS coverage is automatically terminated. When the ANG member's active-duty service ends, the eligibility for non-premium plans ends as well unless the member qualifies for TRICARE transitional health care, otherwise known as Transitional Assistant Management Program (TAMP). **Eligibility information is listed at www.tricare.mil/mybenefit/home/overview/SpecialPrograms/TAMP.**

If an ANG member qualifies for TAMP, that member is eligible for transitional benefits. The member and their eligible family members receive a total of 180 days of TAMP coverage. This 180 day period begins the day after the qualifying active-duty period ends. TAMP eligibles (including the former active-duty member) who were enrolled in Prime immediately prior to their change in status may continue their enrollment in TRICARE Prime with no break in coverage. A reenrollment application must be completed prior to the TAMP expiration period in order to continue with TRICARE Prime. The effective date shall be the date the sponsor separated from active duty as the intent is to ensure that Prime coverage is seamless.

If a service member does not qualify for TAMP coverage, the member must reenroll in TRS within 60 days to continue uninterrupted health care coverage.

Federal employee reservists do not qualify for TRICARE Reserve Select as they are eligible for health care coverage under the Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) Program (unless their position is excluded by law or regulation). Federal employee reservists who are placed in a leave without pay status (LWOP) when called to active duty for more than 30 days can keep their FEHB coverage for up to 18 months. The reservist is responsible for paying the enrollee share of the premium during the first 12 months, and the agency pays the agency's share.

More information on FEHB is available on the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) website http://www.opm.gov/insure/health/eligibility/index.asp.

Part V: MILPDS Updates

9. Update of the EID, listed as the "Notify Date" in MILPDS: This updated data flows to DEERS identifying the person as eligible for TRICARE benefits. This will establish the EID at Defense Manpower Data Center (DMDC). "Notify Date" is the date the earliest date on which a member may be notified of a pending deployment. It is also the date the unit commander or senior authorized individual signs the list of personnel to satisfy deployment taskings.

Part VI: Orders Information

10. FOR ORDERS ISSUING OFFICIALS.

As a minimum the following statement will be included on activation orders: "*Your Early Identification Date is _____. Based on these orders to Active Federal Service for a period of 31 days or more in support of a contingency operation dated after 28 Oct 04, members and eligible dependents may be eligible for TRICARE benefits. IAW (I), Identification Cards for members of the Uniformed Services, their eligible family members and other eligible personnel, 20 Dec 02, Para 1.19.4, it is the members responsibility to ensure their DEERS record reflects the proper active duty dates if orders are in excess of 30 days. Eligibility period for this benefit begins upon notification or receipt of delayed-effective-date-orders to active duty or up to one hundred eighty (180) days prior being placed on active duty, whichever is later. Benefits are effective the date you receive notification that you are (or will be) ordered to active duty for a period of 31 days or more support of a contingency operation as defined in provisions of law, 10 U.S.C. 101(a)(13)(b).*"

Part VII: Definitions

ACTIVE DUTY: Identifies ANG personnel serving on volunteer or non-volunteer (mobilization) orders. For the purpose of this program, personnel must be serving on active-duty orders for more than 30 days in support of a contingency operation.

EARLY IDENTIFICATION DATE (EID): This is the calendar date a "delayed-effective-date-active duty order" is issued. For ANG members in either a volunteer or mobilization status, this means matching a notification message that contains a gaining Major Command's (MAJCOM) validated requirement to support a contingency operation as defined in 10 U.S.C. 101(a)(13)(B) with a list of personnel approved by a unit commander or a senior authorized individual in the unit. For the purpose of this program, the EID can never be more than 180 days prior to the active-duty effective date.

DELAYED-EFFECTIVE-DATE ACTIVE-DUTY ORDER: DoD defines this as either a) individual mobilization order or b) a unit alert order with an annex approved by a senior authorized individual for the unit or higher HQ that contains the identification of all individuals to whom individual mobilization orders will be issued in accordance with the unit alert order.

LIM-MOB-UPDATE SCREEN: The update screen in MILPDS provides the area for updating information for personnel who are serving on active duty. While the screen implies it is used only for mobilizations, volunteer data must be updated as well. POC: NGB/A1PR, commercial 301-836-7158, DSN 278-7158 and email: angrc.ngb.a1pr.staff@ang.af.mil.

RESERVE COMPONENT (RC) MEMBERS: Term used for all reserve/ANG members.

Part VIII: POCs

11. TRICARE Options, TRICARE benefits or TRICARE enrollment: TRICARE management office at 888-DOD-CARE (888-363-2273), or access the TRICARE web site at www.tricare.osd.mil/reserve.

12. Air National Guard POCs for Early TRICARE:

Lieutenant Colonel Eric H. Stubbs or Master Sergeant Edidiong O. Ekong NGB/A1PS, commercial 703-607-5930/5975, DSN 327-5930/5975 and email: eric.stubbs@ang.af.mil/edidiong.ekong@ang.af.mil.

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