THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20301-1200

HEALTH AFFAIRS

MAR 10 2003

MEMORANDUM FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE ARMY (M&RA)
ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE NAVY (M&RA)
ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE AIR FORCE (M&RA)

SUBJECT: TRICARE Benefits for Activated Reserve Component Personnel and Families

This memorandum revises TRICARE policy to ensure a consistent and improved benefit for Reserve Component (RC) members and their families. These policies supercede HA Policy 96-018, "Participation in TRICARE for Families of Reserve/Guard Activated in Support of Operation Joint Endeavor," dated January 3, 1996 and "Clarification on TRICARE Policy Execution Concerning National Guard and Reserve TRICARE Prime Enrollment During OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM/NOBLE EAGLE," dated December 20, 2001. This new policy will simplify TRICARE Prime eligibility and enrollment requirements to improve support for mobilized RC members and their families, and represents a further step toward consistency of benefits for Reserve Component and active duty members.

Eligibility for TRICARE Prime. Effective immediately, Reserve Component Service members called to active duty for more than 30 days and their family members residing in TRICARE Prime catchment areas are eligible to enroll in TRICARE Prime. There are no enrollment fees or co-payments for family members who elect to enroll in Prime. Enrollment forms must be completed and MTF or civilian network providers must be used.

Eligibility for TRICARE Prime Remote. The Reserve Component TRICARE Prime Remote for Active Duty Family Members (TPRADFM) program provides Reserve Component families with easy access to civilian health care providers when the Service member and family reside more than 50 miles, or a one hour commute, from a military medical treatment facility. The legislation that established the Reserve Component (TPRADFM) benefit required that the family member *reside with* the Service member. Effective immediately, "reside with" is interpreted as meaning that eligible family members resided with the Service member before the Service member left for their home station, mobilization site, or deployment location, and the family members continue to reside there.

The TRICARE Management Activity will coordinate these changes with our TRICARE contractors to ensure that enrollment actions are provided to mobilized Service members and their families. The attached guidelines provide specific details for Lead Agents, MTF commanders and Service members in support of this policy. These changes further our efforts to provide a consistent health benefit to all active duty beneficiaries and their families.

William Winkenwerder Jr.

William Winkenwerder, Jr., MD

Attachment
As Stated

cc:
USD (P&R)
ASD (RA)
Commandant, US Coast Guard
TRICARE Management Activity
Surgeon General of the Army
Surgeon General of the Navy
Surgeon General of the Air Force
TRICARE Lead Agents

Guidelines for TRICARE Prime and TRICARE Prime Remote Family Member Enrollment During Activation of Reserve and Guard Members

1. Reserve Component Members and Their Families Residing Stateside in TRICARE Prime Catchment Area: Reserve Component members ordered to active duty for more than 30 days and their family members who reside in a military treatment facility (MTF) catchment area are now eligible to enroll in TRICARE Prime. This is a change from the previous requirement to have orders for 179 days or more. Eligibility for enrollment in TRICARE Prime is identical to that currently available to the active force. Service members upon reporting to their home station or mobilization site will enroll to the MTF closest to their home (residential mailing address). Reserve Component members will not be required to re-enroll when they go to either another stateside location or deploy overseas. Family members may enroll themselves if the Service member is already deployed and the family members reside in a catchment area.

Lead Agent Offices will work with the applicable MTF Commander/Managed Care Support Contractor to coordinate mobilization/home station point enrollments, dissemination of TRICARE education material, and briefings to members. Enrollment forms for each region are available on the HA/TMA web site.

Service members must ensure their DEERS data is correct and that family members are enrolled via the enrollment form appropriate for their home location. Service members and family members must be advised of the enrollment processing time requirement. Enrollment forms must be received by the contractor by the 20th of the current month for coverage to begin on the first day of the next month. For example, if the contractor receives an enrollment form by June 20, 2003, coverage will begin on July 1, 2003. If the enrollment form is received after the 20th of the month, their coverage will begin on the first day of the following month, or August 1, 2003.

Reserve Component units should work with the applicable Lead Agent Office to coordinate mobilization/inprocessing point enrollments, TRICARE briefings, and distribution of educational material to Service members.

2. Reserve Component Members and Their Families Residing Stateside in Prime Remote Locations. Family member eligibility for TRICARE Prime Remote (TPR) for Active Duty Family Members requires that family members and Service member reside with one another in a TPR Zip Code. "Reside with" is interpreted as meaning that eligible family members resided with the Service member before he/she left for their home station, mobilization site, or deployment location, and continue to reside there. The residential address in DEERS must be the same for the Service member and their family members for the family to be eligible for TPR. At their home station or mobilization site, Service members will have the opportunity to enroll their family members in TPRADFM for their residential mailing address. Reserve Component members will be enrolled to the MTF nearest their mobilization site but will maintain their residential mailing address. Service members will not be required to re-enroll when they go to either another stateside location or deploy overseas. Service members who would have qualified

for TPR under the above mentioned conditions and who are already mobilized may update their residential mailing address information in DEERS to allow family member eligibility for TPR regardless of where the Service member originally enrolled.

Reserve Component units should work with the applicable Lead Agent Office to coordinate enrollment in TPR, to conduct TRICARE briefings, and to distribute TPR educational material to Service members.

3. Reserve Component Members and Their Families Residing in U.S. Territories and Overseas . Members permanently residing in U.S. Territories and overseas will be enrolled at their mobilization/inprocessing point, however, the member's enrollment location will be their residential mailing address and not their mobilization site. Reserve Component members will not be re-enrolled when they go to either a stateside location or to another overseas location/region.

. Reservist Component family members will be eligible for enrollment in TRICARE Overseas Prime if the sponsor resides in a designated overseas location prior to activation/mobilization. Enrollment for family members will be based on the residential mailing address of the sponsor prior to activation/mobilization. Eligibility for TRICARE Overseas Prime requires the family be accompanied by the sponsor; therefore, a family member cannot relocate within the overseas region, relocate to another overseas region, or relocate from a stateside location to an overseas region and transfer enrollment. Enrollment procedures in TRICARE Overseas Prime are identical to that currently available to the active force.

4. Overseas/Deployment Information. If a Reserve Component member presents at any military treatment facility and is not enrolled, the responsible TRICARE Regional Office/Lead Agent Office will assist the Service member and his or her family in enrolling to the appropriate region or in TPRADFM (if applicable) for the Service member's residential mailing address prior to mobilization. Members of the Reserve Component are entitled to medical care in any Uniformed Services military treatment facility for any injury, illness or disease incurred or aggravated in the line of duty. Claims for personnel deployed overseas during periods of mobilization will be processed through Wisconsin Physician Services

5. Special Information For Family Members. Family members may self enroll in Prime in Prime Service Areas and may transfer enrollment between Prime Service Areas. However, family members can only enroll themselves in TPR based on the residential mailing address shared with the Service member at the time of mobilization and may not transfer enrollment to another TPR location. The active duty sponsor does not need to sign the enrollment application. This applies to each of the respective programs listed above.

TRICARE Management Activity points of contact for this are Major Dawn Erckenbrack or Mike Talisnik at (703) 681-0064.