



THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

1200 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-1200

JUL 19 2005

HEALTH AFFAIRS

MEMORANDUM FOR SURGEON GENERAL OF THE ARMY
SURGEON GENERAL OF THE NAVY
SURGEON GENERAL OF THE AIR FORCE
CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER OF THE U.S. COAST GUARD

SUBJECT: Policy Procedures for Approving TRICARE Prime Lock-Out Waivers

In accordance with 32 CFR 199.17 (o)(4), any non-active duty beneficiary may disenroll from TRICARE Prime at any time. Beneficiaries who voluntarily disenroll prior to their annual enrollment renewal date will not be eligible to re-enroll in Prime for a 12-month period from the effective date of the disenrollment. The lock-out also applies to those beneficiaries who fail to pay the required enrollment fees in a timely manner. The Assistant Secretary of Defense (Health Affairs) has the authority to waive the 12-month lock-out in extraordinary circumstances. The purpose of this policy is to delegate the authority to waive the 12-month lock-out to the TRICARE Regional Offices (TROs).

The attached policy procedures provide guidance to the TROs for addressing beneficiary requests for waivers of the 12-month lock-out period.

In accordance with 32 CFR 199.17 (o)(4) and TRICARE Operations Manual 6010.51M Chapter 6, Section 1, active duty Service members and their families in the rank of E-1 through E-4 are exempt from the lock-out provision.

My point of contact for this action is Lieutenant Colonel Guy Strawder, TRICARE Management Activity, phone (703) 681-0039, or e-mail at guy.strawder@tma.osd.mil.

William Winkenwerder, Jr., MD

Attachment:
As stated

cc:
Director, TRO (North)
Director, TRO (South)
Director, TRO (West)
TRICARE Area Offices – Overseas

HA POLICY: 05-008

Policy Procedures for Approving TRICARE Prime Lock-Out Waivers

- With the implementation of each new contract, the TRO will be granted the authority to waive the 12-month lock-out period.
- A written request to waive the 12-month lock-out will be submitted to the Managed Care Support Contractor (MCSC) by the beneficiary.
- The TROs will evaluate beneficiary requests for lock-out waivers and beneficiaries will be re-instated in TRICARE Prime in the following instances:
 - Cases when errors are made by someone other than the beneficiary:
 - If it is determined that an error was made by someone other than the beneficiary, (i.e. the MCSC, the TRICARE Management Activity (TMA), payment agencies, etc.) the beneficiary will be reinstated with no lapse in coverage. The beneficiary will not be required to complete a new enrollment form.
 - Cases related to failure to make payments:
 - If it is determined that the beneficiary failed to pay enrollment fees due to extraordinary circumstances which prevented payment ability, and continuous coverage is warranted, the beneficiary may be reinstated with no lapse in coverage if the lapse has not been greater than 90 days. The MCSC only has authority to go into the beneficiary's record history up to 90 days. After 90 days, the TRO will request that the Regional Contractor contact the DEERS Support Office to request that the lock-out be waived (systematically lifted). The beneficiary will not be required to complete a new enrollment form.
 - If a beneficiary is disenrolled for non-payment and there has been no previous lock-out for non-payment within the last 12 months, the lockout may be waived. This will require the beneficiary to complete a new universal enrollment form, submit fees, and a new enrollment will begin in accordance with new enrollment procedures outlined in TRICARE Policy 6010.54M Chapter 10, Section 2.1.
 - Other Cases:
 - If a beneficiary is in need of Case Management, there will be retroactive enrollment to the first day of the month in which the request was made. The beneficiary will be required to complete a new enrollment form. For additional information, please refer to TRICARE Policy Manual 6010.54M Chapter 10, Section 2.1.