



UNITED STATES OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT
Washington, DC 20415

The Director

Friday, January 31, 2003

MEMORANDUM FOR: Human Resources Directors

FROM: Kay Coles James, Director

Subject: Authorization to Accept Belated Open Season Enrollment Changes

CareFirst Blue Cross and Blue Shield (BCBS) and Children's Hospital were involved in a lengthy contract dispute which continued beyond the close of last fall's Open Season which ended on December 9, 2002. OPM staff monitored the negotiations process from the first report and have been prepared to make appropriate recommendations as soon as the dispute was resolved. CareFirst BCBS and Children's Hospital have now announced they have reached agreement, and Children's Hospital will continue to participate in CareFirst BCBS's preferred provider network for the next three years.

Some Federal employees may have switched their health plan because of concerns about Children's Hospital being in their plan's network. We are instructing you to allow the employees who switched from either CareFirst Blue Choice or the BCBS Service Benefit Plan and have not filed claims under their new plans, the opportunity to make a belated open season change to switch back to their original plan. The opportunity to change will begin immediately and continue through March 3, 2003. The effective date of these changes will be the first pay period on or after January 1, 2003

We are also sending the attached Benefits Administration Letter 03-201 to agency benefits officers notifying them of this authorization.

Benefits Administration Letter 03-201:

United States Office of Personnel Management
The Federal Government's Human Resources Agency

Retirement and Insurance Service Benefits Administration Letter
Number: 03-203
Date: February 11, 2003

Subject: Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) Program: Opportunity for Certain Former Blue Cross and Blue Shield (BCBS) Service Benefit Plan Members in Florida, Enrollment Codes 104, 105, 111, and 112, to Change Enrollment

Blue Cross and Blue Shield (BCBS) of Florida and BayCare Health System, which consists of several hospitals, were involved in a lengthy contract dispute which continued beyond the close

of last fall's Open Season, which ended on December 9, 2002. BCBS of Florida and BayCare Health System have now announced they have reached agreement, and BayCare Health System will continue to participate in BCBS of Florida's Preferred Provider Organization (PPO) network for the next 33 months.

Some Federal employees may have switched their health plan because of concerns about BayCare Health System being in BCBS of Florida's PPO network. We are instructing you to allow the employees who switched from the BCBS Service Benefit Plan and have not filed claims under their new plans, the opportunity to make a belated open season change to switch back to their original plan. The opportunity to change will begin immediately and continue through March 17, 2003. The effective date of these changes will be the first pay period on or after January 1, 2003.

Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

Abby L. Block
Assistant Director for Insurance Programs