



UNITED STATES OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT
Washington, DC 20415

The Director

Tuesday, May 14, 2002

MEMORANDUM FOR: Heads Of Executive Departments And Agencies

FROM: Kay Coles James, Director

Subject: Human Resources Policy to Assist Federal Employees Called to Active Military Duty

Section 8906(e)(3) authorizes Federal agencies to pay the employee, as well as the Government, share of the Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) premiums for enrolled employees who are called to active duty under certain conditions. The conditions cover the 911 Terrorist Attacks, Kosovo, the 1998 Iraq operations, and Bosnia, as well as future contingency operations under Title 10 of the U.S. Code.

The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) is already on record as encouraging Federal agency payment of both the employee and government share of FEHB premiums for these employees. In light of its importance, I would like to take this opportunity to reaffirm our policy. Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies should implement a uniform policy in support of Department of Defense (DoD) contingency operations by waiving the requirement that employees pay their share of the FEHB premiums incurred when they are called to active duty military duty for more than 30 days.

Providing support for these employees is an important issue. The Federal Government is the largest single employer of members of the uniformed services reserves, and we are extremely proud of the ceaseless dedication and perseverance of our colleagues in a time of international crisis. Our first obligation as an employer, therefore, is to make sure that those who perform active military duty are able to leave their employment temporarily with the knowledge that their affairs are in order and their rights protected.

I count on your enthusiastic support for this policy. If you have any questions about this initiative and how to administer it, please contact OPM's Office of Insurance Policy at (202) 606-0004.