

**Department of Veterans Affairs**  
Washington, DC

**Worklife and Benefits Service (058)**

**FLYER**

Benefits 06-3  
January 19, 2006

**TO: Chief, HRMS**

**SUBJ: Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) Program: Extended Coverage for Employees Called to Active Military Duty**

This flyer announces the issuance of the Office of Personnel Management's (OPM) Benefits Administration Letter [BAL 06-401](#), which explains how agencies are to provide the continued FEHB coverage authorized by the National Defense Authorization Act for 2005 (Public Law 108-375) and the Veterans Benefits Improvement Act of 2004 (Public Law 108-454). The BAL also provides a Processing Table to assist Human Resources offices in properly administering these authorities.

P.L. 108-375 amended FEHB law to provide up to 24 months of continued FEHB coverage for Federal employees who are called to active duty in support of a contingency operation, and to authorize agencies to pay the employee's share and the Government's share of premiums for up to 24 months.

P. L. 108-454, the Veterans' Benefits Improvement Act of 2004, was enacted December 10, 2004. It amended 38 U.S.C. 4317(a)(1)(A) to extend from 18 to 24 months the length of an employee's health insurance coverage when the employee is absent because of service in the uniformed services. For FEHB purposes, this law applies to employees who are called to active duty but do not meet all the requirements of P.L. 108-375. Generally, these employees have orders that do not show that they are called to active duty in support of a contingency operation. As before, they do not meet the requirements of FEHB law for agency premium payment during active duty.

The Worklife and Benefits Service previously issued guidance on the "Extension to 24 months" in Benefits Flyer 05-58, dated November 02, 2005.

Questions regarding this flyer may be directed to Elizabeth A. White at (202) 273-9801, Therese M. Kilgore at (202) 273-8258, Christopher Morris (202) 273-9886, or Deborah K. Brodbeck via Outlook.

**Office of Human Resources and Administration**  
**Office of Human Resources Management and Labor Relations**