



FIRSTCARE HEALTH PLAN

2000

A Health Maintenance Organization



Serving: The entire Texas Panhandle and much of West Texas

Enrollment in this Plan is limited; see page 5 for requirements.

West Texas

Enrollment code:

CK1 Self only

CK2 Self and family

Waco

Enrollment code:

6U1 Self only

6U2 Self and family

Special Notice: This Plan has eliminated a portion of its Service Area for 2000. If you are enrolled in this Plan and live or work in one of the following areas, you must select another plan during Open Season to continue to receive full Plan benefits: the West Texas counties of Callahan, Coke, Coleman, Comanche, Concho, Crockett, Eastland, Fisher, Haskell, Irion, Jones, Kent, Knox, McCullough, Mitchell, Nolan, Runnels, Schleicher, Shackelford, Stephens, Sterling, Stonewall, Sutton, Taylor, Throckmorton, and Tom Green. If you live or work in one of these areas and do not select another FEHB plan, you will be covered only for emergency services received outside the Service Area. In order to receive full Plan benefits, you must travel to a county in the remaining Service Area, and be seen by a Plan provider.

Visit the OPM website at <http://www.opm.gov/insure>
and
this Plan's website at <http://www.firstcare.com>

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United States Office Of
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Table of Contents

	Page
Introduction	1
Plain language	1
How to use this brochure	2
Section 1 — Health Maintenance Organizations	3
Section 2 — How we change for 2000	3
Section 3 — How to get benefits	5
Section 4 — What to do if we deny your claim or request for service	8
Section 5 — Benefits	10
Section 6 — General exclusions - Things we don't cover	18
Section 7 — Limitations - Rules that affect your benefits	19
Section 8 — FEHB FACTS	21
Inspector General Advisory: Stop Healthcare Fraud!	24
Summary of benefits	25
Rate Information	26

Introduction

Southwest Health Alliances, dba FIRSTCARE
12940 Research Blvd.
Austin, Texas 78750

This brochure describes the benefits you can receive from FIRSTCARE under its contract (CS 2321) with the Office of Personnel Management (OPM), as authorized by the Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) law. This brochure is the official statement of benefits on which you can rely. A person enrolled in this Plan is entitled to the benefits described in this brochure. If you are enrolled for Self and Family coverage, each eligible family member is also entitled to these benefits.

OPM negotiates benefits and premiums with each plan annually. Benefit changes are effective January 1, 2000, and are shown on pages 3-4. Premiums are listed at the end of this brochure.

Plain language

The President and Vice President are making the Government's communication more responsive, accessible, and understandable to the public by requiring agencies to use plain language. Health plan representatives and Office of Personnel Management staff have worked cooperatively to make portions of this brochure clearer. In it you will find common, everyday words, except for necessary technical terms; "you" and other personal pronouns; active voice; and short sentences.

We refer to FIRSTCARE as "this Plan" throughout this brochure even though in other legal documents, you will see a plan referred to as a carrier.

These changes do not affect the benefits or services we provide. We have re-written this brochure only to make it more understandable.

We have not re-written the Benefits section of this brochure. You will find new benefits language next year.

How to use this brochure

This brochure has eight sections. Each section has important information you should read. If you want to compare this Plan's benefits with benefits from other FEHB plans, you will find that the brochures have the same format and similar information to make comparisons easier.

1. **Health Maintenance Organizations (HMO).** This Plan is an HMO. Turn to this section for a brief description of HMOs and how they work.
2. **How we change for 2000.** If you are a current member and want to see how we have changed, read this section.
3. **How to get benefits.** Make sure you read this section; it tells you how to get services and how we operate.
4. **What to do if we deny your claim or request for service.** This section tells you what to do if you disagree with our decision not to pay for your claim or to deny your request for a service.
5. **Benefits.** Look here to see the benefits we will provide as well as specific exclusions and limitations.
6. **General exclusions - Things we don't cover.** Look here to see benefits that we will not provide.
7. **Limitations - Rules that affect your benefits.** This section describes limits that can affect your benefits.
8. **FEHB FACTS.** Read this for information about the Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) Program.

Section 1 — Health Maintenance Organizations

Health maintenance organizations (HMOs) are health plans that require you to see Plan providers: specific physicians, hospitals and other providers that contract with us. These providers coordinate your health care services. The care you receive includes preventative care such as routine office visits, physical exams, well-baby care and immunizations, as well as treatment for illness and injury.

When you receive services from our providers, you will not have to submit claim forms or pay bills. However, you must pay copays and coinsurance listed in this brochure. When you receive emergency services you may have to submit claim forms.

You should join an HMO because you prefer the plan's benefits, not because a particular provider is available. You cannot change plans because a provider leaves our Plan. We cannot guarantee that any one physician, hospital, or other provider will be available and/or remain under contract with us. Our providers follow generally accepted medical practice when prescribing any course of treatment.

Section 2 — How we change for 2000

Program-wide changes

To keep your premium as low as possible OPM has set a minimum copay of \$10 for all primary care office visits.

This year, you have a right to more information about this Plan, care management, our networks, facilities, and providers.

If you have a chronic or disabling condition, and your provider leaves the Plan at our request, you may continue to see your specialist for up to 90 days. If your provider leaves the Plan and you are in the second or third trimester of pregnancy, you may be able to continue seeing your OB/GYN until the end of your postpartum care. You have similar rights if this Plan leaves the FEHB program (See Section 3., How to get benefits, for more information).

You may review and obtain copies of your medical records on request. If you want copies of your medical records, ask your health care provider for them. You may ask that a physician amend a record that is not accurate, not relevant, or incomplete. If the physician does not amend your record, you may add a brief statement to it. If they do not provide you your records, call us and we will assist you.

If you are over age 50, all FEHB plans will cover a screening sigmoidoscopy every five years. This screening is for colorectal cancer.

Changes to this Plan

Your share of the non-postal premium for Enrollment Code CK will decrease by 26.4% for Self Only and by 29.0% for Self and Family, and for Enrollment Code 6U it will increase by 16.4% for Self Only and by 16.4% for Self and Family.

The Plan has increased the specialist office visit copay from \$10 to \$15 (See page 10).

The Plan has increased the copay for a doctor's house call from \$10 to \$20 (See page 10).

The Plan has increased the name brand prescription drug copay from \$10 to \$15 for up to a 30-day supply (See page 17).

The Plan has added mail order prescription drug coverage, available at participating mail order pharmacies. Prescriptions for chronic conditions may be obtained for up to a 90-day supply, subject to a member copay of \$10 per prescription unit or refill for generic drugs, and a \$30 copay per prescription unit or refill for name brand drugs (See page 17).

Coverage for maternity care, including prenatal, delivery, and postnatal care, by a Plan doctor will be subject to a one-time copayment of \$100. Previously, there was a copayment of \$10 per visit (See page 10).

The Plan has increased the copay for diagnosis and treatment of infertility to a member copay of 50% of charges. Previously, these services were subject to a \$10 copay (See page 12).

Family planning services, such as injections of Depo Provera; the fitting and insertion of diaphragms; intrauterine devices (IUDs); and implantable drugs, such as Norplant (insertion and removal); are subject to a member copay of 20% of charges. Previously, Depo Provera was subject to the prescription drug copay, diaphragms and IUDs were excluded from coverage, and Norplant was subject to a one-time member copay of 40% of charges, not to exceed \$200 per prescription (See page 10).

The administration of allergy injections, in the absence of an office visit, will be subject to a member copay of 50% of charges. Previously, the administration of allergy injections, in the absence of an office visit, was subject to a \$10 office visit copay (See page 10).

Rehabilitative therapy (physical, speech and occupational) has increased from a \$10 copay to a \$15 copay per outpatient session (See page 11).

Ambulance transportation ordered or authorized by a Plan doctor will increase from a \$25 copay per trip to a \$75 copay per trip (See page 13).

The Plan has increased the hospital emergency room visit copay, for emergencies within or outside the service area, from \$50 to \$75 (See page 14).

The Plan has increased the urgent care center visit copay, for emergencies within or outside the service area, from \$10 to \$25 (See page 14).

There is now a \$75 copay for emergency ambulance services, within or outside the service area. Previously, the brochure did not show a copay for emergency ambulance services (See page 15).

Diabetic equipment will now be subject to a member copay of 20% of charges. Previously, this benefit was covered in full (See page 11).

Cochlear implanted devices are no longer a covered benefit. Previously, they were subject to a member copay of 50% of charges (See page 10).

The C-PAP monitoring device has been reclassified as durable medical equipment, subject to a member copay of 20% of charges. Previously, this device was covered in full (See page 11).

Accidental dental services are now subject to a \$10 office visit copay, and the Plan must be notified within 24 hours of the accident, and the services must be provided within 6 months of the date of accident. Previously, these services were covered in full, and the Plan had to be notified within 48 hours of the accident, and the services had to be provided within 24 months of the date of the accident (See page 18).

Insulin and prescriptive or non-prescriptive oral agents for controlling blood sugar levels are now subject to a \$10 copay per prescription, for up to a 30-day supply, as determined by the prescribing physician. Previously, the brochure did not show that insulin was subject to a \$10 copay per prescription, and prescriptive or non-prescriptive oral agents for controlling blood sugar levels were covered in full (See page 17).

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Section 3. How to get benefits

What is this Plan's service area?

To enroll with us, you must live or work in our service area. This is where our providers practice. Our service area is:

West Texas

In **West Texas**, the counties of Andrews, Armstrong, Bailey, Borden, Brewster, Briscoe, Carson, Castro, Childress, Cochran, Collingsworth, Cottle, Crane, Crosby, Dallam, Dawson, Deaf Smith, Dickens, Donley, Ector, Floyd, Gaines, Garza, Glasscock, Gray, Hale, Hall, Hansford, Hartley, Hemphill, Hockley, Howard, Hutchinson, King, Lamb, Lipscomb, Loving, Lubbock, Lynn, Martin, Midland, Moore, Motley, Ochiltree, Oldham, Parmer, Pecos, Potter, Randall, Reagan, Reeves, Roberts, Scurry, Sherman, Swisher, Terry, Upton, Ward, Wheeler, Winkler, and Yoakum.

Waco Area

In the **Waco area**, the counties of Bell, Bosque, Brazos, Burleson, Burnet, Coryell, Falls, Freestone, Grimes, Hamilton, Hill, Houston, Lampasas, Lee, Leon, Limestone, Llano, Madison, McLennan, Milam, Mills, Navarro, Robertson, San Saba, Somervell, Walker, and Washington.

Ordinarily, you must get your care from providers who contract with us. If you receive care outside our service area, we will pay only for emergency care. We will not pay for any other health care services.

If you or a covered family member move outside of our service area, you can enroll in another plan. If your dependents live out of the area (for example, if your child goes to college in another state), you should consider enrolling in a fee-for-service plan or an HMO that has agreements with affiliates in other areas. FIRSTCARE will only provide coverage for emergency care outside our service area. If you or a family member move, you do not have to wait until Open Season to change plans. Contact your employing or retirement office.

How much do I pay for services?

You must share the cost of some services. This is called either a copayment (a set dollar amount) or coinsurance (a set percentage of charges). Please remember you must pay this amount when you receive services.

After you pay 200% of annual premium per Self Only enrollment or 200% of annual premium per Self and Family enrollment in copayments, you do not have to make any further payments for certain services for the rest of the year. This is called a catastrophic limit. However, copayments or coinsurance for your prescription drugs do not count toward these limits and you must continue to make these payments.

Be sure to keep accurate records of your copayments and coinsurance, since you are responsible for informing us when you reach the limits.

Do I have to submit claims?

You normally won't have to submit claims to us unless you receive emergency services from a provider who doesn't contract with us. The Plan will pay benefits directly to the providers of your emergency care upon receipt of their claims. If you file a claim, please send us all of the documents for your claim as soon as possible. You must submit claims by December 31 of the year after the year you received the service. Either OPM or we can extend this deadline if you show that circumstances beyond your control prevented you from filing on time.

Who provides my health care?

FIRSTCARE, an Individual Practice Prepayment (IPP) Plan, is an organized system of health care in which private doctors and other providers of care have come together to provide you with quality health care services. FIRSTCARE stresses preventive care, the use of outpatient treatment and early detection and treatment and other cost efficient measures to assure you that you will receive appropriate medical care when you need it, whether you are well or sick.

FIRSTCARE services are provided through over 619 primary care physicians, 1,165 specialists, 60 contracted hospitals and many other health professionals and facilities. FIRSTCARE has been serving FEHB employees and eligible dependents since 1988.

The first and most important decision each member must make is the selection of a primary care doctor. Services of other providers are covered only when you have been referred by your primary care doctor, with the following exceptions: women have direct access to their designated OB/GYN for one well-woman examination per year; care related to pregnancy; care for all gynecological conditions; and diagnosis, treatment and referral of any disease or condition within the scope of the professional practice of a credentialed obstetrician or gynecologist.

What do I do if my primary care physician leaves the Plan?

Call us. We will help you select a new one.

What do I do if I need to go into the hospital?

Talk to your Plan physician. If you need to be hospitalized, your primary care physician or specialist will make the necessary hospital arrangements and supervise your care.

What do I do if I'm in the hospital when I join this Plan?

First, call our customer service department at 806/356-5155 or 800/884-4901. If you are new to the FEHB Program, we will arrange for you to receive care. If you are currently in the FEHB Program and are switching to us, your former plan will pay for the hospital stay until:

- You are discharged, not merely moved to an alternative care center; or
- The day your benefits from your former plan run out; or
- The 92nd day after you became a member of this Plan; whichever happens first.

These provisions only apply to the person who is hospitalized.

How do I get specialty care?

Your primary care physician will arrange your referral to a specialist. Referral to a participating specialist is given at the primary care physician's discretion; if non-Plan specialists or consultants are required, the primary care physician will arrange appropriate referrals.

When you receive a referral from your primary care physician, you must return to the primary care physician after the consultation unless your doctor authorizes additional visits. All follow-up care must be provided or authorized by the primary care physician. Do not go to the specialist for a second visit unless your primary care physician has arranged for, and the Plan has issued an authorization for, the referral in advance.

If you need to see a specialist frequently because of a chronic, complex, or serious medical condition, your primary care physician will develop a treatment plan that allows you to see your specialist for a certain number of visits without additional referrals. Your primary care physician will use our criteria when creating your treatment plan or, you may request a non-primary care specialist as your primary care physician.

If you have a chronic, disabling, or life threatening illness you are allowed to have a non-primary care specialist serve as your primary care physician provided that:

- The request includes information specified by the Plan, including the certification of medical need, and is signed by the member and the non-primary care specialist interested in serving as the primary care physician;
- The non-primary care specialist meets the Plan's requirements for primary care physician participation; and
- The non-primary care specialist is willing to accept the coordination of all the member's health care needs.

The effective date of the new designation of a non-primary care specialist shall not be retroactive. If the request is denied, a member may appeal the decision through the Plan's appeal process.

What do I do if I am seeing a specialist when I enroll?

Your primary care physician will decide what treatment you need. If they decide to refer you to a specialist, ask if you can see your current specialist. If your current specialist does not participate with us, you must receive treatment from a specialist who does. Generally, we will not pay for you to see a specialist who does not participate with our Plan.

What do I do if my specialist leaves the Plan?

Call your primary care physician, who will arrange for you to see another specialist. You may receive services from your current specialist until we can make arrangements for you to see someone else.

But, what if I have a serious illness and my provider leaves the Plan or this Plan leaves the Program?

Please contact us if you believe your condition is chronic or disabling. You may be able to continue seeing your provider for up to 90 days after we notify you that we are terminating our contract with the provider (unless the termination is for cause). If you are in the second or third trimester of pregnancy, you may continue to see your OB/GYN until the end of your postpartum care.

You may also be able to continue seeing your provider if your plan drops out of the FEHB Program and you enroll in a new FEHB plan. Contact the new plan and explain that you have a serious or chronic condition, or are in your second or third trimester. Your new plan will pay for or provide your care for up to 90 days after you receive notice that your prior plan is leaving the FEHB Program. If you are in your second or third trimester, your new plan will pay for the OB/GYN care you receive from your current provider until the end of your postpartum care.

How do you authorize medical services?

Your physician must get our approval before sending you to a hospital, referring you to a specialist, or recommending follow-up care. Before giving approval, we consider if the service is medically necessary, and if it follows generally accepted medical practice.

How do you decide if a service is experimental or investigational?

Determining eligibility of coverage for a new technology requires evaluation of its health effects by the Plan's Medical Advisory Committee, which consists of Medical Directors from all of the Plan's regions, Senior Vice President, and appropriate Ad Hoc Specialists. A service or supply shall be considered to be experimental or investigational as follows:

- If the protocols or consent document of the entity prescribing or rendering the service or supply describes it as an alternative to more conventional therapies;
- Authoritative medical or scientific literature published in the United States and written by experts in the field indicates that additional research is necessary before the service or supply could be classified as equally or more effective than conventional therapies;
- Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approval is required in order for the service or supply to be lawfully marketed, and such approval has not been granted at the time the service or supply is prescribed or rendered; and
- The prescribed service or supply is available to the member only through participation in FDA Phase I or Phase II clinical trials, or through FDA Phase III experimental or research clinical trials or corresponding trials sponsored by the National Cancer Institute.

Section 4 — What to do if we deny your claim or request for service

If we deny services or won't pay your claim, you may ask us to reconsider our decision. Your request must:

1. Be in writing;
2. Refer to specific brochure wording explaining why you believe our decision is wrong; and
3. Be made within six months from the date of our initial denial or refusal. We may extend this time limit if you show that you were unable to make a timely request due to reasons beyond your control.

We have 30 days from the date we receive your reconsideration request to:

1. Maintain our denial in writing;
2. Pay the claim;
3. Arrange for a health care provider to give you the service; or
4. Ask for more information.

If we ask your medical provider for more information, we will send you a copy of our request. We must make a decision within 30 days after we receive the additional information. If we do not receive the requested information within 60 days, we will make our decision based on the information we already have.

When may I ask OPM to review a denial?

You may ask OPM to review the denial after you ask us to reconsider our initial denial or refusal. OPM will determine if we correctly applied the terms of our contract when we denied your claim or request for service.

What if I have a serious or life threatening condition and you haven't responded to my request for service?

Call the Complaint & Appeal Coordinator at 800/365-1064 x6124 and we will expedite our review.

What if you have denied my request for care and my condition is serious or life threatening?

If we expedite your review due to a serious medical condition and deny your claim, we will inform OPM so that they can give your claim expedited treatment too. Alternatively, you can call OPM's Health Benefits Contracts Division 3 at 202/606-0755 between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. Serious or life-threatening conditions are ones that may cause permanent loss of bodily functions or death if they are not treated as soon as possible.

Are there other time limits?

You must write to OPM and ask them to review our decision within 90 days after we uphold our initial denial or refusal of service. You may also ask OPM to review your claim if:

1. We do not answer your request within 30 days. In this case, OPM must receive your request within 120 days of the date you asked us to reconsider your claim.
2. You provided us with additional information we asked for, and we did not answer within 30 days. In this case, OPM must receive your request within 120 days of the date we asked you for additional information.

What do I send to OPM?

Your request must be complete, or OPM will return it to you. You must send the following information:

1. A statement about why you believe our decision is wrong, based on specific benefit provisions in this brochure;

2. Copies of documents that support your claim, such as physicians' letters, operative reports, bills, medical records, and explanation of benefits (EOB) forms;
3. Copies of all letters you sent us about the claim;
4. Copies of all letters we sent you about the claim; and
5. Your daytime phone number and the best time to call.

If you want OPM to review different claims, you must clearly identify which documents apply to which claim.

Who can make the request?

Those who have a legal right to file a disputed claim with OPM are:

1. Anyone enrolled in the Plan;
2. The estate of a person once enrolled in the Plan; and
3. Medical providers, legal counsel, and other interested parties who are acting as the enrolled person's representative. They must send a copy of the person's specific written consent with the review request.

Where should I mail my disputed claim to OPM?

Send your request for review to: Office of Personnel Management, Office of Insurance Programs, Contracts Division 3, P.O. Box 436, Washington, D.C. 20044.

What if OPM upholds the Plan's denial?

OPM's decision is final. There are no other administrative appeals. If OPM agrees with our decision, your only recourse is to sue.

If you decide to sue, you must file the suit against OPM in Federal court by December 31 of the third year after the year in which you received the disputed services or supplies.

What laws apply if I file a lawsuit?

Federal law governs your lawsuit, benefits, and payment of benefits. The Federal court will base its review on the record that was before OPM when OPM made its decision on your claim. You may recover only the amount of benefits in dispute.

You (or a person acting on your behalf) may not sue to recover benefits on a claim for treatment, services, supplies, or drugs covered by us until you have completed the OPM review procedure described above.

Your records and the Privacy Act

Chapter 89 of title 5, United States Code allows OPM to use the information it collects from you and us to determine if our denial of your claim is correct. The information OPM collects during the review process becomes a permanent part of your disputed claims file, and is subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act and the Privacy Act. OPM may disclose this information to support the disputed claim decision. If you file a lawsuit, this information will become part of the court record.

Section 5 — Benefits

Medical and Surgical Benefits

What is covered

A comprehensive range of preventive, diagnostic and treatment services is provided by Plan doctors and other Plan providers. This includes all necessary office visits; **you pay** a \$10 copay for a primary care physician office visit and **you pay** a \$15 copay for a specialist office visit, but no additional copay for laboratory tests and X-rays. Within the service area, house calls will be provided if, in the judgment of the Plan doctor, such care is necessary and appropriate; **you pay** a \$20 copay for a doctor's house call, and **you pay** nothing for home visits by nurses and health aides.

The following services are included and are subject to the office visit copay unless stated otherwise:

- Preventive care, annual routine hearing, vision, and speech screenings through age 18, and biennial hearing, vision, and speech screenings for members age 19 and older, for the purpose of determining vision and hearing loss, and speech impairment, well-baby care and periodic check-ups
- Mammograms are covered as follows: for women age 35 through age 39, one mammogram during these five years; for women age 40 through 49, one mammogram every one or two years; for women age 50 through 64, one mammogram every year; and for women age 65 and above, one mammogram every two years. In addition to routine screening, mammograms are covered when prescribed by the doctor as medically necessary to diagnose or treat illness.
- Routine immunizations and boosters
- Consultations by specialists; **you pay** \$15
- Diagnostic procedures, such as laboratory tests and x-rays
- Complete obstetrical (maternity) care for all covered females, including prenatal, delivery and postnatal care by a Plan doctor; **you pay** a one-time copay of \$100. The mother, at her option, may remain in the hospital up to 48 hours after a regular delivery and 96 hours after a caesarean delivery. Inpatient stays will be extended if medically necessary. If enrollment in the Plan is terminated during pregnancy, benefits will not be provided after coverage under the Plan has ended. Ordinary nursery care of the newborn child during the covered portion of the mother's hospital confinement for maternity will be covered under either a Self Only or Self and Family enrollment; other care of an infant who requires definitive treatment will be covered only if the infant is covered under a Self and Family enrollment.
- Voluntary sterilization; family planning services; injections of Depo Provera; the fitting and insertion of diaphragms, intrauterine devices (IUDs), and implantable drugs, such as Norplant (insertion and removal); **you pay** 20% of charges
- Diagnosis and treatment of diseases of the eye
- Allergy testing and treatment, including testing and treatment materials (such as allergy serum); **you pay** nothing for allergy serum, but for the administration of allergy injections, in the absence of an office visit, **you pay** 50% of charges
- The insertion of internal prosthetic devices, such as pacemakers and artificial joints; **you pay** nothing. The cost of a cochlear implanted device is not covered.
- Cornea, heart, heart-lung, kidney, liver, lung (single and double) and pancreas transplants; allogeneic (donor) bone marrow transplants; autologous bone marrow transplants (autologous stem cell and peripheral stem cell support) for the following conditions: acute lymphocytic or non-lymphocytic leukemia, advanced Hodgkin's lymphoma, advanced non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, advanced neuroblastoma, breast cancer; multiple myeloma; epithelial ovarian cancer; and testicular, mediastinal, retroperitoneal and ovarian germ cell tumors. Transplants are covered when approved by the Medical Director. Related medical and hospital expenses of the donor are covered when the recipient is covered by this Plan.

CARE MUST BE RECEIVED FROM OR ARRANGED BY PLAN DOCTORS

Medical and Surgical Benefits *continued*

- Women who undergo mastectomies may, at their option, have this procedure performed on an inpatient basis and remain in the hospital up to 48 hours after the procedure and 24 hours following a lymph node dissection
- Dialysis
- Chemotherapy, radiation therapy, and inhalation therapy
- Prostate screening
- Telemedicine to deliver health care, which includes use of interactive audio, video, or other electronic media for diagnosis, consultation, treatment, transfer of medical data, and medical education, but excludes services performed using a telephone or facsimile (FAX) machine
- Surgical treatment of morbid obesity
- Orthopedic devices, such as braces; foot orthotics; **you pay** 20% of reasonable charges (replacement items limited to cases necessitated by bodily growth)
- Prosthetic devices, such as artificial limbs; lenses following cataract removal; breast prostheses, surgical bras, and their replacements; **you pay** 20% of reasonable charges (replacement items limited to cases necessitated by bodily growth, except for surgical bras). **You pay** nothing for internal prosthetic devices.
- Durable medical equipment, such as hospital type beds, crutches/walkers, canes, traction devices, nebulizers, indwelling urinary catheters, manual wheelchairs, braces (limb or back only), and C-PAP monitoring device (when there is a diagnosis of documented obstructive sleep apnea); **you pay** 20% of charges
- Home health services of nurses and health aides, including intravenous fluids and medications, when prescribed by your Plan doctor, who will periodically review the program for continuing appropriateness and need; **you pay** nothing
- All necessary medical or surgical care in a hospital or extended care facility from Plan doctors and other Plan providers, at no additional cost to you
- Rehabilitative therapy (physical, speech and occupational) is provided on an inpatient or outpatient basis; **you pay** a \$15 copay per outpatient session, nothing for inpatient care. Speech therapy is limited to treatment of certain speech impairments of organic origin. Occupational therapy is limited to services that assist the member to achieve and maintain self-care and improved functioning in other activities of daily living.
- Ostomy supplies; **you pay** nothing
- Sterile dressing change kits, i.e., tracheostomy suction and dressing kits, and central line dressing kits; **you pay** nothing
- Diabetic services and supplies for the treatment of insulin dependent or non-insulin dependent diabetes; elevated blood glucose levels induced by pregnancy; or other medical conditions associated with elevated blood glucose levels. Diabetes self-management training; equipment; supplies and medications are covered health services based on medical necessity when prescribed by your primary care physician or authorized specialist physician and purchased through a participating Plan provider. Self-management training will include nutritional counseling; education as to use of equipment and supplies; follow-up education dependent on condition changes and needs of member; periodic or episodic and continuing education training when prescribed by an appropriate health care practitioner. **You pay** 20% of charges for diabetic equipment; **you pay** nothing for diabetic supplies; and **you pay** a \$10 copay per prescription, for up to a 30-day supply of insulin, as determined by the prescribing physician.
- Monitoring devices, such as apnea monitors, and uterine monitors for use in the home, when prescribed and directed by a Plan provider; **you pay** nothing
- Oxygen, oxygen concentrators, rental of equipment for administration of oxygen, and mechanical equipment necessary for treatment of chronic or acute respiratory failure, when prescribed and directed by a Plan provider, and approved in advance by the Plan; **you pay** nothing

Medical and Surgical Benefits *continued*

Limited benefits

Oral and maxillofacial surgery is provided for nondental surgical and hospitalization procedures for congenital defects, such as cleft lip and cleft palate, and for medical or surgical procedures occurring within or adjacent to the oral cavity or sinuses including, but not limited to, treatment of fractures and excision of tumors and cysts. All other procedures involving the teeth or intra-oral areas surrounding the teeth are not covered, including shortening of the mandible or maxilla for cosmetic purposes, correction of malocclusion, and any non-surgical dental care involved in the treatment of temporomandibular joint (TMJ) pain dysfunction syndrome.

Reconstructive surgery will be provided to correct a condition resulting from a functional defect or from injury or surgery that has produced a major effect on the member's appearance and if the condition can reasonably be expected to be corrected by such surgery. A patient and her attending physician may decide whether to have breast reconstruction surgery following a mastectomy and whether surgery on the other breast is needed to produce a symmetrical appearance.

Diagnosis and treatment of infertility is covered; **you pay** 50% of charges. The following types of artificial insemination are covered: intravaginal insemination (IVI); intracervical insemination (ICI); and intrauterine insemination (IUI); **you pay** 50% of charges; cost of donor sperm is not covered. Fertility injectable medications administered by Plan providers are covered; **you pay** 50% of charges. Self-administered injectable and oral fertility medications are covered under the Prescription Drug Benefit; **you pay** 50% of charges. Other assisted reproductive technology (ART) procedures, such as in vitro fertilization and embryo transfer, are not covered.

Cardiac rehabilitation following a heart transplant, bypass surgery or a myocardial infarction is provided at a Plan facility for up to two months per condition, or for up to 60 days per condition per calendar year, whichever is greater, if significant improvement can be expected within that time; **you pay** a \$10 copay per visit.

Hearing aids are covered when determined to be medically necessary by a Plan physician, authorized in advance by the Plan, and obtained from a Plan provider. Coverage is limited to a maximum of \$500 per ear once every 36 months. Repair or replacement due to normal wear and tear and loss or damage is not covered.

What is not covered

- Physical examinations that are not necessary for medical reasons, such as those required for obtaining or continuing employment or insurance, attending school or camp, or travel
- Reversal of voluntary, surgically-induced sterility
- Surgery primarily for cosmetic purposes
- Transplants not listed as covered
- Chiropractic services
- Homemaker services
- Corrective eyeglasses, frames and contact lenses, including the fitting of contact lenses, except as necessary for the first pair of corrective lenses following cataract surgery
- Refractions, including lens prescriptions
- Any eye surgery solely for the purpose of correcting refractive defects of the eye, such as nearsightedness (myopia), farsightedness (hyperopia), and astigmatism (blurring)

CARE MUST BE RECEIVED FROM OR ARRANGED BY PLAN DOCTORS

Hospital/Extended Care Benefits

What is covered

Hospital care

The Plan provides a comprehensive range of benefits with no dollar or day limit when you are hospitalized under the care of a Plan doctor. **You pay** nothing per inpatient admission; \$10 per visit for hospital outpatient services. **All necessary services are covered**, including:

- Semiprivate room accommodations; when a Plan doctor determines it is medically necessary, the doctor may prescribe private accommodations or private duty nursing care
- Specialized care units, such as intensive care or cardiac care units

Extended care

The Plan provides a comprehensive range of benefits to a maximum of 100 days per calendar year when full-time skilled nursing care is necessary and confinement in a skilled nursing facility is medically appropriate as determined by a Plan doctor and approved by the Plan. **You pay** nothing. **All necessary services are covered**, including:

- Bed, board and general nursing care
- Drugs, biologicals, supplies, and equipment ordinarily provided or arranged by the skilled nursing facility when prescribed by a Plan doctor.

Hospice care

Supportive and palliative care for a terminally ill member is covered in the home or a hospice facility. Services include inpatient and outpatient care, and family counseling; these services are provided under the direction of a Plan doctor who certifies that the patient is in the terminal stages of illness, with a life expectancy of approximately 6 months or less.

Ambulance service

Benefits are provided for ambulance transportation ordered or authorized by a Plan doctor; **you pay** \$75 per trip in an ambulance.

Limited benefits

Inpatient dental procedures

Hospitalization for certain dental procedures is covered when a Plan doctor determines there is a need for hospitalization for reasons totally unrelated to the dental procedure; the Plan will cover the hospitalization, but not the cost of the professional dental services. Conditions for which hospitalization would be covered include hemophilia and heart disease; the need for anesthesia, by itself, is not such a condition.

Acute inpatient detoxification

Hospitalization for medical treatment of substance abuse is limited to emergency care, diagnosis, treatment of medical conditions, and medical management of withdrawal symptoms (acute detoxification) if the Plan doctor determines that outpatient management is not medically appropriate. See page 16 for nonmedical substance abuse benefits.

What is not covered

- Personal comfort items, such as telephone and television
- Custodial care, rest cures, domiciliary or convalescent care

CARE MUST BE RECEIVED FROM OR ARRANGED BY PLAN DOCTORS

Emergency Benefits

What is a medical emergency?

A medical emergency is the sudden and unexpected onset of a condition or an injury that you believe endangers your life or could result in serious injury or disability, and requires immediate medical or surgical care. Some problems are emergencies because, if not treated promptly, they might become more serious; examples include deep cuts and broken bones. Others are emergencies because they are potentially life-threatening, such as heart attacks, strokes, poisonings, gunshot wounds, or sudden inability to breathe. There are many other acute conditions that the Plan may determine are medical emergencies — what they all have in common is the need for quick action.

Emergencies within the service area

If you are in an emergency situation, please call your primary care physician. In extreme emergencies, if you are unable to contact your doctor, contact the local emergency system (e.g., the 911 telephone system) or go to the nearest hospital emergency room. Be sure to tell the emergency room personnel that you are a Plan member so they can notify the Plan. You or a family member should notify the Plan within 24 hours unless it was not reasonably possible to do so. It is your responsibility to ensure that the Plan has been timely notified.

If you need to be hospitalized, the Plan must be notified within 24 hours or on the first working day following your admission, unless it was not reasonably possible to notify the Plan within that time. If you are hospitalized in non-Plan facilities and a Plan doctor believes care can be better provided in a Plan hospital, you will be transferred when medically feasible with any ambulance charges covered in full.

Benefits are available for care from non-Plan providers in a medical emergency only if delay in reaching a Plan provider would result in death, disability or significant jeopardy to your condition.

To be covered by this Plan, any follow-up care recommended by non-Plan providers must be approved by the Plan or provided by Plan providers.

Plan pays...

Reasonable charges for emergency services to the extent the services would have been covered if received from Plan providers.

You pay...

\$75 per hospital emergency room visit or \$25 per urgent care center visit for emergency services that are covered benefits of this Plan. If the emergency results in admission to a hospital, the emergency care copay is waived. However, if you are admitted from the emergency room for an observation period of less than 24 hours, the emergency room copay will not be waived.

Emergencies outside the service area

Benefits are available for any medically necessary health service that is immediately required because of injury or unforeseen illness.

If you need to be hospitalized, the Plan must be notified within 24 hours or on the first working day following your admission, unless it was not reasonably possible to notify the Plan within that time. If a Plan doctor believes care can be better provided in a Plan hospital, you will be transferred when medically feasible with any ambulance charges covered in full.

To be covered by this Plan, any follow-up care recommended by non-Plan providers must be approved by the Plan or provided by Plan providers.

Plan pays...

Reasonable charges for emergency services to the extent the services would have been covered if received from Plan providers.

You pay...

\$75 per hospital emergency room visit or \$25 per urgent care center visit for emergency services that are covered benefits of this Plan. If the emergency results in admission to a hospital, the emergency care copay is waived. However, if you are admitted from the emergency room for an observation period of less than 24 hours, the emergency room copay will not be waived.

Emergency Benefits continued

What is covered

- Emergency care at a doctor's office or an urgent care center
- Emergency care as an outpatient or inpatient at a hospital, including doctors' services
- Ambulance service approved by the Plan; **you pay** \$75

What is not covered

- Elective care or nonemergency care
- Emergency care provided outside the service area if the need for care could have been foreseen before leaving the service area

Filing claims for non-Plan providers

With your authorization, the Plan will pay benefits directly to the providers of your emergency care upon receipt of their claim. Physician claims should be submitted on the HCFA 1500 claim form. If you are required to pay for the services, submit itemized bills and your receipts to the Plan along with an explanation of the services and the identification information from your ID card.

Payment will be sent to you (or the provider if you did not pay the bill), unless the claim is denied. If it is denied, you will receive notice of the decision, including the reasons for the denial and the provisions of the contract on which denial was based. If you disagree with the Plan's decision, you may request reconsideration in accordance with the disputed claims procedure described on pages 8-9.

Mental Conditions/Substance Abuse Benefits

Mental conditions

Members must get a referral from their primary care physician to access mental health services. The mental health provider, for the Amarillo and Lubbock regions, which includes Midland and Odessa, is Comprehensive Behavioral Care 800/541-3647; for the Waco region the mental health provider is Corphealth 800/753-1469.

What is covered

To the extent shown below, the Plan provides the following services necessary for the diagnosis and treatment of acute psychiatric conditions, including the treatment of mental illness or disorders:

- Diagnostic evaluation
- Psychological testing
- Psychiatric treatment (including individual and group therapy)
- Hospitalization (including inpatient professional services)

Outpatient care

Up to 20 outpatient visits to Plan doctors, consultants or other psychiatric personnel each calendar year; **you pay** a \$25 copay per visit or 50% of the reasonable charge, whichever is less, per visit for each covered visit — all charges thereafter.

Inpatient care

Up to 30 days of hospitalization each calendar year; **you pay** nothing for the first 30 days — all charges thereafter.

CARE MUST BE RECEIVED FROM OR ARRANGED BY PLAN DOCTORS

Serious mental illness

Coverage is provided for the medically necessary care, diagnosis, and treatment of serious mental illnesses. Services are subject to the same copays required for outpatient and inpatient services applicable to any other medical conditions (see pages 10 and 13 for copay levels).

“Serious mental illness” means the following psychiatric illnesses as defined by the American Psychiatric Association in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM) III-R.

1. Schizophrenia;
2. Paranoid and other psychotic disorders;
3. Bipolar disorders (hypomanic, manic, depressive and mixed);
4. Major depressive disorders (single episode or recurrent)
5. Schizo-affective disorders (bipolar or depressive);
6. Pervasive developmental disorders;
7. Obsessive-compulsive disorders; and
8. Depression in childhood and adolescence.

What is not covered

- Care for psychiatric conditions that in the professional judgment of Plan doctors are not subject to significant improvement through relatively short-term treatment
- Psychiatric evaluation or therapy on court order or as a condition of parole or probation, unless determined by a Plan doctor to be necessary and appropriate
- Psychological testing when not medically necessary to determine the appropriate treatment of a short-term psychiatric condition

Substance abuse

What is covered

This Plan provides medical and hospital services such as acute detoxification services for the medical, non-psychiatric aspects of substance abuse, including alcoholism and drug addiction, the same as for any other illness or condition and, to the extent shown below, the services necessary for diagnosis and treatment.

Outpatient care

All necessary services for the psychiatric aspects of substance abuse are provided as with any physical illness; **you pay** a \$10 copay per visit.

Inpatient care

All necessary treatment is provided for substance abuse rehabilitation (intermediate care) in an alcohol detoxification or rehabilitation center approved by the Plan; **you pay** nothing. Coverage is limited to a lifetime maximum of three (3) separate series of treatment for each covered individual.

What is not covered

- Treatment that is not authorized by a Plan doctor.

CARE MUST BE RECEIVED FROM OR ARRANGED BY PLAN DOCTORS

Prescription Drug Benefits

What is covered

Prescription drugs prescribed by a Plan or referral doctor and obtained at a Plan pharmacy will be dispensed for up to a 30-day supply or 100-unit supply, whichever is less. **You pay** a \$5 copay per prescription unit or refill for generic drugs and a \$15 copay for name brand drugs.

When generic substitution is permissible (i.e., a generic drug is available and the prescribing doctor does not require the use of a name brand drug), but you request the name brand drug, **you pay** the price difference between the generic and name brand drug as well as the \$15 copay per prescription unit or refill.

Drugs are prescribed by Plan doctors and dispensed in accordance with the Plan's drug formulary. Plan doctors are asked to use the formulary list when prescribing; however, it is not mandatory. Non-formulary drugs will be covered when prescribed by a Plan doctor.

Mail order pharmacy benefits

Prescription drugs for chronic conditions may be obtained by mail order, at a participating mail order pharmacy, for up to a 90-day supply; **you pay** a \$10 copay per prescription unit or refill for generic drugs and a \$30 copay per prescription unit or refill for name brand drugs.

Covered medications and accessories include:

- Drugs for which a prescription is required by Federal law
- Oral contraceptive drugs
- Insulin, and prescriptive and non-prescriptive oral agents for controlling blood sugar levels; **you pay** a \$10 copay per prescription, for up to a 30-day supply, as determined by the prescribing physician
- Diabetic supplies, including insulin syringes, needles, glucose test tablets and test tape, Benedict's solution or equivalent and acetone test tablets; **you pay** nothing (Additional equipment and supplies are covered under "Medical and Surgical Benefits" - Diabetic services and supplies - see page 11).
- Disposable needles and syringes needed to inject covered prescribed medication; **you pay** nothing
- Formulas necessary for the treatment of Phenylketonuria (PKU) and other heritable diseases
- Intravenous fluids and medication for home use, implantable drugs, and some injectable drugs, are covered under Medical and Surgical Benefits.

Limited benefits

- Oral and injectable fertility drugs; **you pay** 50% of charges
- Injectable contraceptive drugs, such as Depo Provera; diaphragms; Intrauterine devices (IUDs); and implantable drugs, such as Norplant. There is no charge when Norplant is implanted during a covered hospitalization. There will be no refund of any portion of the coinsurance if the implanted time-release medication is removed before the end of its expected life. **You pay** 20% of charges (covered under "Medical and Surgical Benefits").
- Sexual dysfunction drugs are subject to dosage limits set by the Plan. Contact the Plan for details.

What is not covered

- Drugs available without a prescription or for which there is a nonprescription equivalent available
- Drugs obtained at a non-Plan pharmacy except for out-of-area emergencies
- Vitamins and nutritional substances that can be purchased without a prescription
- Medical supplies such as dressings and antiseptics
- Drugs for cosmetic purposes
- Drugs to enhance athletic performance
- Smoking cessation drugs and medication, including nicotine patches
- Drugs prescribed for weight loss and appetite suppressants

CARE MUST BE RECEIVED FROM OR ARRANGED BY PLAN DOCTORS

Other Benefits

Dental care

What is covered

Accidental injury benefit

Restorative services and supplies necessary to promptly repair (but not replace) sound natural teeth are covered. The need for these services must result from an accidental injury. Accidental injury does not include injury caused by or arising out of the act of chewing or biting. You must notify the Plan within 24 hours of the accidental injury, and services are to be provided within 6 months of the date of the accident, unless the member's medical condition indicates the dental care must be delayed. **You pay** a \$10 office visit copay.

What is not covered

- Other dental services not shown as covered

Section 6 — General exclusions - Things we don't cover

The exclusions in this section apply to all benefits. **Although we may list a specific service as a benefit, we will not cover it unless your Plan doctor determines it is medically necessary to prevent, diagnose, or treat your illness or condition.**

We do not cover the following:

- Services, drugs or supplies that are not medically necessary;
- Services not required according to accepted standards of medical, dental, or psychiatric practice;
- Care by non-Plan providers except for authorized referrals or emergencies (see Emergency Benefits);
- Experimental or investigational procedures, treatments, drugs or devices;
- Procedures, services, drugs and supplies related to abortions except when the life of the mother would be endangered if the fetus were carried to term;
- Procedures, services, drugs and supplies related to sex transformations;
- Services or supplies you receive from a provider or facility barred from the FEHB Program; and
- Expenses you incurred while you were not enrolled in this Plan.

CARE MUST BE RECEIVED FROM OR ARRANGED BY PLAN DOCTORS

Section 7 — Limitations - Rules that affect your benefits

Medicare

Tell us if you or a family member is enrolled in Medicare Part A or B. Medicare will determine who is responsible for paying for medical services and we will coordinate the payments. On occasion, you may need to file a Medicare claim form.

If you are eligible for Medicare, you may enroll in a Medicare+Choice plan and also remain enrolled with us.

If you are an annuitant or former spouse, you can suspend your FEHB coverage and enroll in a Medicare+Choice plan when one is available in your area. For information on suspending your FEHB enrollment and changing to a Medicare+Choice plan, contact your retirement office. If you later want to re-enroll in the FEHB Program, generally you may do so only at the next Open Season.

If you involuntarily lose coverage, or move out of the Medicare+Choice service area, you may re-enroll in the FEHB Program at any time.

If you do not have Medicare Part A or B, you can still be covered under the FEHB Program and your benefits will not be reduced. We cannot require you to enroll in Medicare.

For information on Medicare+Choice plans, contact your local Social Security Administration (SSA) office or request it from SSA at 1-800/638-6833.

Other group insurance coverage

When anyone has coverage with us and with another group health plan, it is called double coverage. You must tell us if you or a family member has double coverage. You must also send us documents about other insurance if we ask for them.

When you have double coverage, one plan is the primary payer; it pays benefits first. The other plan is secondary; it pays benefits next. We decide which insurance is primary according to the National Association of Insurance Commissioners' Guidelines.

If we pay second, we will determine what the reasonable charge for the benefit should be. After the first plan pays, we will pay either what is left of the reasonable charge or our regular benefit, whichever is less. We will not pay more than the reasonable charge. If we are the secondary payer, we may be entitled to receive payment from your primary plan.

We will always provide you with the benefits described in this brochure. Remember: even if you do not file a claim with your other plan, you must still tell us that you have double coverage.

Circumstances beyond our control

Under certain extraordinary circumstances, we may have to delay your services or be unable to provide them. In that case, we will make all reasonable efforts to provide you with necessary care.

When others are responsible for injuries

When you receive money to compensate you for medical or hospital care for injuries or illness that another person caused, you must reimburse us for whatever services we paid for. We will cover the cost of treatment that exceeds the amount you received in the settlement. If you do not seek damages, you must agree to let us try. This is called subrogation. If you need more information, contact us for our subrogation procedures.

TRICARE

TRICARE is the health care program for members, eligible dependents, and retirees of the military. TRICARE includes the CHAMPUS program. If both TRICARE and this Plan cover you, we are the primary payer. See your TRICARE Health Benefits Advisor if you have questions about TRICARE coverage.

Workers' compensation

We do not cover services that:

- You need because of a workplace-related disease or injury that the Office of Workers' Compensation Programs (OWCP) or a similar Federal or State agency determine they must provide;
- OWCP or a similar agency pays for through a third party injury settlement or other similar proceeding that is based on a claim you filed under OWCP or similar laws.

Once the OWCP or similar agency has paid its maximum benefits for your treatment, we will provide your benefits.

Medicaid

We pay first if both Medicaid and this Plan cover you.

Other Government Agencies

We do not cover services and supplies that a local, State, or Federal Government agency directly or indirectly pays for.

If you have a malpractice claim

If you have a malpractice claim because of services you did or did not receive from a plan provider, it must go to binding arbitration. Contact us about how to begin our binding arbitration process.

Section 8 — FEHB FACTS

You have a right to information about your HMO.

OPM requires that all FEHB plans comply with the Patients' Bill of Rights, which gives you the right to information about your health plan, its networks, providers and facilities. You can also find out about care management, which includes medical practice guidelines, disease management programs and how we determine if procedures are experimental or investigational. OPM's website (www.opm.gov) lists the specific types of information that we must make available to you.

If you want specific information about us, call 806/356-5155 or 800/884-4901, or write to 12940 Research Blvd. Austin, Texas 78750. You may also contact us by fax at 512/257-6040, or visit our website at www.firstcare.com.

Where do I get information about enrolling in the FEHB Program?

Your employing or retirement office can answer your questions, and give you a *Guide to Federal Employees Health Benefits Plans*, brochures for other plans and other materials you need to make an informed decision about:

- When you may change your enrollment;
- How you can cover your family members;
- What happens when you transfer to another Federal agency, go on leave without pay, enter military service, or retire;
- When your enrollment ends; and
- The next Open Season for enrollment.

We don't determine who is eligible for coverage and, in most cases, cannot change your enrollment status without information from your employing or retirement office.

When are my benefits and premiums effective?

The benefits in this brochure are effective on January 1. If you are new to this plan, your coverage and premiums begin on the first day of your first pay period that starts on or after January 1. Annuitants' premiums begin January 1.

What happens when I retire?

When you retire, you can usually stay in the FEHB Program. Generally, you must have been enrolled in the FEHB Program for the last five years of your Federal service. If you do not meet this requirement, you may be eligible for other forms of coverage, such as Temporary Continuation of Coverage, which is described later in this section.

What types of coverage are available for my family and me?

Self Only coverage is for you alone. *Self and Family* coverage is for you, your spouse, and your unmarried dependent children under age 22, including any foster or step children your employing or retirement office authorizes coverage for. Under certain circumstances, you may also get coverage for a disabled child 22 years of age or older who is incapable of self-support.

If you have a Self Only enrollment, you may change to a Self and Family enrollment if you marry, give birth or add a child to your family. You may change your enrollment 31 days before to 60 days after you give birth or add the child to your family. The benefits and premiums for your Self and Family enrollment begin on the first day of the pay period in which the child is born or becomes an eligible family member.

Your employing or retirement office will not notify you when a family member is no longer eligible to receive health benefits, nor will we. Please tell us immediately when you add or remove family members from your coverage for any reason, including divorce.

If you or one of your family members is enrolled in one FEHB plan, that person may not be enrolled in another FEHB plan.

Are my medical and claims records confidential?

We will keep your medical and claims information confidential. Only the following will have access to it:

- OPM, this Plan, and subcontractors when they administer this contract;
- This plan, and appropriate third parties, such as other insurance plans and the Office of Workers' Compensation Programs (OWCP), when coordinating benefit payments and subrogating claims;
- Law enforcement officials when investigating and/or prosecuting alleged civil or criminal actions,
- OPM and the General Accounting Office when conducting audits,
- Individuals involved in bona fide medical research or education that does not disclose your identity; or
- OPM, when reviewing a disputed claim or defending litigation about a claim.

Information for new members

Identification cards

We will send you an Identification (ID) card. Use your copy of the Health Benefits Election Form, SF-2809, or the OPM annuitant confirmation letter until you receive your ID card. You can also use an Employee Express confirmation letter.

What if I paid a deductible under my old plan?

Your old plan's deductible continues until our coverage begins.

Pre-existing conditions

We will not refuse to cover the treatment of a condition that you or a family member had before you enrolled in this Plan solely because you had the condition before you enrolled.

When you lose benefits

What happens if my enrollment in this Plan ends?

You will receive an additional 31 days of coverage, for no additional premium, when:

- Your enrollment ends, unless you cancel your enrollment, or
- You are a family member no longer eligible for coverage.

You may be eligible for former spouse coverage or Temporary Continuation of Coverage.

What is former spouse coverage?

If you are divorced from a Federal employee or annuitant, you may not continue to get benefits under your former spouse's enrollment. But, you may be eligible for your own FEHB coverage under the spouse equity law. If you are recently divorced or are anticipating a divorce, contact your ex-spouse's employing or retirement office to get more information about your coverage choices.

What is TCC?

Temporary Continuation of Coverage (TCC). If you leave Federal service or if you lose coverage because you no longer qualify as a family member, you may be eligible for TCC. For example, you can receive TCC if you are not able to continue your FEHB enrollment after you retire. You may not elect TCC if you are fired from your Federal job due to gross misconduct.

Get the RI 79-27, which describes TCC, and the RI 70-5, the *Guide to Federal Employees Health Benefits Plans for Temporary Continuation of Coverage and Former Spouse Enrollees* from your employing or retirement office.

Key points about TCC:

- You can pick a new plan;
- If you leave Federal service, you can receive TCC for up to 18 months after you separate;
- If you no longer qualify as a family member, you can receive TCC for up to 36 months;

- Your TCC enrollment starts after regular coverage ends.
- If you or your employing office delay processing your request, you still have to pay premiums from the 32nd day after your regular coverage ends, even if several months have passed.
- You pay the total premium, and generally a 2-percent administrative charge. The government does not share your costs.
- You receive another 31-day extension of coverage when your TCC enrollment ends, unless you cancel your TCC or stop paying the premium.
- You are not eligible for TCC if you can receive regular FEHB Program benefits.

How do I enroll in TCC?

If you leave Federal service your employing office will notify you of your right to enroll under TCC. You must enroll within 60 days of leaving, or receiving this notice, whichever is later.

Children: You must notify your employing or retirement office within 60 days after your child is no longer an eligible family member. That office will send you information about enrolling in TCC. You must enroll your child within 60 days after they become eligible for TCC, or receive this notice, whichever is later.

Former spouses: You or your former spouse must notify your employing or retirement office within 60 days of one of these qualifying events:

- Divorce
- Loss of spouse equity coverage within 36 months after the divorce.

Your employing or retirement office will then send your former spouse information about enrolling in TCC. Your former spouse must enroll within 60 days after the event, which qualifies them for coverage, or receiving the information, whichever is later.

Note: Your child or former spouse loses TCC eligibility unless you or your former spouse notify your employing or retirement office within the 60-day deadline.

How can I convert to individual coverage?

You may convert to an individual policy if:

- Your coverage under TCC or the spouse equity law ends. If you canceled your coverage or did not pay your premium, you cannot convert;
- You decided not to receive coverage under TCC or the spouse equity law; or
- You are not eligible for coverage under TCC or the spouse equity law.

If you leave Federal service, your employing office will notify you if individual coverage is available. You must apply in writing to us within 31 days after you receive this notice. However, if you are a family member who is losing coverage, the employing or retirement office will not notify you. You must apply in writing to us within 31 days after you are no longer eligible for coverage.

Your benefits and rates will differ from those under the FEHB Program; however, you will not have to answer questions about your health, and we will not impose a waiting period or limit your coverage due to pre-existing conditions.

How can I get a Certificate of Group Health Plan Coverage?

If you leave the FEHB Program, we will give you a Certificate of Group Health Plan Coverage that indicates how long you have been enrolled with us. You can use this certificate when getting health insurance or other health care coverage. You must arrange for the other coverage within 63 days of leaving this Plan. Your new plan must reduce or eliminate waiting periods, limitations or exclusions for health related conditions based on the information in the certificate.

If you have been enrolled with us for less than 12 months, but were previously enrolled in other FEHB plans, you may request a certificate from them, as well.

Inspector General Advisory: Stop Health Care Fraud!

Fraud increases the cost of health care for everyone. If you suspect that a physician, pharmacy, or hospital has charged you for services you did not receive, billed you twice for the same service, or misrepresented any information, do the following:

- Call the provider and ask for an explanation. There may be an error.
- If the provider does not resolve the matter, call us at 806/356-5155 or 800/884-4901 and explain the situation.
- If we do not resolve the issue, call or write:

**THE HEALTH CARE FRAUD HOTLINE
202/418-3300**

U.S. Office of Personnel Management
Office of the Inspector General Fraud Hotline
1900 E Street, NW, Room 6400
Washington, D.C. 20415.

Penalties for Fraud

Anyone who falsifies a claim to obtain FEHB Program benefits can be prosecuted for fraud. Also, the Inspector General may investigate anyone who uses an ID card if they:

- Try to obtain services for a person who is not an eligible family member; or
- Are no longer enrolled in the Plan and try to obtain benefits.
- Your agency may also take administrative action against you.

Summary of Benefits for FIRSTCARE - 2000

Do not rely on this chart alone. All benefits are provided in full unless otherwise indicated subject to the limitations and exclusions set forth in the brochure. This chart merely summarizes certain important expenses covered by the Plan. If you wish to enroll or change your enrollment in this Plan, be sure to indicate the correct enrollment code on your enrollment form (codes appear on the cover of this brochure). **ALL SERVICES COVERED UNDER THIS PLAN, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF EMERGENCY CARE, ARE COVERED ONLY WHEN PROVIDED OR ARRANGED BY PLAN DOCTORS.**

	Benefits	Plan pays/provides	Page
Inpatient care	Hospital	Comprehensive range of medical and surgical services without dollar or day limit. Includes in-hospital doctor care, room and board, general nursing care, private room and private nursing care if medically necessary, diagnostic tests, drugs and medical supplies, use of operating room, intensive care and complete maternity care. You pay nothing	13
	Extended care	All necessary services, limited to 100 days per calendar year. You pay nothing	13
	Mental conditions	Diagnosis and treatment of acute psychiatric conditions for up to 30 days of inpatient care per year. You pay nothing. Also, there is coverage for serious mental illness when medically necessary	15-16
	Substance abuse	Up to three (3) separate series of treatment per lifetime for substance abuse rehabilitation (intermediate care) in an Alcohol Detoxification or Rehabilitation Center approved by the Plan; you pay nothing	16
Outpatient care		Comprehensive range of services such as diagnosis and treatment of illness or injury, including specialist's care; preventive care, including well-baby care, periodic check-ups and routine immunizations; laboratory tests and X-rays; complete maternity care. You pay a \$10 copay per office visit; there is a one-time \$100 copay for maternity care; \$15 per specialist visit; and \$20 per house call by a doctor	10-12
	Home health care	All necessary visits by nurses and health aides. You pay nothing	11
	Mental conditions	Up to 20 outpatient visits per year you pay a \$25 copay per visit. Also, there is coverage for serious mental illness when medically necessary	15-16
	Substance abuse	Services for the psychiatric aspects of substance abuse are provided as with any physical illness; you pay a \$10 copay per visit	16
Emergency care		Reasonable charges for services and supplies required because of a medical emergency. You pay a \$75 copay to the hospital for each emergency room visit and any charges for services that are not covered by this Plan	14-15
Prescription drugs		Drugs prescribed by a Plan doctor and obtained at a Plan pharmacy. You pay a \$5 copay for generic drugs and a \$15 copay for name brand drugs per prescription unit or refill	17
Dental care		Accidental injury benefit; you pay a \$10 copay	18
Vision care		No current benefit	
Out-of-pocket Maximum		Copayments are required for a few benefits; however, after your out-of-pocket expenses reach a maximum of 200% of annual premium per Self Only or 200% of annual premium per Self and Family enrollment per calendar year, covered benefits will be provided at 100%. This copay maximum does not include charges for prescription drugs	5

2000 Rate Information for FIRSTCARE

Non-Postal rates apply to most non-Postal enrollees. If you are in a special enrollment category, refer to the FEHB Guide for that category or contact the agency that maintains your health benefits enrollment.

Postal rates apply to most career U.S. Postal Service employees. In 2000, two categories of contribution rates, referred to as Category A rates and Category B rates, will apply for certain career employees. If you are a career postal employee but not a member of a special postal employment class, refer to the category definitions in “The Guide to Federal Employees Health Benefits Plans for United States Postal Service Employees,” RI 70-2, to determine which rate applies to you.

Postal rates do not apply to non-career postal employees, postal retirees, certain special postal employment classes or associate members of any postal employee organization. Such persons not subject to postal rates must refer to the applicable “Guide to Federal Employees Health Benefits Plans.”

Type of Enrollment	Code	<u>Non-Postal Premium</u>				<u>Postal Premium A</u>		<u>Postal Premium B</u>	
		<u>Biweekly</u>		<u>Monthly</u>		<u>Biweekly</u>		<u>Biweekly</u>	
		Gov't Share	Your Share	Gov't Share	Your Share	USPS Share	Your Share	USPS Share	Your Share

West Texas

Self Only	CK1	\$78.83	\$35.10	\$170.80	\$76.05	\$93.06	\$20.87	\$93.26	\$20.67
Self and Family	CK2	\$175.97	\$68.75	\$381.27	\$148.96	\$207.74	\$36.98	\$201.02	\$43.70

Waco

Self Only	6U1	\$69.12	\$23.04	\$149.76	\$49.92	\$81.79	\$10.37	\$81.79	\$10.37
Self and Family	6U2	\$148.47	\$49.49	\$321.68	\$107.23	\$175.69	\$22.27	\$175.69	\$22.27