

The HR Advisor

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DoDEA Human Resources Regional Service Center



2010 FEDERAL BENEFITS OPEN SEASON BEGAN: NOVEMBER 8TH!

The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) has announced the 2010 Federal Benefits Open Season for 2011. Open plan enrollments will be held for the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program (FEHB), Federal Employees Dental and Vision Insurance Programs (FEDVIP), and the Federal Flexible Spending Account Program (FSAFEDS) **Monday, November 8 - Monday, December 13.**

OPEN SEASON OPPORTUNITIES:

- FEHB:** Enroll in, change, or cancel an existing enrollment in a health plan under the FEHB Program.
- FEDVIP:** Enroll in, change, or cancel an existing enrollment in a dental and/or vision plan under the FEDVIP Program.
- FSA:** Enroll in a flexible spending account - a health care and/or dependent care account under the FSAFEDS Program. Unlike with other programs, employees **MUST** reenroll in FSAFEDS each year to participate. FSA enrollments **DO NOT** carry over year to year.

2011 Plan premiums are available on OPM's website at
<http://www.opm.gov/insure/health/rates/index.asp>.

Additional open season guidance and instructions will be
disseminated in the near future.

Updates will be posted on the DoDEA HR Website at
<http://www.dodea.edu/offices/hr/employees/benefits/openseason.htm>.

We highly recommend you frequently visit the above webpage to
ensure you remain abreast of 2010 open season information.

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DID YOU KNOW?

DLA may be reached for all your HR processing needs? Please see Page 5 for their contact information.

The HR Advisor is here to work for you! If you have HR related items of interest or articles to publish, please email Cathi Del Gallo @ Catherine.delgallo@hq.dodea.edu

The submission deadline for December's issue is Friday, November 26.

**HAPPY
THANKSGIVING!**

PlanSmartChoice by Asparity Decision Solutions

Now available for FREE to all Federal employees & agencies!

PlanSmartChoice is an online suite of benefit selection tools that helps federal employees and non-Medicare eligible retirees select medical, dental, and vision coverage and tax savings plans (such as a Flexible Spending Account or Health Savings Account) that meet their personal needs and financial circumstances.

To use the tool, employees will have to register and provide information regarding their current coverage and anticipated medical expenses as well as family member information. Asparity will not release any personal identification information provided.

The PlanSmartChoice benefit selection tools have been available to federal employees since 1998. In the past, federal agencies purchased access to the site for their employees. Asparity is now making PlanSmartChoice available at no cost to all federal employees and agencies at a publicly available Web portal. The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) has stated Federal agencies are authorized to accept this free service; however, it is not a federally sponsored vendor or software application. Neither OPM nor DoDEA accepts any responsibility for the company, software, administration, or the information provided to the employee.

Employees using the tool do so freely and DoDEA accepts no responsibility or liability in respect with any communication, information or for the consequences of any actions taken on the basis of the information provided.

To access PlanSmartChoice go to <https://www.plansmartchoice.com/>.

Flexible Spending Account Program (FSAFEDS)

FSAFEDS is the Federal Flexible Spending Account Program available to most Federal employees in the Executive Branch and employees in several other agencies that have adopted the Program. A Flexible Spending Account, or FSA, allows you to set aside pre-tax money. You pay less taxes and therefore save money. You are reimbursed for certain medical or medical related expenses once you submit claims for eligible health care and day care expenses.

FSAFEDS offers three types of FSAs: A Dependent Care FSA, general purpose Health Care FSA, and a Limited Expense Health Care FSA.

A Dependent Care FSA (DCFSA) reimburses eligible day care expenses for your children under age 13 and your tax dependents of any age who are incapable of self-care. These expenses must be necessary to allow you and your spouse (if married) to work, look for work or attend school full-time. You and your spouse (if married) must have earned income during the year to be eligible.

A general purpose Health Care FSA (HCFSA) reimburses eligible health care expenses not covered by the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program, the Federal Employees Dental and Vision Insurance Program, or any other insurance. Eligible expenses include co-payments, co-insurance, deductibles, over-the-counter medicines (with a prescription as of 01/01/2011), medical supplies, prescription drugs, vision and dental care, shipping and handling charges for mail-order prescriptions and eligible over-the-counter items, and much more.

A Limited Expense Health Care FSA (LEX HCFSA) is designed for individuals who are enrolled in or covered under a High Deductible Health Plan (HDHP) with a Health Savings Account (HSA). Under IRS rules, you cannot enroll in a general purpose HCFSA and an HSA at the same time, but you CAN enroll in a LEX HCFSA and an HSA at the same time. A LEX HCFSA limits reimbursement to only eligible dental and vision expenses.

You may review an extensive list of eligible expenses for the Health Care, Limited Expense, and Dependent Care FSAs by visiting the Eligible Expenses Juke Box @ <https://www.fsafeds.com/fsafeds/eligibleexpenses.asp>, www.FSAFEDS.com or <https://www.FSAFEDS.com/fsafeds/index.asp>. To learn more, go to www.FSAFEDS.com or <https://www.FSAFEDS.com/fsafeds/index.asp>.

Health Care Reform Changes for Federal Benefits Programs

On March 23, 2010, President Obama signed the Affordable Care Act, (ACA), Public Law 111-148. Several provisions of the ACA will affect eligibility and benefits under the Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) Program and the Federal Flexible Spending Account Program (FSAFEDS) beginning January 1, 2011.

What Are the Changes to FEHB Program Dependent Eligibility Rules Under the ACA?

All changes are effective on January 1, 2011

Children	Effect of ACA
Between ages 22 and 26	Children between the ages of 22 and 26 are covered under their parent's Self and Family enrollment up to age 26.
Married Children	Married children (but NOT their spouse or their own children) are covered up to age 26. This is true even if the child is currently under age 22.
Children with or eligible for employer-provided health insurance	Children who are eligible for or have their own employer-provided health insurance are eligible for coverage up to age 26.
Stepchildren	Stepchildren do not need to live with the enrollee in a parent-child relationship to be eligible for coverage up to age 26.
Children Incapable of Self-Support	Children who are incapable of self-support because of a mental or physical disability that began before age 26 are eligible to continue coverage. Contact your human resources office or retirement system for additional information.
Foster Children	Foster children are eligible for coverage up to age 26.

Children **do not** have to live with their parent, be financially dependent upon their parent or be students to be covered up to age 26. There is also no requirement that the child have prior or current insurance coverage. FEHB Program plans will send notice to all their enrollees of the coverage eligibility changes as a part of that plan's Open Season communications.

Additional Health Care Reform guidance and instructions as well as updates to the ACA will be posted on the DoDEA HR Website at <http://www.dodea.edu/offices/hr/employees/benefits/healthcarereform.htm>. We highly recommend you frequently visit this webpage to ensure you keep abreast of available information and upcoming changes.

Employees can also learn more about Health Care Reform by visiting OPM's website at <http://www.opm.gov/insure/health/reform/index.asp>.



Post Allowance Table Updates

Effective October 10, 2010, the Post Allowance Payment Tables in section 229.1 of the Department of State Standardized Regulations (DSSR) for foreign posts were revised. If you would like to view the revised Post Allowance Tables, they are available on the Office of Allowances (State Department) web site at <http://aoprals.state.gov/>. Click on “DSSR Table of Contents” and “229 Post Allowance Payment Tables”.

Dependent Parents of the Employee or Employee’s Spouse for Purposes of Travel and Overseas Allowances

Parents of the employee or employee’s spouse may be considered dependents for permanent duty travel eligibility if they are residing as members of the employee’s household when the employee reports for duty at the new duty station or performs authorized renewal agreement or separation travel. In addition, the parent must receive 51 percent of their support from the employee or employee’s spouse. They may also be considered dependents if they are members of the employee’s household and, in addition to their own income, receive support (less than 51 percent) from the employee or employee’s spouse without which they would be unable to maintain a reasonable standard of living. For overseas allowances, parents of the employee or employee’s spouse must be residing with the employee at his/her overseas post and be at least 51 percent dependent on the employee for support. For purposes of travel and overseas allowances, the dependency criteria for a parent are not based on medical needs of the parent. Rather it is based on monetary support and the fact that the parent resides with the employee as a member of the employee’s household.

An employee’s request to establish a parent as a dependent for travel and allowances must be accompanied by documentation to support the relationship and documentation to support the residence of the parent. In addition, a separate signed statement is required from the employee outlining the parent’s annual income from all sources; the parent’s annual personal and household expenses and what portion of those expenses are paid by the employee.

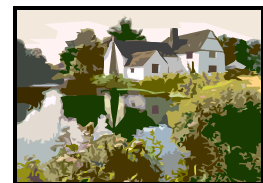
HQ Training Tidbits: Cancellation of Training Event

The SF-182 has been submitted, you are registered and have received your Career Development Notification Memorandum; your event has been confirmed. Then something happens and you are unable to attend. What should you do?

If for any reason you cannot participate in a confirmed event, immediately notify the Human Resources Development Specialist (HRDSA) who signed your confirmation letter and your supervisor. HRDS can help you reschedule, arrange to send a substitute, or cancel your registration. By notifying HRDS we can ensure that your training funds are not lost and you do not incur unnecessary costs to the government and/or to you.

A friendly reminder, the money you save on an event is funds that can be used later by you or by a fellow employee.

If you have any questions on cancelling, rescheduling or sending a substitute to a confirmed training event, contact your Human Resource Development Specialists at 703-588-3801.



Personal Accountability

Do you know how to “report in” in the event of a natural disaster?

DODI 3001.02 states that when directed by the Secretary of Defense (OSD), all DoD-affiliated personnel (this includes Civilian employees) in a declared disaster area are required to check-in with their organization either in person, by telephone, or via the internet. All DoDEA civilian employees and eligible family members outside the continental United States are covered by this Instruction.

In the coming months, DoDEA will be implementing the Fourth Estate Personnel Accountability & Assessment System (FEPAAS) which is an automated tool for reporting your whereabouts if an emergency is declared where you live, or are located at that time of the emergency (such as TDY). FEPAAS allows employees to report their status and whereabouts directly via a website. Your supervisor and other key personnel within the agency can immediately access entered information so that they know you and your family members are safely evacuated and to identify those employees and family members still in need of assistance during a disaster.

Please Save the Following Contact Information:

- FEPAAS website: <https://fepaas.whs.mil>
- A phone number or email address for your supervisor
- Personnel accountability email address: personnel.accountability@hq.dodea.edu
- Personnel Accountability Action Line 1-877-851-0150, 703-588-3805, DSN 425-3805

For more information on Personal Accountability contact your DoDEA representative, Nicole Pool, at 703-588-3809 or Nicole.pool@hq.dodea.edu.

Defense Logistics Agency (DLA)

Do You Need HR Assistance?

<u>PACIFIC:</u>	DHRC-DDODEAHR@dla.mil	<u>HQ STAFFING:</u>	DHRC-D-DODEAStaffing@dla.mil
General Line	614-692-2225 DSN 850-2225	General Line	614-692-3775 DSN 850-3775
Processing	614-692-8001 DSN 850-8001	Classification	614-692-0261 DSN 850-0261
Travel & Allowances	614-692-8702 DSN 850-8702	Logistics	614-692-8726 DSN 850-8726
		Education	614-692-9299 DSN 850-9299
		I.T.	614-692-8726 DSN 850-8726
<u>EUROPE:</u>	DHRC-DDODEAHR@dla.mil	Gen Counsel	614-692-9308 DSN 850-9308
General Line	614-692-2666 DSN 850-2666	EEO	614-692-9308 DSN 850-9308
Processing	614-692-0261 DSN 850-0261	Contracting	614-692-9299 DSN 850-9299
Trav/Allow	614-692-0314 DSN 850-0314	MCF & P	614-692-0261 DSN 850-0261 614-692-9308 DSN 850-9308
<u>DDESS/HQ:</u>	DHRC-DDODEAHR@dla.mil	HR	614-692-0261 DSN 850-0261
General Line	614-692-2913 DSN 850-2913	Res Mgmt	614-692-9299 DSN 850-9299
Processing	614-692-7386 DSN 850-7386		
Benefits	614-692-9277 DSN 850-9277		