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THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

WASHINGTON, DC 20301-1200

Aug 25 1997

MEMORANDUM FOR: SURGEON GENERAL OF THE ARMY
SURGEON GENERAL OF THE NAVY
SURGEON GENERAL OF THE AIR FORCE

SUBJECT: Policy On Active Duty Member Requests for Non-Emergency Dental Services From Civilian Providers

Active duty members requiring dental care who are assigned to geographically separated areas, and cannot be treated in a cost effective manner at military dental treatment facilities, should expect to receive timely evaluation of treatment plans submitted by civilian providers. Unfortunately, wide variance currently exists in the amount of time that military claims processing authorities take to process these preapprovals, creating uncertainty and frustration for personnel and, at times, leading to significant delays in treatment. Accordingly, policy needs to be established on processing these treatment plans.

It is Department of Defense Policy that requests for non-emergency dental treatment from civilian providers shall be processed and a reply forwarded within 21 days of receipt by a military claims processing authority. I recognize that unusual circumstances may exist that require more than 21 days for completion; however, all exceptions must be approved by military claims processing authority commanders. My point of contact is Colonel Marvin Bennett, Senior Consultant for Dentistry, who may be contacted at (703) 697-9181.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Edward D. Martin".

Edward D. Martin, M.D.
Acting Assistant Secretary of Defense

HA Policy 97-065

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Last update: 1/11/1999