



Tribal Benefits Administration Letter

Number: 12-601

Date: March 2, 2012

Subject: Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) Program: Conducting the Initial Enrollment Opportunity

The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) issues Tribal Benefits Administration Letters (TBAL) to help tribal employers administer the Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) Program. You will receive TBALs on various topics such as how to conduct the Initial Enrollment Opportunity (IEO), how to conduct the FEHB Open Season, and other information that would affect the administration of the FEHB Program.

TBAL 12-601 provides instructions on conducting the IEO for your eligible tribal employees in the FEHB Program. The second TBAL 12-602 provides information on ordering and distributing FEHB information.

Attachments

This TBAL is divided into five attachments as indicated below to more efficiently provide information regarding your responsibilities during the IEO.

- **Attachment 1: Advise, Inform, and Provide Information to Employees on the Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) Program and the Initial Enrollment Opportunity (IEO)**
- **Attachment 2: FEHB Program Tribal FastFacts: The Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) Program for Tribal Employees**
- **Attachment 3: FEHB Program Tribal FastFacts: Selecting a Health Plan During the Initial Enrollment Opportunity for Tribal Employees**
- **Attachment 4: FEHB Initial Enrollment Opportunity for Tribal Employees Flyer/Poster**
- **Attachment 5: Process FEHB Enrollment Actions**

Please distribute Attachments 2 - 3 to your employees and inform them that the 2012 plan information is available at www.opm.gov/insure/health/tribes/planinfo/index.asp.

- FEHB Program Tribal FastFacts: The FEHB Program for Tribal Employees (Attachment 2) - provides an overview of the FEHB Program.
- FEHB Program Tribal FastFacts: Selecting a Health Plan During the Initial

Enrollment Opportunity for Tribal Employees (Attachment 3) - provides a step-by-step process of what to think about during the IEO period.

- FEHB Initial Enrollment Opportunity for Tribal Employees (Attachment 4) – is a flyer/poster alerting tribal employees of the IEO. Tribal employers can use this to communicate information, such as the dates of the IEO, tribal benefits officer contact information, and website information.

Tribal Programs Listserv

We are pleased to announce our Tribal Programs listserv. The Tribal Programs listserv will email subscribers important information such as the Tribal Benefits Administration Letters (TBALs), FEHB Program updates, and other resources.

As a subscriber, the Tribal Listserv will keep you up-to-date on FEHB Program information for you and your tribal employees. Please consider becoming a subscriber. It's easy to do! Please follow the instructions below.

How to subscribe to the Tribal Programs listserv:

1. Send an email message requesting a subscription to the list. Address your email to: tribalprograms@listserv.opm.gov.
2. In the Subject Line of the email message, please type: SUBSCRIBE

Importance of Updated Contact Information in TIPS

OPM strongly recommends keeping all contact information updated in the Tribal Insurance Processing System (TIPS). OPM and the National Finance Center (NFC), as paymaster, use the contact information in TIPS to contact the tribal employer about any questions or inquiries. OPM also provides the Tribal Benefits Officer information to FEHB plans to contact about scheduling health fairs.

In addition, OPM starts its non-payment for premium process by contacting the individuals in TIPS. If TIPS's contact information is not up to date, OPM may not be able to reach the correct individual and may have to terminate the entire tribe, tribal organization, or urban Indian Organization from the Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) Program.

If you have specific questions, please contact the Tribal Desk at tribalprograms@opm.gov or at 202-606-2530. This contact information is for Tribal Benefits Officers only. Do not distribute this information to your tribal employees. OPM will redirect any tribal employee inquiry back to the Tribal Benefits Officer.

We look forward to working with you during this Initial Enrollment Opportunity. Again, we encourage you and your employees to visit www.opm.gov/tribalprograms.

Sincerely,

John O'Brien
Director
Healthcare and Insurance