
FEHB Program Carrier
Letter
All Carriers

**U.S. Office of Personnel
Management**

Letter No. 2003-11

Date: March 18, 2003

Fee-for-service [11] Experience-rated HMO [11] Community Rated [10]

SUBJECT: LEVEL ORANGE ALERT

The Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) Program is a central element of the American civil service, and a vital source of security and comfort to employees and their families. As FEHB carriers, your respect for the service our employees provide the Nation is appreciated, and we are grateful for your role in the lives of our employees. As the Nation moves to a Level Orange Alert, we need you to have procedures in place to ensure that immediate health care services are available to your Federal members should they be injured in an attack on the American Homeland.

While we expect you to operate under your OPM contract, we also expect you to demonstrate the maximum flexibility under the contract. For example, we expect that fee-for-service plans will relax the requirement under the pre-certification provision that the plan must be notified within two business days of an emergency admission. Likewise, fee-for-service plans and HMOs should relax their requirements about notification and levels of benefit payment when victims are taken to non-plan and/or non-PPO hospitals or other disaster treatment centers.

We also need your help to make certain that FEHB members get additional supplies of medications as backup for emergency situations, including:

- Enrollees can get six days of daily medicines and your renewal policies are flexible enough that it does not trip a non-approval..
- Flexibility so that uniformed services can meet medium term drug supply needs. At this time, a 90 day supply for called-to-active duty members should be made available.
- Flexibility so that civilian employees who need to go to off site locations to continue the functions of government can get an extra supply of prescriptions. At this time, a 30 day supply should be made available.

As a reminder, charges for work-related injuries sustained by Federal workers will be payable by the Office of Workers' Compensation Programs (OWCP). However, we encourage you to provide immediate payment and to seek subsequent reimbursement from OWCP.

This is a time for concern for all Americans, but through the dedicated professionalism of the Federal civil service and their teammates across the Nation, we stand firm and prepared to defend our freedom. We are very much focused on security for all Americans – security abroad and security at home. I know you are sensitive to the needs of your members, and I am counting on your full cooperation in the event there should be special circumstances.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kay Coles James", is centered on a light gray rectangular background.

Kay Coles James
Director