



DIRECTOR – CIVILIAN BENEFITS CENTER

Date: 11 October 2016

To: All Civilian Employees

Subj: Get Ready for the Federal Benefits Open Season: 14 November – 12 December 2016

1. This is the second message published to prepare you for the upcoming Federal Benefits Open Season. The first message entitled "Health, Dental and Vision Insurance Premiums for 2017" is available on the Office of Civilian Human Resources (OCHR) portal at <https://portal.secnav.navy.mil/orgs/MRA/DONHR/Benefits/Pages/Benefits-Officer-Messages.aspx>. On average, the Civilian Benefits Center (CBC) receives 14,000 health insurance elections during the open season. This is also the same time of the year that employees make changes to their Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) contributions or elect to make TSP Catch-up Contributions for the 2017 tax year.

2. Now is the time to take the appropriate steps to be ready:

a. Accessing Employee Benefits Information System (EBIS). EBIS is a self-service Web application that allows you to independently make your health insurance and TSP elections without the assistance of a Customer Service Representative. Since your EBIS password expires every 60 days, you may need to reset it before the start of the open season. Information about how to establish your EBIS account is available on the OCHR portal at <https://portal.secnav.navy.mil/orgs/MRA/DONHR/Benefits/Pages/EBIS.aspx>. In order to access EBIS, you must use a government computer; have a ".mil, .edu or .gov" email address and a Department of Defense Common Access Card. When prompted, select your email certificate. If this is your first time accessing the Web site, you will be required to complete a simple registration.

b. Open season Information. As information is received, it will be posted to the portal at https://portal.secnav.navy.mil/orgs/MRA/DONHR/Benefits/Pages/Benefits_Open_Season.aspx. Health insurance plan brochures will be available in early November. You are encouraged to read the information that is received via mail or email from your current health provider as they are required to provide plan changes that will occur in the next benefit year. The CBC cannot advise you on which health insurance plan is best suited for you; this is a decision you must make after reviewing the plans.

3. If you need assistance accessing your EBIS account, please call the Benefits Line at 888-320-2917 from 7:30 a.m. - 7:30 p.m., Eastern Time, Monday - Friday, except on Federal holidays. The TTY number is 866-359-5277. Because call volume is typically high during the open season period (14 November - 12 December), you may experience a longer than normal call wait time when attempting to reach the Benefits Line. The best time to call is before 10:00 a.m. and after 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time. Your patience is appreciated.

Another way to reach the Benefits Line is to email your questions to navybenefits@navy.mil. You must include your full name, pay plan, grade, contact telephone number and the best time to call. Please do not include Privacy Act or other Personally Identifiable Information such as date of birth or Social Security number in your email correspondence.

4. Open season will be busy – get ready now by ensuring you can access your EBIS account and review information on the Benefits Open Season.

Thank you,
Mary E. Foley