

OBTAINING MEDICAL SUPPORT FROM MILITARY PERSONNEL

Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS)

The military health care program is called TRICARE/CHAMPUS (Civilian Health and Medical Program of the Uniformed Services). A system called DEERS (Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System) maintains the information on the sponsor [military service personnel] and dependents enrolled in this program. The process for obtaining medical support from military parents is described below.

How to enroll in person

First of all, the child must be determined to be a military dependent and enrolled in DEERS. The documents needed for enrollment into DEERS should include a court ordered paternity determination (if the child's parents were not married), birth certificate, and a court order for child support or other means of providing support. The custodial parent must go to the nearest military ID card-issuing facility and present the appropriate documents to the verifying officer.

How to enroll by mail

A custodial parent wishing to enroll by mail should contact any military installation with a RAPIDS center. (RAPIDS stands for Real-Time Automated Personnel Identification Card System and refers to the program through which individuals receive ID cards and through which all personnel changes are made.) **Location of the nearest enrollment site or military installation can be obtained from the Defense Manpower Data Center (DMDC) Telephone Center from 6:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., Pacific Time, Monday through Friday at (800)-538-9552.** The nearest location may also be found via the Internet at <http://www.dmdc.osd.mil/rsl/>. (This web site is restricted to .mil and .gov users. County agencies or contractors will not be able to access it.)

Before the DEERS enrollment can be completed, an attempt will be made to have the military service personnel, known as the sponsor, sign the paperwork. The amount of time for this process will vary depending on the location and the assignment of the military member. If the sponsor is unwilling to sign, the verifying official may sign on behalf of the sponsor after all efforts to obtain the sponsor's signature have failed and those efforts have been documented.

Once enrolled in DEERS, the child is eligible to receive medical care in two ways. The child may be able to obtain medical care and medications from military hospitals and clinics. The child can also use the cost share medical coverage, TRICARE, with civilian health providers. Getting health care from a uniformed service hospital or clinic when available saves money and paperwork. Military bases have Health Benefits Advisors to assist custodial parents on medical options and choices.

TRICARE uses the term "shared" rather than "covered" because the cost is shared by the beneficiary after an annual deductible cost is satisfied. Claims to TRICARE can be submitted up to a year after treatment. Entitlement to DoD medical benefits is determined by either the child's date of birth, or the date(s) of the sponsor's military service, not the DEERS enrollment date. A TRICARE handbook explaining coverage is available by writing or calling:

TRICARE Management Activity (TMA)
Public Affairs Branch
Aurora, Colorado 80045-6900
(303) 361-1000/1129

How to Learn Whether a Dependent Has Been Enrolled in DEERS (TRICARE)

A legal dependent (one for whom paternity has been established) of a military personnel is eligible for TRICARE medical services through DEERS. The custodial parent can enroll the dependent at any military installation. If a caseworker wants to learn whether a child has already been enrolled in DEERS, he/she should write to the following address or call the toll-free number:

DMDC Support Office
Attn: CA99
400 Gigling Road
Seaside, CA 93955-6771
(800) 538-9552

Include the name and Social Security number (SSN) of the military service personnel as well as the name, SSN, and date of birth of the dependent.

Where to Send the Medical Support Notice for Active Duty and Retired Military

Send the National Medical Support Notice to DMDC. DMDC will respond with a letter in-lieu of the form. The National Medical Support Notice does not apply to the medical coverage received by active duty or retired service members because the medical coverage is an automatic benefit that service members receive for themselves and family members when on active duty and retired. It is not a health care coverage to be signed up for separately. Once an active duty military member and family members have been enrolled in the Defense Enrollment and Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS), they have medical benefits. These medical benefits do not include dental or vision care.

Send the National Medical Support Notice to:

DMDC Support Office
Attn: CA99
400 Gigling Road
Seaside, CA 939550-6771

Please do not send requests for medical coverage information for medical support orders to the Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS) in Cleveland.

How to Obtain Medical Insurance Information on DoD Civilian Employees

Medical insurance information on DoD civilian employees may be obtained from the human resources department of the employing agency. We are also working with DoD to obtain a central site for obtaining medical information for DoD civilian employees.