

SUBJECT: Improving Health Care Access for DoD Civilian Employees in Japan

CPPC Members:

The Department of Defense (DoD) is establishing a one-year pilot program to provide enhanced health care support to DoD civilian employees in Japan. The Pilot Health Insurance Enhancement for DoD Civilian Employees in Japan will assist participants with health care navigation, to include health care provider finder services, direct billing agreements, and improved reimbursement processes. This pilot program, at no cost to the participants, will test the feasibility and demand for this type of support.

This action was directed by the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness (USD(P&R)) after a yearlong effort to identify and address concerns regarding access to medical care for DoD civilians stationed in Japan. A few details about the pilot below:

- On September 30, 2024, DoD awarded a contract to International SOS (ISOS) to provide supplemental support services for DoD civilian employees. Services will begin January 1, 2025. The first three months of the contract will be a transition period. Between now and December 31, 2024, ISOS will stand up establish a centralized toll-tree number to a call center. The call center will be staffed 24/7 with bilingual staff and nurses to guide requestors through the process and help them determine what they need. The call center will also contact provider offices, book appointments, and (when necessary) issue payment guarantees up front. During this period, ISOS will also finalize procedures for processing requests and providing the covered services for employee use.
- The pilot will support DoD civilian employees with provider finder services, direct billing agreements, and improved reimbursement processes, provided by ISOS in coordination with the employees' Federal Health Employee Benefits (FEHB) plan. These services will mitigate the burden of civilian employees paying upfront for care and locating a provider in the Japanese health care system.
- Participation in the pilot program is limited to only DoD civilian employees enrolled in a participating FEHB plan and does not extend to dependents. If an employee is not currently enrolled in a participating FEHB plan, they must select a participating FEHB plan during the 2024 Federal Benefits Open Season enrollment period November 11 - December 9, 2024.
- The Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs (ASD (HA)) and the Defense Health Agency (DHA) are working with ISOS to finalize the list of participating FEHB plans, which will be provided as part of the open enrollment process. NAF employees are eligible for this program, but only through their insurance carrier, Aetna International.
- The pilot will test the feasibility and demand for these services. After one year, the USD(P&R) will review the performance of the pilot and determine appropriate next steps. Please note that emergency medical services at military hospitals and clinics will continue to

be available to anyone with base access on a cost-reimbursable basis (i.e., billed against the employee's insurance) and subject to both capability and capacity at the facility.

DoD is executing a communications campaign to ensure DoD civilian employees are aware of the pilot and the requirements for participation. There will be targeted communications in advance of, and during, the Open Season enrollment period to encourage DoD civilian employees to select a participating FEHB plan. CPP will also distribute more details on the services offered before Open Season begins.

Communications tactics will also include media engagement, Congressional notification, touchpoints with Military and Veteran Service Organizations and patient advocacy groups and coordinated social media. Any external inquiries should be directed to your servicing Office of Public Affairs or CPP for appropriate action and/or response.

The Defense Civilian Personnel Advisory Service (DCPAS) is also providing notice to unions with National Consultation Rights (NCR) during the communications period. A notice of information to NCR unions will launch today. Upon finalization of ISOS procedures for processing employee requests and providing the covered services, DCPAS will issue a 30-day NCR notice with an opportunity for unions to respond to impact and implementation matters.

The public announcement for this pilot program is posted on Defense.gov: [URL] and the DCPAS website: [URL]. In addition, DHA has posted information on the following military treatment facility websites in Japan.

- [18th Medical Group - Kadena Air Base > Getting Care > Appointments & Referrals \(tricare.mil\)](#)
- [35th Medical Group - Misawa Air Base > Getting Care > Appointments & Referrals \(tricare.mil\)](#)
- [374th Medical Group - Yokota Air Base > Getting Care > Appointments & Referrals \(tricare.mil\)](#)
- [Army Health Clinic BG Crawford Sams-Camp Zama > Getting Care > Appointments & Referrals \(tricare.mil\)](#)
- [Naval Hospital Yokosuka > Getting Care > Appointments & Referrals \(tricare.mil\)](#)
- [United States Naval Hospital Okinawa-Japan > Getting Care > Appointments & Referrals \(tricare.mil\)](#)

Request that you distribute this information widely to ensure your civilian employees in Japan get the word that this pilot program will be available for enrollment during Open Season with services starting January 1, 2025.

For questions, my POC is Sherri Ward, sherri.v.ward.civ@mail.mil.