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## News Releases

# Active Duty Family Members in Remote U.S. Locations Gain New TRICARE Benefit

September 03, 2002  
No. 02-22

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A new cost-saving benefit, TRICARE Prime Remote for Active Duty Family Members (TPRADFM), began Sept. 1, 2002, for family members of active duty sponsors who reside in locations designated as TRICARE Prime Remote (TPR) within the 50 United States. To be eligible for the new benefit, which is similar to TRICARE Prime, active duty family members (ADFMs) must live with their sponsor. In order to be eligible for TPR, the sponsor must be assigned to a duty location and reside at a location that is at least 50 miles or more in distance, or approximately a one-hour drive from the nearest military treatment facility. Active duty sponsors and family members also must be identified as eligible in the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS).

"Previously, the only option available to ADFMs residing in remote locations was to seek care from providers under the TRICARE Standard benefit," said John Leininger, TRICARE Prime Remote project manager, TRICARE Management Activity (TMA). "Starting Sept. 1, this inequity is eliminated. Like all other TRICARE Prime enrollees, these family members now have access to a TRICARE Prime-like benefit which has no copayments, deductibles or claim forms to file, and providers who meet rigorous standards for providing quality health care," Leininger said.

Enrollment in TPRADFM is voluntary, but highly encouraged, especially for family members who live with their sponsors in areas far away from a military treatment facility. ADFMs who choose to enroll may receive health care from either a TRICARE network provider or, if a network provider is not available, from any TRICARE-authorized civilian provider. ADFMs who choose not to enroll may continue using the TRICARE Standard or Extra benefits, with applicable cost shares and deductibles.

To enroll, ADFMs must complete and submit a TPRADFM enrollment application to their TRICARE regional managed care support contractor (MCSC). TMA recently authorized an extended "pre-enrollment" period to allow family members whose applications were received Sept. 1 to 20 to enroll in TPRADFM effective Sept. 1. After Sept. 20, the regular Prime enrollment period will resume, with applications received between the first and the 20th of month resulting in enrollment on the first day of the following month. Applications received after the 20th of the month will result in enrollment effective the first day of the second month after their enrollment applications are received (For example, if an application is received Sept. 21, enrollment begins Nov. 1). Telephone numbers for MCSCs and enrollment applications are available online at [www.tricare.osd.mil/remote/benes/adf.html](http://www.tricare.osd.mil/remote/benes/adf.html).

Family members who reside in locations where network providers are available must select a primary care manager (PCM) at the time of enrollment. If specialty care is required, the family member's PCM will contact the regional health care finder (HCF) to obtain the required pre-authorization. In locations where network providers are not available family members will not have an assigned PCM. They will, however, be required to use the services of authorized TRICARE providers (a licensed medical provider approved by TRICARE) for primary care, and the family member will need to contact the regional HCF to obtain pre-authorization for specialty care.

Shortly after enrolling in the TPRADFM program, family members will receive a welcome letter in the mail from their regional MCSC and a TPRADFM enrollment card. On the day of their scheduled medical appointment, the card along with their military identification card must be presented as verification of TPRADFM enrollment.

Family members who need assistance locating a TRICARE network or authorized provider may contact their regional health care finder or TRICARE Service Center toll-free, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. A list of the regional toll-free numbers is available online at [www.tricare.osd.mil/main/tollfree.htm](http://www.tricare.osd.mil/main/tollfree.htm). A provider directory is also available online at [www.tricare.osd.mil/provider\\_directory.html](http://www.tricare.osd.mil/provider_directory.html).

The new benefit supports approximately 140,000 active duty family members residing with TPR-eligible sponsors in remote locations. Eligibility is based on information available in DEERS. Sponsors are encouraged to verify that information listed for themselves and family members is correct by contacting the nearest identification card facility. They may also contact the Defense Manpower Data Center toll-free at 1-800-538-9552, to verify that information listed for themselves and their family members is correct. Additional information on the TPRADFM program for sponsors and family members is available on the TRICARE Web site at [www.tricare.osd.mil/remote](http://www.tricare.osd.mil/remote).

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The content of this page was updated on September 3, 2002