

MEMORANDUM TO OWNERS OF SYSTEMS WITH EMPLOYEE HEALTH
BENEFIT PROGRAM DATA

FROM: RONALD P. SANDERS
ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR
Division for Strategic Human Resources Policy

Subject: Changing the Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB)
Enrollment Code

We solicit your help and support in making a needed change to the Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) Enrollment Code. The three character coding structure currently used for FEHB enrollment, in which the first two fields identify the plan and the third field identifies the option and self or family enrollment, has been in place for over forty years. With the proliferation of new health benefit options and carriers, it is only a short time before we run out of three character enrollment codes. We believe a new six character coding structure will provide the flexibility needed to run the FEHB program well into the future, while still keeping the enrollment code relatively short and easy to use.

We realize that such a change is costly to make and takes time to accomplish, and therefore solicit your input on the following questions:

- If OPM were to establish a six character FEHB enrollment code and provide you with the coding structure by the end of January 2005, could you make the necessary system, record keeping, enrollee card, and other changes in time for the Calendar Year 2007 FEHB season? (Note: For payroll providers, this would mean withholdings made in the first full pay period in January 2007.)
- Can you suggest any alternatives that may be less costly or more effective, realizing that the three character code needs to be replaced?

We appreciate your participation in the FEHB program and feedback on this important issue. Please respond to the preceding questions by September 30, 2004. Responses should be sent to the Office of Personnel Management, Deputy Associate Director, Center for HR Systems Requirements and Strategies, 1900 E Street, NW. – Room 6H31, Washington, DC 20415. E-mail responses are also acceptable, and can be sent to: hrsystempolicy@opm.gov. Thank you.