

Newsflash 12-6

Federal Employees Health Benefits Program Coverage for Certain Firefighters **Information for Benefits Officers**

This Newsflash affects Temporary Firefighters

The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) issued BAL 12-203 on July 17, 2012, authorizing the eligibility to enroll in the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program (FEHBP) for employees who are in positions identified by OPM as providing emergency response services for wildland fire protection.

Agencies may make FEHBP enrollments for Temporary Firefighters and their eligible family members effective on July 17, 2012, unless the firefighter requests that his or her enrollment take effect at the beginning of the next pay period after he or she submits an election form.

Agencies may accept the SF 2809 enrollment form/accept a belated enrollment under 5 CFR 890.301(c); or accept an enrollment by proxy under 5 CFR 890.301(d).

To ensure a smooth enrollment process, agencies are requested to annotate in the Remarks section on the SF 2809 enrollment form that the enrollment is for temporary firefighters eligible for FEHBP coverage under 5 CFR 890.102(h).

OPM has amended regulation 5 CFR 890.102(i) to permit agencies to request that OPM extend FEHB coverage to employees engaged in a very high risk or life threatening emergency response services similar to the services performed by those responding to the wildfires and only when requested by their employing agencies.

Link to BAL 12-203: <http://www.opm.gov/retire/pubs/bals/2012/12-203.pdf>



Questions?

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