

Prime And Status Changes

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1.0 POLICY

1.1 Generally, when the TRICARE eligibility status changes, eligibility for TRICARE Prime benefits also changes. The time frames for Prime eligibility parallel TRICARE eligibility.

1.2 In all cases, when TRICARE eligibility ends, eligibility for Prime ceases. This includes retirees, their family members and survivors who turn age 65 and are entitled to Medicare but are not eligible for TRICARE for Life, dependent children who lose TRICARE eligibility due to age, remarriage of former spouses, etc.

1.3 To have continuous Prime coverage, the enrollee shall submit an enrollment form, **Beneficiary Web Enrollment (BWE) transaction, or a telephonic request** to the contractor before retirement and pay the appropriate enrollment fees within the required time frames (see [Section 2.1, paragraph 1.1.4.2.1](#)). Active duty personnel who retire may enroll at the same time as the remaining family members.

1.3.1 If this is not done prior to retirement or separation, enrollment or reenrollment will be effective according to the provisions of [Section 2.1, paragraph 1.1.4](#).

1.3.2 If the enrollee is receiving ongoing care at the time of retirement or separation, he/she must comply with all of the care authorization requirements of the enrollee's new status including getting a new authorization from the Managed Care Support Contractor (MCSC).

1.4 When status changes from Active Duty Family Member (ADFM) to retiree family member, Prime enrollees shall be offered an opportunity to continue enrollment in Prime, if available, but at the retiree cost-sharing rates. These enrollees must pay the applicable enrollment fees. Beneficiaries shall be permitted to keep their Primary Care Manager (PCM), if possible. Military Treatment Facility (MTF) Commanders shall determine if retiring beneficiaries who enroll in Prime could keep their MTF PCMs, given the MTF's enrollment plan and MTF capacity.

1.5 Prime Enrollment for Transitional Survivors. Those in Transitional Survivor Status, are not distinguished from other ADFMs for Prime eligibility. See the Transitional Survivor Status policy in [Section 7.1](#).

1.6 When an active duty member retires other than the first of the month or a member separates other than the first of the month but continues to be eligible (e.g., is the spouse of an active duty member; or is eligible for Transitional Assistance Management Program (TAMP)), Prime enrollment

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may continue as of the date of retirement or separation so long as all enrollment requirements have been met as stated in [Section 2.1, paragraph 1.1.4](#).

1.7 When TRICARE Prime enrollment changes from an individual to a family enrollment status prior to annual renewal for beneficiary categories required to pay an enrollment fee, the unused portion (pro-rated on a monthly basis) of the fee will be applied toward a new enrollment period or refunded in accordance with the TRICARE Operations Manual (TOM), [Chapter 6, Section 1, paragraph 7.0](#).

1.7.1 For ADFMs, single enrollment can be changed to family at any time during the enrollment period. A new enrollment period shall be established for the family.

1.7.2 In cases of a change in status from single to family based on the birth or adoption of a child, the newborn or adoptee will be deemed to be enrolled in Prime as of the day of birth or adoption. A responsible representative has 60 days to officially enroll the child to the Prime option. If the newborn or adoptee is formally enrolled in Prime within the 60 day period, the date of enrollment will be the first of the month following the date of birth or adoption. (The 20th of the month enrollment rule is waived, if necessary.) If the newborn or adoptee is not formally enrolled during the 60 day calendar period, the newborn or adoptee will revert to a non-enrolled beneficiary effective the 61st day. If the decision is made to continue Prime coverage, an **official enrollment request** (enrollment form, **BWE transaction, or telephonic request**) must be completed on behalf of the child. For retirees or their family members or survivors who decide to continue enrollment for the child, the unused portion (pro-rated on a monthly basis) of the single enrollment fee they paid will be applied toward a new family enrollment period. For newborns and newly adopted children enrolled under this provision, Point of Service cost-sharing does not apply through the 60th day or the date the enrollment form is actually received by the contractor, whichever is earlier. All services shall be processed with the Prime copayment even in the absence of referrals or authorizations. The TRICARE Regional Director (RD) is granted the authority to extend the deemed period up to 120-days, on a case-by-case or regional basis.

Note: In the case of a reservist who has been called to active duty for a period of 30 days or less, a new family member is not considered enrolled in Prime, since the dependents of the reservist are not eligible to enroll in Prime.

1.7.3 For those newborns and adoptees who are covered under the 60 day "deemed enrollment" benefit, process these claims as civilian Prime for this period. If the newborn or adoptee is formally enrolled during this period, process using enrollment status. If the newborn or adoptee is not formally enrolled during the 60 day calendar day period, at the end of the 60th calendar day period, the contractor shall process all claims as a non-enrolled beneficiary, applying the appropriate TRICARE cost-shares and deductibles. See the TOM, [Chapter 8, Section 1, paragraph 5.0](#) for claims processing procedures.

1.8 When a family enrollment status changes to single, there is no refund of the paid enrollment fee, unless the family enrollment becomes an individual enrollment due to death of one or more family members or a retired TRICARE Prime enrollee becomes dual eligible (see the TOM, [Chapter 6, Section 1, paragraph 7.0](#)). The remaining single enrollee continues to have Prime coverage until the enrollee takes action to disenroll, the enrollee is no longer eligible for TRICARE Prime, or the enrollee fails to pay a required enrollment fee.

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1.9 TRICARE eligible beneficiaries who have less than 12 months of eligibility remaining (for example, retirees who are 64 years of age, TAMP beneficiaries, etc.) are allowed to enroll in Prime, however, these enrollees will be disenrolled from Prime when they lose their TRICARE eligibility. The beneficiary has the choice of paying all of the enrollment fee or paying the fees on a monthly or quarterly basis. If paid on a monthly or quarterly basis, the beneficiary will be required to pay the installments that would cover the period of their eligibility only. See [paragraph 1.8](#) for those who pay in full at the beginning of the enrollment period.

1.10 For exceptions to enrollment fee refunds, see the TOM, [Chapter 6, Section 1](#).

1.11 Enrollees may disenroll from TRICARE Prime according to the requirements of [Section 2.1](#).

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