

USDA-ARS
Human Resources Division
5601 Sunnyside Avenue
Beltsville, MD 20705-5107

**ELECTION OF BENEFITS COVERAGE FOR EMPLOYEES CALLED TO ACTIVE
MILITARY DUTY**

Requesting Leave Without Pay or Separating (for more than 30 days)
(current as of February 26, 2003)

EMPLOYEE NAME (PLEASE TYPE
OR PRINT)

SSN:

DATE LWOP BEGAN:

Or

DATE OF SEPARATION:

MAILING ADDRESS FOR OFFICIAL CORRESPONDENCE AND CONTACT TELEPHONE NUMBER:

Federal Employee Health Benefits (FEHB)

The FEHB Program allows you to continue coverage **at no cost to you** for up to 18 months while you are on leave without pay (LWOP) or separate to enter active duty military. At the end of the 18 months your coverage will terminate. You and your eligible family members will have 31 days to convert to a non-group policy. When you return to active Federal Service you can enroll in an FEHB plan within 60 days of the return to service (as long as the position is not excluded from coverage). **If you do not want to continue your FEHB** please check below, sign, and date this form. The termination is not considered a break in the continuous coverage necessary for continuing FEHB coverage into retirement. However, the period during which the termination is in effect does not count toward satisfying the required 5 years of continuous coverage.

Continue the enrollment

Terminate the enrollment

Not Enrolled

Lump-Sum Annual Leave

As an employee called to active military duty you may choose to (1) have your annual leave remain to your credit until you return to your civilian position, or (2) receive a lump-sum payment for all accrued and accumulated annual leave. There is no requirement for you to separate from your civilian Federal position in order to receive the lump-sum payment, you must refund your agency an amount equal to the pay that covers the period between the date of reemployment and the expiration of the lump-sum leave period.

I want my annual leave to remain

I elect a lump-sum payment for my annual leave*

I elect to use my annual leave while on active duty**

I elect to use my military leave while on active duty**

*There is no requirement for you to separate from your civilian federal position in order to receive the lump-sum payment. If you return to your civilian position prior to the end of the period covered by the lump-sum payment, you must refund your agency an amount equal to the pay that covers the period between the date of reemployment and the expiration of the lump-sum period.

**I understand that when I am performing active military duty, my compensation will be based on the terms of my military pay grade. Compensation from my civilian position will not be received unless I elect to use military or annual leave. I will work out the details of my leave usage (annual and Military) with my supervisor and timekeeper before I report for active duty.

Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) Loan Payments

If you are currently making loan payments to TSP, while you are on LWOP to perform military service, you will be permitted to suspend payments on your loan until you return to pay status. Although loan payments will not be due before then, interest will continue to accrue for the entire period. (You cannot repay your civilian TSP loan by making loan allotments from your uniformed services pay.) The maximum time limits for repayments, 5 years for general purpose loans or 18 years for residential loans, will be extended by the length of your military service. If you separate, TSP will send you a notice with instructions to repay your loan within 90 days. If you do not pay the loan in full within the required date, the outstanding balance of your loan and any unpaid interest will be reported to the IRS as a taxable distribution.

Are you currently paying a civilian TSP loan? **YES** **NO**

CERTIFICATION

Employee Signature

Date

Agency Representative

Date

(Please complete, sign, and return this document with your SF-52, "Request for Personnel Action", and a copy of your military orders, to your personnel contact)

(Current as of February 26, 2003)

Miscellaneous

Long Term Care (LTC) Insurance: If you are going on LWOP or separating from Federal Civilian Service and you have LTC Insurance you will be able to continue coverage. If your premium is being paid by payroll deductions, you will need to contact LTC office by calling 1-800-582-3337 to make arrangements for continued payments. If you decide to cancel coverage while in LWOP you will not be given another opportunity to enroll using the abbreviated underwriting, but you will be able to reapply for the insurance using the full underwriting application.

Federal Employees Group Life Insurance (FEGLI): FEGLI will continue for 12 months while on LWOP. If you separate you are considered to be in a nonpay status for FEGLI purposes and will keep your coverage for up to 12 months, or until 90 days after your military service ends, whichever date comes first. This coverage is free. You will also have a 31 day extension of coverage and a right to convert.

Thrift Savings Plan (TSP): For purposes of the TSP, no contributions can be made, either by the agency or the employee, for any time in an LWOP status or for a period of separation. Once you are in a pay status, you will be able to make up missed contributions. Additional information can be found at www.tsp.gov in the TSP Fact Sheet “Benefits that Apply to Members of the Military Who Return to Federal Civilian Service”.

Retirement: If you are in a LWOP status while performing active military duty, you continue to be covered by the retirement law you are currently covered under, either the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) or the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS). Death benefits will be paid as if you were still in the civilian position. Should you become disabled while on Active Duty, disability benefits will be paid if you meet the minimum civilian service requirement (5 years for CSRS, 18 months for FERS). Upon eventual retirement from civilian service, the period of military service is creditable under either CSRS or FERS, subject to the rules for crediting military service. If you separate to enter active military duty, you will receive retirement credit for the period of separation when you exercise restoration rights to your civilian position. If you separate and do not exercise the restoration right, but later re-enters civilian service, the military service may be credited under the retirement system, subject to the rules governing credit for military service. However, if you are covered by CSRS and separate to enter active military duty during a period of war or national emergency as declared by Congress or proclaimed by the President, you are deemed not to have separated from your civilian position for retirement purposes, unless you apply for and receive a refund of your retirement deductions.

Bonds/Allotments/Court Orders: If you have bonds or allotments, they will stop while you are in LWOP. You will need to make arrangements with your Military Finance Office if you wish to continue. If there is a court order on file with our agency, the court will be notified on your separation or LWOP status.

DESIGNATION OF BENEFICIARY FORMS

<http://www.opm.gov/insure/designations>

You are encouraged to keep your Designation of Beneficiary Forms up to date. If a designation is on file, payment will be made to the last form on file regardless of the family status. If you are unsure of your designations you are encouraged to complete the various designation forms.

If a designation is not on file, the payment will be made in the order of precedence as follows:

1. To your widow or widower.
2. If none, to your child or children equally, and descendants of deceased children by representation. (A court will usually have to appoint a guardian to receive payment for a minor child)
3. If none, to your parents equally or to the surviving parent.
4. If none, to the appointed executor or administrator of your estate.
5. If none, to your next of kin who is entitled to your estate under the laws of the state in which you resided at the time of your death.

To file a Designation of Beneficiary form or to update a current designation use the following forms:

SF- 1152 Designation of Beneficiary for **Unpaid Compensation** (last pay check, annual leave, awards) This form should be given to the personnel office. (Maintained in the Official Personnel Folder (OPF).

<http://www.opm.gov/insure/designations>

TSP-3 Designation of Beneficiary for the **Thrift Saving Plan (TSP)** (this form is mailed directly to the TSP office at the address listed on the form). <http://www.opm.gov/insure/designations>

SF-2823 (new form dated April 2001, previous editions are not usable) Designation of Beneficiary for the **Federal Employees' Group Life Insurance**. This form should be given to the personnel office.

(Maintained in the OPF). <http://www.opm.gov/insure/designations>

SF-2808 Designation of Beneficiary for the **Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS)**. This form is mailed directly to the Office of Personnel Management, address listed on the form. This form is used only for employees covered under CSRS or CSRS/Offset. <http://www.opm.gov/insure/designations>

SF-3102 Designation of Beneficiary for the **Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS)**. This form should be given to the personnel office. (Maintained in the OPF). This form is used only for employees covered under FERS. <http://www.opm.gov/insure/designations>