

NOAA CORPS FREQUENTLY ASKED MEDICAL QUESTIONS

Medical Benefit FAQs After Transfer and Receiving Care When Sick or Injured

NOAA Corps officers can access healthcare while at home or when traveling for business or pleasure by coordinating care with TriCare. NOAA Corps officers are responsible for familiarizing themselves with sick leave, convalescent leave and maternity leave policies and procedures covered in the NOAA Corps Directives (NCD), [Chapter 6, Part 4](#).

Q: I have just arrived at my new duty assignment. How do I find a TriCare participating Primary Care Manager (PCM) in my new town of residence?

A: Steps for healthcare benefits upon transfer.

-Login to [milConnect](#) website

- Click on the blue "Sign In" button at the top of the page.
- Ensure your phone number, email address, home and duty station are updated
- Go to the Family Members list and select whose PCM you want to change.
- On the Medical Enrollments tab, select the "Change PCM" button.

- Or you can call you Regional Tricare Contractor

East Region: Humana Military (1-800-444-5445)

West Region: Health Net (1-844-866-9378)



Upon transfer it is recommended that officers establish care with their new PCM.

Q: What do I do if my PCM orders a special test/procedure or refers me to see another physician or specialist?

A: Your PCM sends a referral from their office to the designated TriCare regional contractor (West: Health Net or East: Humana). Officers are responsible for registering with their regional contractor. For [TriCare East: Humana](#) and [TriCare West: Health Net](#).

Active Duty Service Members can view the referral or pre-authorization in their regions portal. Once your PCM submits the referral request, allow up to three business days for a referral, and up to five business days for an authorization. You may see the referral authorization before the referral's physician office receives it. Please review the referral for the number of office visits authorized and the expiration dates of your referral. If there is a question, call your TriCare regional contractor.

Q: What are the differences between TriCare Prime and TriCare Prime Remote?

A: [TriCare Prime](#). Requires enrollment (see previous question and answer on how to enroll). Care is managed by military hospitals and clinics or military treatment facilities (MTF). [Here is the link to find an MTF near you.](#)

[TriCare Prime Remote](#): TRICARE Prime Remote (TPR) is a managed care option available in remote areas in the United States. TriCare Prime Remote also requires enrollment. By law, you can only use TPR if both your sponsor's home and work addresses are more than 50 miles (or one hour's drive time) from a military hospital or clinic.

Q: I am transferring assignments this summer. What should I do to prepare for this?

A: Treat this transfer as an opportunity to catch up on getting your routine health care, if needed. Before you move, be sure to discuss any ongoing health issues with your current primary care manager, family doctor, or specialist. You should also schedule routine physicals and immunizations. If you have any civilian medical or dental providers, be sure to ask for copies of your records to take with you.

Remember to complete TriCare enrollment as soon as you arrive at your new duty station and BEFORE you become ill and require medical treatment. NOAA Corps officers who do not enroll or update their enrollment upon change of duty station may experience difficulties in getting specialty referrals as well as delays in scheduling medical appointments.

Q: If I get sick, where do I go for medical care and treatment?

A: TriCare covers emergency care. Emergency care means care for an illness or injury that threatens your life, limb, sight, or safety. If you reasonably believe you have an emergency, always call 911 or your international emergency number, or go to the nearest emergency room. If you're enrolled in a TriCare Prime plan, contact your primary care manager within 24 hours or the next business day after you receive emergency care. Also, be sure to follow up with your PCM for a referral for all specialty care appointments.

In a non-emergent situation you should contact your PCM. If it's after hours or if you are not sure if you need to see a provider, call the TriCare Nurse Advice Line 24/7 at 1-800-TRICARE (874-2273) option 1 to talk with a registered nurse.

Q: What medical records does CPC require if I see a doctor or go to an emergency room?

A: As prescribed in [NCD 03101](#), officers are responsible for providing complete information regarding matters of their health to CPC's Medical Affairs Branch (MAB). Therefore, all medical records from healthcare providers and other related medical visits should be submitted. Medical records could include, but are not limited to: operative notes, physician progress notes, lab results, diagnostic procedures, admission and/or discharge summaries, emergency room records, etc.. These documents should be submitted via [MHS GENESIS patient portal](#) to NOAA Corps Medical Affairs.

At the time of your appointment or your emergency room visit you should obtain from the provider their recommendation for duties or any activity restriction(s). This recommendation must be submitted to the MAB (email notification via noaacorps.medical@noaa.gov) and upload supporting medical documents through MHS GENESIS Patient Portal.

Q: How do I obtain these medical records?

A: Ask for your medical records at the time of the appointment or emergency room visit. Most likely the documentation at that time will be incomplete. ALL records (including lab results, x-ray reports) will not be immediately available. It is best to sign a formal release of medical information at the time of your appointment/visit for release of complete medical records. It is the officer's responsibility to submit all medical records to the MAB as soon as they are available. Submission of these medical records will also assist you in filing a medical claim (if applicable) with the Veterans Affairs Administration upon separation or retirement from the NOAA Corps.

If you were seen at a Military Treatment Facility you can view your records on [MHS Genesis Patient Portal](#) and send notification of the appointment date and type to MAB at noaacorps.medical@noaa.gov. MAB has access to view records in MHS GENESIS.

Q: What should I do if I am planning a medical procedure, surgery or treatment?

A: Please contact MAB as soon as possible at noaacorps.medical@noaa.gov and upload all supporting medical documents utilizing the MHS GENESIS Patient Portal.

Q: What do I do if I attempt to receive medical services at a MTF and am asked for a Unit Identification Code (UIC)?

A: UIC identifies your active duty service unit. The NOAA Corps does not utilize this code. When a UIC is requested by an MTF, officers may inform them that NOAA Corps does not use a UIC and provide them with the code “55555” which is classified as unknown.