

Subject: Reservists and FEHB Deductions from Awards

Sent: Tuesday, 17 June 2003

The purpose of this E-mail is to provide you a heads-up on a problem regarding award payments to employees called to active military duty.

Some reservists who elected to continue their Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) while on active duty in support of a contingency have reported that FEHB deductions were taken from their award payments. The Benefits and Entitlements Service Team (BEST) was hopeful these were isolated incidents since in Apr 03 our POC at DFAS-Pensacola shared with us there was a "fix" in place with the payroll system to stop deductions from coming out of employee cash awards. Unfortunately, we found out today the "fix" did not work and FEHB deductions will be taken from reservists' awards.

As I am sure you will remember, this same problem occurred last year. Procedures were developed and monies owed to reservists due to erroneous deductions from cash awards should have been refunded. At this time, we are waiting for procedures from HQ DFAS on how to best handle the issue for this year.

Last year, many CPFs were contacted directly by employees and since Leave and Earning Statements will be hitting the web tomorrow, we wanted to provide you with a heads up. If employees contact your staff directly, there are two options.

- The first option is to refer employees to BEST. For those employees who contact BEST, we will advise employees, capture their information, and share with them that we are waiting for guidance from HQ DFAS.
- The second option is for your staff to keep a record of the names, Social Security Numbers (SSN), commercial telephone numbers of the reservists, and the specifics about their awards; i.e., what exactly was deducted from the award. If your staff chooses to prepare a consolidated list, please E-mail the list to laurie.lynch@randolph.af.mil. Ms Lynch can also be reached via the BEST CPF Line toll-free number. Because of the anticipated workload associated for both BEST and DFAS, please only send a list of affected employees, not a listing of all your reservists who received a performance award.

Once we receive guidance from HQ DFAS on what their procedures will be, we will send you an update.

As we work thru these challenging times together, we appreciate your continued support.

Chief, Special Operations Division
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