



March 18, 2005

Mr. William H. Young
President
National Association of Letter
Carriers, AFL-CIO
100 Indiana Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20001-2144

Dear Bill:

The Postal Service is implementing changes in the administration of Federal Employee Health Benefits Plan (FEHBP) and Federal Employees' Group Life Insurance (FEGLI) for career employees absent to perform active duty military service.

Civilian employees of the U.S. Postal Service who serve in the National Guard or Reserve and are called to active duty (voluntarily or involuntary) in support of a contingency operation as defined in Title 10 U.S.C. 101(a)(13), are eligible for full payment of FEHBP premiums by the Postal Service. Under Executive Order 12302 and 13223, the President has authorized the Department of Defense and the Department of Transportation to order any unit and any member of the Ready Reserve to active duty for not more than 24 consecutive months. The Postal Service will provide coverage up to that period of service.

Effective March 17, 2005, the Postal Service will pay the employee's share, in addition to the Postal Service's share, of the FEHBP premium for up to twenty-four months for covered, qualified career employees. This coverage is retroactive to December 28, 2002. The changes also provide for a Leave Without Pay (LWOP) Interruption Option that allows for the use of annual leave interrupt periods of LWOP to extend health benefit coverage.

Enclosed is a copy of the final draft of the new Management Instruction providing implementation instructions for the field that will provide you with the details of this support initiative. You will receive a copy of the published document.

These changes are made pursuant to new federal guidance on the extension of coverage, and are made in our continuing efforts to support our employees called to active military duty.

If you have any questions on this matter, please contact Charles Baker at (202) 268-3832.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Doug A. Tulino".

Doug A. Tulino
Manager
Labor Relations Policies and Programs

Enclosure