

(Added Pub. L. 108-496, § 3, Dec. 23, 2004, 118 Stat. 4008.)

EFFECTIVE DATE

Section effective Dec. 23, 2004, and applicable to contracts that take effect with respect to the calendar year 2006, see section 7 of Pub. L. 108-496, set out as a note under section 8951 of this title.

**§ 8986. Election of coverage**

(a) An eligible individual may enroll in a vision benefits plan for self-only, self plus one, or for self and family. If an eligible individual has a spouse who is also eligible to enroll, either spouse, but not both, may enroll for self plus one or self and family. An individual may not be enrolled both as an employee, annuitant, or other individual eligible to enroll and as a member of the family.

(b) The Office shall prescribe regulations under which—

(1) an eligible individual may enroll in a vision benefits plan; and

(2) an enrolled individual may change the self-only, self plus one, or self and family coverage of that individual.

(c)(1) Regulations under subsection (b) shall permit an eligible individual to cancel or transfer the enrollment of that individual to another vision benefits plan—

(A) before the start of any contract term in which there is a change in rates charged or benefits provided, in which a new plan is offered, or in which an existing plan is terminated; or

(B) during other times and under other circumstances specified by the Office.

(2) A transfer under paragraph (1) shall be subject to waiting periods provided under a new plan.

(Added Pub. L. 108-496, § 3, Dec. 23, 2004, 118 Stat. 4008.)

EFFECTIVE DATE

Section effective Dec. 23, 2004, and applicable to contracts that take effect with respect to the calendar year 2006, see section 7 of Pub. L. 108-496, set out as a note under section 8951 of this title.

**§ 8987. Coverage of restored survivor or disability annuitants**

A surviving spouse, disability annuitant, or surviving child whose annuity is terminated and is later restored, may continue enrollment in a vision benefits plan subject to the terms and conditions prescribed in regulations issued by the Office.

(Added Pub. L. 108-496, § 3, Dec. 23, 2004, 118 Stat. 4009.)

EFFECTIVE DATE

Section effective Dec. 23, 2004, and applicable to contracts that take effect with respect to the calendar year 2006, see section 7 of Pub. L. 108-496, set out as a note under section 8951 of this title.

**§ 8988. Premiums**

(a) Each eligible individual obtaining supplemental vision coverage under this chapter shall be responsible for 100 percent of the premiums for such coverage.

(b) The Office shall prescribe regulations specifying the terms and conditions under which individuals are required to pay the premiums for enrollment.

(c) The amount necessary to pay the premiums for enrollment may—

(1) in the case of an employee, be withheld from the pay of such an employee; or

(2) in the case of an annuitant, be withheld from the annuity of such an annuitant.

(d) All amounts withheld under this section shall be paid directly to the qualified company.

(e) Each participating qualified company shall maintain accounting records that contain such information and reports as the Office may require.

(f)(1) The Employee Health Benefits Fund is available, without fiscal year limitation, for reasonable expenses incurred by the Office in administering this chapter before the first day of the first contract period, including reasonable implementation costs.

(2)(A) There is established in the Employees Health Benefits Fund a Vision Benefits Administrative Account, which shall be available to the Office, without fiscal year limitation, to defray reasonable expenses incurred by the Office in administering this chapter after the start of the first contract year.

(B) A contract under this chapter shall include appropriate provisions under which the qualified company involved shall, during each year, make such periodic contributions to the Vision Benefits Administrative Account as necessary to ensure that the reasonable anticipated expenses of the Office in administering this chapter during such year are defrayed.

(Added Pub. L. 108-496, § 3, Dec. 23, 2004, 118 Stat. 4009; amended Pub. L. 114-328, div. A, title VII, § 715(b)(2), Dec. 23, 2016, 130 Stat. 2222.)

AMENDMENT OF SUBSECTION (c)

*Pub. L. 114-328, div. A, title VII, § 715(b)(2), (c), Dec. 23, 2016, 130 Stat. 2222, 2223, provided that, applicable with respect to the first contract year for chapter 89A or 89B of this title, as applicable, that begins on or after Jan. 1, 2018, this section is amended:*

*(1) in paragraph (1), by striking “or” at the end;*

*(2) in paragraph (2), by striking the period at the end and inserting a semicolon; and*

*(3) by adding at the end the following new paragraphs:*

*(3) in the case of a covered TRICARE-eligible individual who receives pay from the Federal Government or an annuity from the Federal Government due to the death of a member of the uniformed services (as defined in section 101 of title 10), and is not a former spouse of a member of the uniformed services, be withheld from—*

*(A) the pay (including retired pay) of such individual; or*

*(B) the annuity paid to such individual; or*

*(4) in the case of a covered TRICARE-eligible individual who is not described in paragraph (3), be billed to such individual directly.*

*See 2016 Amendment note below.*

AMENDMENTS

2016—Subsec. (c)(3), (4). Pub. L. 114-328 added pars. (3) and (4).

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 2016 AMENDMENT

Amendment by Pub. L. 114-328 applicable with respect to the first contract year for chapter 89A or 89B of this title, as applicable, that begins on or after Jan. 1, 2018, see section 715(c) of Pub. L. 114-328, set out as a note under section 8951 of this title.

EFFECTIVE DATE

Section effective Dec. 23, 2004, and applicable to contracts that take effect with respect to the calendar year 2006, see section 7 of Pub. L. 108-496, set out as a note under section 8951 of this title.

§ 8989. Preemption

The terms of any contract that relate to the nature, provision, or extent of coverage or benefits (including payments with respect to benefits) shall supersede and preempt any State or local law, or any regulation issued thereunder, which relates to vision benefits, insurance, plans, or contracts.

(Added Pub. L. 108-496, § 3, Dec. 23, 2004, 118 Stat. 4010.)

EFFECTIVE DATE

Section effective Dec. 23, 2004, and applicable to contracts that take effect with respect to the calendar year 2006, see section 7 of Pub. L. 108-496, set out as a note under section 8951 of this title.

§ 8990. Studies, reports, and audits

(a) Each contract shall contain provisions requiring the qualified company to—

- (1) furnish such reasonable reports as the Office determines to be necessary to enable it to carry out its functions under this chapter; and
- (2) permit the Office and representatives of the Government Accountability Office to examine such records of the qualified company as may be necessary to carry out the purposes of this chapter.

(b) Each Federal agency shall keep such records, make such certifications, and furnish the Office, the qualified company, or both, with such information and reports as the Office may require.

(c) The Office shall conduct periodic reviews of plans under this chapter, including a comparison of the vision benefits available under chapter 89, to ensure the competitiveness of plans under this chapter. The Office shall cooperate with the Government Accountability Office to provide periodic evaluations of the program.

(Added Pub. L. 108-496, § 3, Dec. 23, 2004, 118 Stat. 4010.)

EFFECTIVE DATE

Section effective Dec. 23, 2004, and applicable to contracts that take effect with respect to the calendar year 2006, see section 7 of Pub. L. 108-496, set out as a note under section 8951 of this title.

§ 8991. Jurisdiction of courts

The district courts of the United States have original jurisdiction, concurrent with the United States Court of Federal Claims, of a civil action or claim against the United States under this chapter after such administrative remedies as required under section 8983(d) have been exhausted, but only to the extent judicial review

is not precluded by any dispute resolution or other remedy under this chapter.

(Added Pub. L. 108-496, § 3, Dec. 23, 2004, 118 Stat. 4010.)

EFFECTIVE DATE

Section effective Dec. 23, 2004, and applicable to contracts that take effect with respect to the calendar year 2006, see section 7 of Pub. L. 108-496, set out as a note under section 8951 of this title.

§ 8992. Administrative functions

(a) The Office shall prescribe regulations to carry out this chapter. The regulations may exclude an employee on the basis of the nature and type of employment or conditions pertaining to it.

(b) The Office shall, as appropriate, provide for coordinated enrollment, promotion, and education efforts as appropriate in consultation with each qualified company. The information under this subsection shall include information relating to the vision benefits available under chapter 89, including the advantages and disadvantages of obtaining additional coverage under this chapter.

(Added Pub. L. 108-496, § 3, Dec. 23, 2004, 118 Stat. 4010.)

EFFECTIVE DATE

Section effective Dec. 23, 2004, and applicable to contracts that take effect with respect to the calendar year 2006, see section 7 of Pub. L. 108-496, set out as a note under section 8951 of this title.

CHAPTER 90—LONG-TERM CARE INSURANCE

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§ 9001. Definitions

For purposes of this chapter:

(1) EMPLOYEE.—The term “employee” means—

- (A) an employee as defined by section 8901(1);
- (B) an individual described in section 2105(e);
- (C) an individual employed by the Tennessee Valley Authority;
- (D) an employee of a nonappropriated fund instrumentality of the Department of Defense described in section 2105(c); and
- (E) an employee of the District of Columbia courts.

(2) ANNUITANT.—The term “annuitant” means—

- (A) any individual who would satisfy the requirements of paragraph (3) of section 8901 if, for purposes of such paragraph, the term “employee” were considered to have the meaning given to it under paragraph (1);
- (B) any individual who—
  - (i) satisfies all requirements for title to an annuity under subchapter III of chapter