

Newsbytes

November 30, 2018

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Partial Government Shutdown Possible

Congress is facing the possibility of a partial government shutdown as legislators return to Washington, DC following their Thanksgiving Day recess. Before the November elections Congress passed a Continuing Resolution to keep certain parts of government open (Departments of Justice, Commerce, Housing and Urban Development, State and Homeland Security) until December 7, 2018.

The Department of Defense Authorization and Defense and Veterans Affairs Appropriations bills have passed and have been signed into law. Since Defense and Veterans spending legislation has already been enacted, FRA members should not be impacted. The one exception would be Department of Homeland Security (DHS) that includes the U.S. Coast Guard. Coast Guard retirees will continue to receive benefits, but Active duty might have their pay delayed and would be paid after the shutdown ends.

FRA Provides Navy and Marine Corps Legislative Fellows Process Brief

This week at FRA HQ, staff gave separate legislation process briefs to the Calendar Year 2019 Navy and Marine Corps Fellows. Both the Marine Corps and Navy offer Congressional Fellowship Programs where participants get the opportunity to work in the legislative branch of the federal government for one year. FRA has provided a legislative process brief to Marine and Navy Legislative Fellows in recent years.

TRICARE Open Season and FEDVIP Sign Up is Now Available

TRICARE Open Season has begun and the Federal Employee Dental and Vision Insurance Program (FEDVIP) enrollment is also now available on line.

If a beneficiary is using a TRICARE health plan and they do not want to make any changes, they do not have to do anything during TRICARE Open Season. If a beneficiary wants to make changes (such as switching from individual to family plan, switch from Select to Prime or vice versa) to their health plan, they must do it during TRICARE Open Season (November 12, 2018-December 10, 2018) or because of a Qualifying Life Event. For more information about TRICARE Open Season [go online](#).

Also the enrollment period is currently open for the Federal Employee Dental and Vision Insurance Program (FEDVIP) through the BENEFEDS enrollment portal [online](#). The FEDVIP

open enrollment ends December 12, 2018. On December 31, 2018, the Defense Health Agency's (DHA)

TRICARE Retiree Dental Program (TRDP) will expire. Military retirees and their families, who were eligible for expiring TRDP, now have the opportunity to enroll in FEDVIP. The opportunity to enroll in FEDVIP is in conjunction with the next Federal Benefits Open Season, which runs from November 12 through December 10, 2018, with coverage effective January 1, 2019. If a beneficiary is currently enrolled in a TRDP plan, they will not be automatically enrolled in a FEDVIP plan for 2019. You must enroll during the open season. If you know a retiree who does not have access to a computer, they can call 1-877-888-FEDS (1-877-888-3337), TTY number 1-877-889-5680 and enroll on FEDVIP.

CFC Contributions Fund Education Foundation Scholarships

The FRA Education Foundation is approved to participate in the 2018 Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) that is administered by the Federal Office of Personnel Management (OPM). The Foundation's participation code is #80236. The solicitation period is currently underway and concludes on January 11, 2019.

Pledges by Federal civilian, postal and military donors support the Foundation and other eligible non-profit organizations. Federal and military retirees are also authorized to participate in the CFC.

The FRA Education Foundation is also a member of CFC-related Military Support Groups of America and was recently awarded its designation as being one of America's Best Charities. More information is [available online](#), by entering "Fleet Reserve Association Education Foundation" in the search box.