

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE**Office of the Secretary****Proposed Collection; Comment Request**

AGENCY: Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense Health Affairs, DoD.

ACTION: Notice.

In accordance with section 3506(c)(2)(A) of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs announces the proposed public information collection and seeks public comment on the provisions thereof. Comments are invited on: (a) Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information shall have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden of the information collection; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (d) ways to minimize the burden of the information collection on respondents, including through the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

DATES: Consideration will be given to all comments received by March 31, 2003.

ADDRESSES: Written comments and recommendations on the information collection should be sent to TRICARE Management Activity, Medical Benefits and Reimbursement Systems, 16401 East Centretch Parkway, ATTN: David Bennett, Aurora, CO 80011-9043.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: To request more information on this proposed information collection, please write to the above address or call TRICARE Management Activity, Medical Benefits and Reimbursement Systems, at (303) 676-3494.

Title; Associated Form; and OMB Number: Application for TRICARE-Provider Status: Corporate Services Provider.

Needs and Uses: The information collection will allow eligible providers to apply for Corporate Services Provider status under the TRICARE program.

Affected Public: Businesses or other for-profit; not-for-profit institutions.

Annual Burden Hours: 333.

Number of Respondents: 1,000.

Responses for Respondent: 1.

Average Burden Per Response: 20 minutes.

Frequency: On occasion.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**Summary of Information Collection**

On March 10, 1999, TRICARE Management Activity (TMA), formerly known as OCHAMPUS, published a finale rule in the **Federal Register** (64 FR 11765), creating a fourth class of TRICARE providers consisting of freestanding corporations and foundations that render principally professional ambulatory or in-home care and technical diagnostic procedures. The intent of the rule was not to create additional benefits that ordinarily would not be covered under TRICARE if provided by a more traditional health care delivery system, but rather to allow those services which would otherwise be allowed except for an individual provider's affiliation with a freestanding corporate facility. The addition of the corporate class will recognize the current range of providers within today's health care delivery structure, and give beneficiaries access to another segment of the health care delivery industry. Corporate services providers must be approved for Medicare payment, or when Medicare approval status is not required, be accredited by a qualified accreditation organization to gain provider authorization status under TRICARE. Corporate services providers must also enter into a participation agreement which will be sent out as part of the initial authorization process. The participation agreement will ensure that TRICARE determined allowable payments, combined with the cost-share/copayment, deductible, and other health insurance amounts, will be accepted by the provider as payment in full.

The Application for TRICARE-Provider Status: Corporate Services Provider, will collect the necessary information to ensure that the conditions are met for authorization as a TRICARE corporate services provider: *i.e.*, the provider (1) is a corporation or a foundation, but not a professional corporation or professional association; (2) provides services and related supplies of a type rendered by TRICARE individual professional providers or diagnostic technical services; (3) is approved for Medicare payment or when Medicare approval status is not required, is accredited by a qualified accreditation organization; and (4) has entered into a participation agreement approved by the Executive Director, TMA or a designee.

The collected information will be used by TRICARE contractors to process claims and verify authorized provider status. Verification involves collecting and reviewing copies of the provider's licenses, certificates, accreditation

documents, etc. If the criteria are met, the provider is granted TRICARE-authorization status. The documentation and information are collected when: (1) A provider requests permission to become a TRICARE-authorized provider; (2) a claim is filed for care received from a provider who is not listed on the contractors' computer listing of authorized providers; or (3) when a former TRICARE-authorized provider requests reinstatement.

The contractors develop the forms used to gather information based on TRICARE conditions for participation listed above. Without the collection of this information, contractors cannot determine if the provider meets TRICARE authorization requirements for corporate services providers. If the contractor is unable to verify that a provider meets these authorization requirements, the contractor may not reimburse either the provider or the beneficiary for the provider's health care services.

To reduce the reporting burden to a minimum, TRICARE has carefully selected the information requested from respondents. Only that information which has been deemed absolutely essential is being requested. If necessary, contractors may verify credentials with Medicare, JCAHO and other national organizations by telephone. TRICARE is also participating with Medicare in the development of a National Provider System which will eliminate duplication of provider certification data collection among Federal government agencies.

TRICARE contractors are required to maintain a computer listing of all providers that have submitted the appropriate authorization information and documentation. To avoid duplicate inquiries, the contractors must search the computer provider listing before requesting documentation from providers. Since the providers affected by this information collection generally have not previously been eligible to be authorized providers, TRICARE contractors will have no information on file. The providers will have to submit the information requested on the data collection form (Application for TRICARE-Providers Status: Corporate Services Provider) in order to obtain provider authorization status under TRICARE.

The information will usually be collected from each respondent only once. It is estimated that there will be approximately 3,000 applicants over an initial 3 year collection period or 1,000 respondents per year. After the initial three years of collection, it is estimated

that annual number of respondents will decline to less than 100. TRICARE will request the provider authorization documentation and information when the provider asks to become TRICARE-authorized or when a claim is filed for a new provider's services. If after a provider has been authorized by a contractor, no claims are filed during a two-year period of time, the provider's information will be placed in the inactive file. To reactivate a file, the provider must verify that the information is still correct, or supply new or changed information. The total first year reporting burden is estimated to be 333⅓ hours.

Dated: January 21, 2003.

Patricia L. Toppings,

Alternate OSD Federal Register Liaison Officer, Department of Defense.

[FR Doc. 03-1947 Filed 1-28-03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 5001-08-M

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Office of the Secretary

Meeting of the Defense Policy Board Advisory Committee.

AGENCY: Department of Defense, Defense Policy Board Advisory Committee.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Defense Policy Board Advisory Committee will meet in closed session at the Pentagon on February 27-28, 2003 from 0900 to 1800.

The purpose of the meeting is to provide the Secretary of Defense, Deputy Secretary of Defense and Under Secretary of Defense for Policy with independent, informed advice on major matters of defense policy. The Board will hold classified discussions on national security matters.

In accordance with section 10(d) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act, Public Law 92-463, as amended [5 U.S.C. App II (1982)], it has been determined that this meeting concerns matters listed in 5 U.S.C. § 552B(c)(1)(1982), and that accordingly this meeting will be closed to the public.

Dated: January 21, 2003.

Patricia L. Toppings,

Alternate OSD Federal Register Liaison Officer, Department of Defense.

[FR Doc. 03-1948 Filed 1-28-03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 5001-08-M

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

[CFDA No. 84.120A]

Office of Postsecondary Education; Minority Science and Engineering Improvement Program; Notice Inviting Applications for New Awards for Fiscal Year (FY) 2003

Purpose of Program: The Minority Science and Engineering Improvement Program (MSEIP) is designed to effect long-range improvement in science and engineering education at predominantly minority institutions and to increase the flow of underrepresented ethnic minorities, particularly minority women, into scientific and technological careers.

Eligibility for Grants: Under section 361 of Title III of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended (HEA), the following entities are eligible to receive a grant under MSEIP:

(1) Public and private nonprofit institutions of higher education that:

(A) Award baccalaureate degrees; and
(B) Are minority institutions;

(2) Public or private nonprofit institutions of higher education that:

(A) Award associate degrees; and
(B) Are minority institutions that:

(i) Have a curriculum that includes science or engineering subjects; and
(ii) Enter into a partnership with

public or private nonprofit institutions of higher education that award baccalaureate degrees in science and engineering;

(3) Nonprofit science-oriented organizations, professional scientific societies, and institutions of higher education that award baccalaureate degrees, that:

(A) Provide a needed service to a group of minority institutions; or
(B) Provide in-service training for

project directors, scientists, and engineers from minority institutions; or
(4) Consortia of organizations that provide needed services to one or more

minority institutions, the membership of which may include:

(A) Institutions of higher education that have a curriculum in science or engineering;

(B) Institutions of higher education that have a graduate or professional program in science or engineering;

(C) Research laboratories of, or under contract with, the Department of Energy;

(D) Private organizations that have science or engineering facilities; or
(E) Quasi-governmental entities that

have a significant scientific or engineering mission.

Eligible Applicants: (a) For institutional, design, and special projects described in 34 CFR 637.12,

637.13 and 637.14, public and private nonprofit minority institutions of higher education as defined in sections 361(1) and (2) of the HEA.

(b) For special projects described in 34 CFR 637.14(b) and (c), nonprofit science-oriented organizations, professional scientific societies, institutions of higher education, and consortia of organizations as defined in sections 361(3) and (4) of the HEA.

(c) For cooperative projects described in 34 CFR 637.15, groups of nonprofit accredited colleges and universities whose primary fiscal agent is an eligible minority institution as defined in 34 CFR 637.4(b).

Note: A minority institution is defined in 34 CFR 637.4(b) as an accredited college or university whose enrollment of a single minority group or combination of minority groups exceeds 50 percent of the total enrollment.

Applications Available: January 31, 2003.

Deadline for Transmittal of Applications: March 17, 2003.

Deadline for Intergovernmental Review: May 19, 2003.

Estimated Available Funds: The Administration has requested \$8,500,000 for this program for FY 2003. The actual level of funding, if any, depends on final congressional action. However, we are inviting applications to allow enough time to complete the grant process if Congress appropriates funds for this program.

Estimated Range of Awards: \$19,000-\$500,000.

Estimated Average Size of Awards

Institutional Projects

Estimated Range of Awards: \$100,000-\$300,000.

Estimated Average Size of Awards: \$125,851.

Estimated Number of Awards: 24.

Design Projects

Estimated Range of Awards: \$19,000-\$20,000.

Estimated Average Size of Awards: \$19,500.

Estimated Number of Awards: 2.

Special Projects

Estimated Range of Awards: \$20,000-\$150,000.

Estimated Average Size of Awards: \$34,622.

Estimated Number of Awards: 12.

Cooperative Projects

Estimated Range of Awards: \$100,000-\$500,000.

Estimated Average Size of Awards: \$251,000.