TRICARE Changes

Among other changes, Tricare will consolidate the current three regions into 2 Regions: East, and West.

BE READY FOR THE TRICARE CHANGES

Tricare is changing!
The most up-to-date information about the changes coming to Tricare as of January 1, 2018 is available at: https://tricare.mil/changes.

Additionally, there is an opportunity on that webpage to sign up for email updates about the changes.

Access Standards for Care
TRICARE has access standards to ensure you get timely health care. Your wait time for an appointment depends on the type of care you need.

1 DAY
URGENT CARE APPOINTMENT
Wait time no longer than one day (24 hours)

7 DAYS
ROUTINE CARE APPOINTMENT
Wait time no longer than one week (seven days)

28 DAYS
SPECIALTY CARE APPOINTMENT
Wait time no longer than four weeks (28 days)

TRICARE also limits how long you should have to travel to get to an appointment. Travel time is limited to 30 minutes for routine care or one hour for specialty care (unless you have waived your access standards).
“Disabled Military Child Protection Act”. This law allows a military parent to provide a survivor benefit for a disabled child and have it paid to a special needs trust for that child’s benefit. A special needs trust is a trust designed for beneficiaries with disabilities, who are either physically or mentally challenged. It is written so that the beneficiary can enjoy the use of property that is held in the trust for his or her benefit, while at the same time allowing the beneficiary to receive essential needs-based government benefits, including Medicaid and Supplemental Security Income (SSI). In addition to the public benefits preservation reasons for such a trust, there may be administrative advantages to using a trust to hold and manage property intended for the benefit of the beneficiary, if the beneficiary lacks the legal capacity to handle his or her own financial affairs. Special needs trusts are sometimes known as supplemental needs trusts in the United States. It is important that you examine your child’s needs and how any additional income may impact them with and without a trust. There are attorneys who specialize in this area and are qualified in assisting you to explore your options.

Your installation’s Exceptional Family Member Program (Military and Family Support Office) and the Legal Assistance Office can provide advice and referrals to local attorneys who specialize in special-needs laws.

You can also visit http://www.militaryonesource.mil/family-and-relationships/special-needs, an official Department of Defense website, or speak to a special needs consultant at Military OneSource at 800-342-9647.

If you already have a special needs trust established for your dependent child and are interested in redirecting their future SBP annuity claim to the SNT, the Defense Finance and Accounting Service can help. See: https://www.dfas.mil/retiredmilitary/provide/sbp/special-needs-trust.html for further information.

Introducing our newest team member: Family Caseworker, Sarah McCarroll

My name is Sarah McCarroll. I’m a Marine Corps spouse and I have been with EFMP for over 6 years. I have experience with Assignment Coordination at the HQMC EFMP level, as well as, Family Caseworker experience with Lejeune-New River EFMP. I’m now excited to have joined the Quantico EFMP Team! I provide family support to our Marines and families stationed in the great state of Florida. I love everything Marine Corps, spending time with my family, the beach, photography, sitting on my deck on a crisp fall morning with coffee and a good book in hand and rooting for the Boston Red Sox. I look forward to hopefully meeting you someday soon and want to thank you for your dedication and service to our Marine Corps and to our country. Semper Fidelis!
Transition planning is required by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 2004 (IDEA) for all students who have IEPs, no later than the student’s 16th birthday. In many locations, transition planning begins earlier, often at age 14, or during the transition between middle and high school. Transition planning provides a roadmap for parents, educators and students to prepare the student with a disability for the responsibilities of adulthood. During the high school years, the student needs to learn the necessary skills to live and work in the community as independently as possible. A transitional IEP must include: Appropriate measurable postsecondary goals based upon age appropriate transition assessments related to training, education, employment, and, where appropriate, independent living skills; and the transition services (including courses of study) needed to assist the child in reaching those goals. The following areas should be considered.

**SELF DETERMINATION/ DISABILITY MANAGEMENT** Explaining your needs and strengths in the workplace or school. Requesting your needed accommodations. Getting advocacy or legal support when needed. Learning about Assistive Technology (AT), Personal Assistance Services (PAS), Disability Pride.

**DAILY LIVING** Cooking meals, using home or commercial washers/dryers, using home cleaning equipment, painting walls.

**ACADEMIC/LIFE LONG LEARNING** Taking classes at a university or community college. Going to community workshops such as gardening, parenting classes, home repair. Using community resources such as the library. Planning a 4 year degree from a college.

**HEALTH/PHYSICAL CARE** Taking care of personal cleanliness such as bathing, washing hair, using deodorant. Managing dental care, making doctor appointments, learning CPR. Sex education awareness and mental health screenings should be considered.

**LEISURE ACTIVITIES** Joining a bowling league, pursuing a hobby, making dates for movies with friends, going out to eat, biking, and attending community events.

**MOBILITY** Getting a driver’s license, how to ride the city bus/para transit system, using the city maps, calling a cab, sharing the cost in a car pool.

**MONEY MANAGEMENT** How to open and manage a checking account, what credit cards mean, how to get a bank loan, how to budget.

**SOCIAL SKILLS** Speaking and greeting others, appropriate behavior at work/school/ friends. Good manners in restaurants, going out on a date, relationships with the opposite sex.

**WORKPLACE READINESS** Managing workplace stresses, dealing with authority, going to a job interview, time management.

**OCCUPATIONAL SPECIFIC SKILLS** Learning the functions of the tools needed for the job, finding a mentor, practice job skills after work such as computer skills, cooking skills.
What criteria must the child of an active duty or retired Service member meet to qualify as incapacitated?

Incapacitated children of active duty or retired Service members may be eligible for TRICARE health benefits and base privileges after age 21 if they meet the following criteria:

- Incapable of providing his or her own support
- Dependent on the sponsor for over 50 percent of his or her support (if the sponsor is deceased, the child must have received over 50 percent of his or her support from the sponsor at the time of death)
- Incapacitation must have occurred prior to age 21 (or age 23 if enrolled as a full-time student)
- Unmarried—if the child marries and subsequently becomes unmarried due to divorce, annulment, or the death of the spouse, the sponsor may apply for reinstatement of the child’s benefits and entitlements as long as he or she meets all other requirements.

What are the requirements to apply for an incapacitated status?

The military sponsor’s Service must process the initial and renewal dependency applications for all incapacitated children. Apply for a determination with the following documentation:

- Dependency Statement – Incapacitated Child Over Age 21 form (DD Form 137-5)
- Application for Identification Card/DEERS Enrollment form (DD Form 1172-2)
- Current physician’s statement dated within 90 days
- A current statement from the Social Security Administration certifying non-eligibility for Medicare Part A. However, if the child is Medicare Part A eligible, proof of Medicare Part A and Part B enrollment must be provided to retain TRICARE benefits unless the sponsor is on active duty
- Birth certificate, if not enrolled in DEERS. If adding a stepchild to DEERS, the parents’ marriage certificate is also required. Note: For questions related to Service-specific procedures or special circumstances please contact the appropriate office for the sponsor’s Service

What benefits and privileges does an incapacitated child of an active duty or retired Service member receive?

Incapacitated children of active duty or retired Service members who meet the requirements are eligible for:

- Health care under one of the TRICARE-administered programs. Incapacitated children who are entitled to Medicare Part A must purchase Medicare Part B to retain TRICARE eligibility unless the sponsor is on active duty.
- Morale, welfare, and recreation privilege
- Commissary and exchange (in most cases)

Are incapacitated children eligible for an ID card?

Once the dependency determination is approved, the incapacitated child of active duty Service member can receive an ID card every four years (incapacitated status must be re-determined every four years). Indefinite military ID cards are authorized for family members of retired Service members entitled to Medicare due to a disability. Eligibility for an indefinite ID card does not waive the requirement to complete a dependency determination through the appropriate office for the sponsor’s Service every four years for permanently incapacitated adult children.

Recommended timeline: Submit packet as early as possible within 90 days prior to the dependent’s 18th birthday.
October, November, and December are full of special events and holidays, but crowds, unusual sights and sounds, guests, traveling, and changes in routine can cause a sensory overload for many people. Not every childhood tradition or family ritual works for the whole family. Here are some simple tips to help you plan ahead, and navigate your holidays and special events with less stress.

1. Consider what is most likely to cause stress. You know your family members. Will the crinkling of gift wrap be disturbing? What about flashing lights, or strangers in the house? If you’re traveling, think about how to make everyone more at ease. Let friends or seldom seen family know, ahead of time, how to best interact. Often, distant family members want to hug children who don’t really know them. Encourage your child to set his or her own boundaries, and make those clear ahead of time.

2. Practice what you can. If the family is getting together, it may be worth using recent pictures to introduce these people ahead of time, reducing the anxiety of connecting names and faces. Is special attire involved? Make sure it’s comfortable, and try it on frequently. You may quickly discover an itchy tag, or that the bow tie is a no go.

3. Create a safe space. One parent shared, recently, that her child manages large events by knowing that he can ask to go sit in the car whenever he needs a break.

4. Prepare. Talk about what will happen. Use social stories, books, or even movies to explain what is appropriate and expected. Ask each family member to share what will make this event enjoyable.

5. Schedule downtime. Plan breaks for everyone. No one wants to be overscheduled. Fatigue and hunger can bring out the worst in all of us.

6. Be flexible. Some events can be spread out over several days, rather than cramming every possible activity into one or two days. One of our staff families puts their Christmas tree up one night, and then decorates it over a few days.

7. Include your children in some way that grows their self confidence. The most popular placemats at one holiday table consisted of drawings made by the children. Remember, perfection is overrated.

8. Keep as much of your routine as you can.

9. Teach relaxation techniques, and pack your tools. There are relaxation apps for phones and tablets. White noise apps, with sounds like ocean waves, or falling rain can often drown out noises that are discomforting. Even very small children can learn to take deep slow breaths and then breathe out slowly with a little practice blowing bubbles. Pack a bag of relaxation aids.

10. Begin with the end. How do you want the day or event to feel? Work your way backward, thinking about how and when to take certain steps.
Do you have children heading back to school? Are they already in school? Is it all going smoothly?

It’s never too late for a fresh start. One of our experienced Moms shared her tips for getting the kids off to a smooth start on school mornings.

“I have three sons, who are now college students, but when there were three under five, preparing to start school for the first time meant a whole new structure to our days. It didn’t take us long to figure out that ADHD, which runs in our family, meant we had to make some serious changes. To make it all work, and get the boys to “buy in”, we tried to make it fun for them.

For starters, we created a “Mission Control Center”. If you’ve seen family command centers on Pinterest or some other site, that was our starting point. We had a wall mounted set of cubbies that we mounted low enough for the children to see into them. There was a calendar (with big squares for writing in medical appointments, school events, birthday parties and other events, like the Marine’s duty nights, ). When the kids came home, they put any papers that we needed to see in their folder, and put it in our cubbies. When we were done with the papers, we put them back in their folders and into their cubbies. We had a white board for grocery lists and other messages, and a bulletin board for reminders and invitations that were received. A small container with pens and pencils made it easy to make a note when we were thinking about it. We also had a trash can right there, so that old papers, junk mail, etc. could be thrown away immediately.

The second step was to create “launch pads”. Each night, before bedtime, anything (except lunchboxes) that the kids needed to take to school the following morning was packed up and put at a designated site by the front door. Their backpacks were in cubbies, and when it was cold, their hooded jackets were on hooks right there with their gloves in the pockets. If there were projects that needed to go to school, they were right there as well. This evening routine was critical for “mission launch” in the morning. They also had launch pads in their bedrooms, with their clothes for the following day selected and out where they could easily be grabbed. Early morning was not the time to have to make decisions.

I packed lunches every day, so we did that early as well, and their lunchboxes sat in the refrigerator overnight, waiting to be grabbed. In the morning, when the time to leave was quickly approaching, we would begin a loud countdown—during which the kids raced to accomplish their “pre-flight” tasks. “Countdown to launch has commenced!” When they heard that, there was a flurry of activity. Coats and gloves went on quickly. Backpacks were donned. Lunchboxes were grabbed, hugs and kisses, and “three, two, one, ASTRONAUTS, LAUNCH!” Most mornings after we started this, our boys went out the door giggling and with all needed gear in hand.

Our routine had to be consistent to the point that the boys didn’t have to think about their next steps, they just did them. It was much like the “muscle memory” that Marines rely on for many of their tasks. As they got older, we changed and adapted a bit. By middle school, nobody wanted to be an astronaut being launched, and many of the tasks were being handled entirely by the boys, but the system stayed in place, and made our mornings much easier.”
For many of us, there’s something about September that motivates us to reorganize and reset our lives for the rest of the year. Maybe we’re reminded of our own “back to school” days, or we’re getting our family back on track after a summer vacation, but as our days shorten and a hint of cooler weather comes our way, there is an opportunity for a “fresh start”.

We polled our staff, checked the internet, and gathered up some great ideas for stepping into the fall season more organized and saving time and money. Family Caseworker, Barbara, saves a little extra money using some simple tools: “I join the rewards programs offered by the various stores and coupons! I’ve also started using an app to search for the best price in town for me too.”

TEO Specialist Angela recommends getting the family into routines. We often think about setting our children’s clothes out the day before, or even organizing them for the week, but that same strategy saves adults time, as well. “By ironing and organizing my clothes for the upcoming week on the weekend, I’m able to be less stressed and have more time in the mornings as I’m getting ready for work.”

Our other TEO, Amy, shared that in her family, they purchase extra school supplies, including items like poster board and display boards, while they are on sale in the fall. “We have a small bookshelf that is the ‘homework center’. This way, there is never a last minute trip to the store when someone ‘remembers’ a project that’s due the following morning.”

Our Administrative Specialist, Sabrena, is an organizing rock star, and we asked her to share her best tips.

“1. Catch the vision – look for balance in what is being organized. Think of the end result. Once the vision is caught, begin the process.

2. Let it go - release the inner hoarder and acknowledge that if items have not been touched or cannot be fixed – “really fixed” – let it go: give it away or trash it.

3. Be messy before masterful – understand that everything will be a mess in the organizing process, but when the task is complete it will be “your” masterpiece.

Once complete, sit back and enjoy!”
1. Your **EFMP Family Caseworker** can assist you in a wide variety of ways. Forms, information, resources, and referrals are just the start. Make your EFMP caseworker one of your first responders, not your last resort.


3. **Military One Source** — [https://www.militaryonesource.mil/](https://www.militaryonesource.mil/) is a great resource for information on all sort of topics that affect military families. Check out their great EFMP resources, which can be downloaded, or in some cases, ordered, at no charge.

4. If your child is in a Department of Defense Dependents School (DoDDS), the following site has the **Notice of Procedural Safeguards** for all DoDDS special needs students’, families, and parents. [http://www.specialed.eu.dodea.edu/Parent%20Rights%20June%2008.pdf](http://www.specialed.eu.dodea.edu/Parent%20Rights%20June%2008.pdf)

5. If you are in the U.S., every state has at least one Parent Information Training Center for parents of children with disabilities, and many have Community Parent Resource Centers as well. You can find information to help you locate these resources, at Parent Center Hub: [http://www.parentcenterhub.org/](http://www.parentcenterhub.org/).

6. **Emergency preparedness** is important for every family, and including the needs of a special needs family member may require extra planning. You can find great information on how to build a special needs emergency plan at: [https://www.phe.gov/Preparedness/news/events/PrepMonth2014/Pages/special-medical.aspx](https://www.phe.gov/Preparedness/news/events/PrepMonth2014/Pages/special-medical.aspx) and [http://www.ready.marines.mil/](http://www.ready.marines.mil/)

7. **Transportation Security Administration (TSA)** may be able to offer some assistance, especially in U.S. airports. The official website ([https://www.tsa.gov/](https://www.tsa.gov/)) includes information about their programs to assist passengers with special needs, including Passenger Support Specialists who can assist in the airport, and the TSA office. One tip, contact TSA Cares via email ([TSA-ContactCenter@tsa.dhs.gov](mailto:TSA-ContactCenter@tsa.dhs.gov)) or phone: 855-787-2227, at least 72 hours before you plan to travel for direct support.

8. ** Transitional services and planning information**: [A Transition Guide to Postsecondary Education and Employment for Students and Youth with Disabilities from the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, United States Department of Education](https://www2.ed.gov/programs/ese/transition/index.html)

9. **Adult and Permanent Dependency Information**, including addresses for all branches of service is [here](https://www.militaryonesource.mil/).