



Tricare Reserve Select Restructured

TRICARE Reserve Select (TRS) has been restructured according to officials at TRICARE Management Activity.

"Eligible members of the Selected Reserve of the Ready Reserve will be able to qualify for, and purchase, the restructured TRS coverage."

The 2007 National Defense Authorization Act mandated the elimination of the complicated three-tier system, according to Granger. As of October 1, all qualified members are now paying the same premium rates.

TRS continued under the current tier system, with its three different premium levels, through Sept. 30, 2007.

"Beneficiaries can check the TRS section on www.tricare.mil for details on the restructured TRS," said Granger. "We'll also be making sure information is readily available for National Guard and Reserve leadership to pass along through their channels."

TRICARE Reserve Select is the premium-based TRICARE health plan qualified National Guard and Reserve members may purchase. The plan offers comprehensive health coverage similar to TRICARE Standard and TRICARE Extra. TRS members and their covered family members may access care from any TRICARE-authorized provider, hospital or pharmacy; as well as from a military clinic or hospital on a space-available basis. TMA officials remind TRS members that space is very limited in military facilities and they may not be able to receive care from a DoD medical facility.

TRICARE Management Activity, the Defense Department agency that administers the health care plan for the uniformed services, retirees and their families, serves more than 9.1 million eligible beneficiaries worldwide.

Briefs

AT&T Wireless Stores Now Accepting Recycled Cell Phones

AT&T-owned wireless store locations have begun serving as wireless phone recycling drop-off sites for a charity benefiting U.S. military families. All 1,800 AT&T-owned wireless stores in more than 1,100 cities across the U.S. now accept donated phones for the Cell Phones for Soldiers charitable program.

AT&T has also donated more than 30,000 prepaid phone cards — valued at more than \$270,000 — to Cell Phones for Soldiers to help connect more military families. AT&T is also providing the nonprofit organization with a new volume discount for purchasing additional phone cards.

Cell Phones for Soldiers (www.cellphonesforsoldiers.com) was established by two Norwell, Mass., teenagers to help buy prepaid phone cards to send to U.S. military members who are serving overseas. The teens, Brittany Bergquist, 16, and Robbie Bergquist, 15, created a nonprofit organization that collects and recycles used wireless phones. With proceeds from the recycling, the organization then purchases prepaid phone cards for military families.

Since the Bergquists founded the program in April 2004, they have raised more than \$1 million and have sent more than 75,000 phone cards to troops overseas.

"The launch of our national recycling program that supports Cell Phones for Soldiers gives us the chance to demonstrate our commitment to military families all across America. AT&T is proud to do what we can to help keep military families connected," said Stan Sigman, president and CEO, AT&T's wireless unit.

In addition to its support for Cell Phones for Soldiers, AT&T announced the donation of an additional 10,000 phone cards directly to troops in Iraq, Kuwait, Afghanistan and other overseas regions in the weeks surrounding Independence Day. The donation is part of an ongoing parallel campaign to support military families with 50,000 free prepaid phone cards — valued at more than \$450,000 — throughout 2007.

Since 2000, AT&T has donated nearly \$8 million in free prepaid phone cards to military members and has provided nearly \$6 million in grants that support military members and related nonprofit organizations. The company also has built 70 calling centers in Iraq, Kuwait and Afghanistan that help keep military members in touch with their families. ●