

part on information provided by the employee to the medical facility.

Appendix I Regional Office Addresses

Central Regional Center, 230 S. Dearborn Street, Room 2944, Chicago, Illinois 60604-1601.

Eastern Regional Center, 6 World Trade Center, Room 350, New York, New York 10048-0206.

Western Regional Center, 600 Harrison Street, Room 245, San Francisco, California 94107-1370.

Appendix II Pertinent Record Systems of Other Agencies

Other Federal agencies maintain government-wide systems of records which may contain information about CPSC employees. Some of these records may be physically located at CPSC. These systems include:

1. Office of Personnel Management, OPM/GOVT-1, General Personnel Records (includes official personnel folders).
2. Office of Personnel Management, OPM/GOVT-2, Employee Performance File System Records.
3. Office of Personnel Management, OPM/GOVT-3, Records of Adverse Actions, Performance Based Reduction in Grade and Removal Actions, and Termination of Probationers.
4. Office of Personnel Management, OPM/GOVT-5, Recruiting, Examining, and Placement Records.
5. Office of Personnel Management, OPM/GOVT-6, Personnel Research and Test Validation Records.
6. Office of Personnel Management, OPM/GOVT-7, Applicant Race, Sex, National Origin, and Disability Status Records.
7. Office of Personnel Management, OPM/GOVT-9, File on Position Classification Appeals, Job Grading Appeals, and Retained Grade or Pay Appeals.
8. Office of Personnel Management, OPM/GOVT-10, Employee Medical File System Records.
9. Office of Government Ethics, OGE/GOVT-1, Executive Branch Public Financial Disclosure Reports and Other Ethics Program Records (includes financial interest disclosure forms of CPSC employees subject to the Ethics in Government Act).
10. Office of Government Ethics, OGE/GOVT-2, Confidential Statements of Employment and Financial Interests.
11. Office of Special Counsel, OSC/GOVT-1, Complaint, Litigation and Political Activity Files.
12. Federal Emergency Management Agency, FEMA/GOVT-1, Uniform Identification System for Federal Employees Performing Essential Duties During Emergencies.
13. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, EEOC/GOVT-1, Equal Employment Opportunity in the Federal Government Complaint and Appeal Records.
14. Merit System protection Board, MSPB/GOVT-1, Appeal and Case Records.

15. General Services Administration, GSA/GOVT-3, Travel Charge Card Program.

16. General Services Administration, GSA/GOVT-4, Contracted Travel Services Program.

17. Department of Labor, DOL/GOVT-1, Office of Workers Compensation Programs, Federal Employees Compensation Act Files.

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DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION NATIONAL AERONAUTICS AND SPACE ADMINISTRATION

[OMB Control No. 9000-0044]

Proposed Collection; Comment Request Entitled Bid/Offer Acceptance Period

AGENCIES: Department of Defense (DOD), General Services Administration (GSA), and National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA).

ACTION: Notice of request for public comments regarding an extension to an existing OMB clearance.

SUMMARY: Under the provisions of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. Chapter 35), the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) Secretariat will be submitting to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) a request to review and approve an extension of a currently approved information collection requirement concerning Bid/Offer Acceptance Period. The clearance currently expires on April 30, 1999.

DATES: Comments may be submitted on or before March 1, 1999.

ADDRESSES: Comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, should be submitted to: FAR Desk Officer, OMB, Room 10102, NEOB, Washington, DC 20503, and a copy to the General Services Administration, FAR Secretariat (MVRs), 1800 F Street, NW, Room 4035, Washington, DC 20405. Please cite OMB Control No. 9000-0044, Bid/Offer Acceptance Period, in all correspondence.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ralph DeStefano, Federal Acquisition Policy Division, GSA (202) 501-1758.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

A. Purpose

Bid acceptance period is the period of time from receipt of bids that is available to the Government to award the contract. This acceptance period is normally established by the Government. However, the bidder may

establish a longer acceptance period than the minimum acceptance period set by the Government by filling in the blank. There are instances when the Government is unable to award a contract within the acceptance period due to unforeseen complications. Rather than incur the costly expense of readvertising, the Government requests the bidders to extend their bids for a longer period of time.

These data are placed with the respective bids and placed in the contract file to become a matter of record.

B. Annual Reporting Burden

Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 1 minute per completion, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information.

The annual reporting burden is estimated as follows: Respondents, 3,220; responses per respondent, 40; total annual responses, 128,800; preparation hours per response, .017; and total response burden hours, 2,190.

OBTAINING COPIES OF PROPOSALS:

Requester may obtain a copy of the justification from the General Services Administration, FAR Secretariat (MVRs), Room 4035, 1800 F Street, NW, Washington, DC 20405, telephone (202) 208-7312. Please cite OMB Control No. 9000-0044, Bid/Offer Acceptance Period, in all correspondence.

Dated: December 22, 1998.

Victoria E. Moss,

Acting Director, Federal Acquisition Policy Division.

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BILLING CODE 6820-34-M

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Office of the Secretary

Civilian Health and Medical Program of the Uniformed Services (CHAMPUS); TRICARE Claimcheck Appeals

AGENCY: Office of the Secretary, DoD.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: This Notice sets forth the Department's plans for enhancing the appeals process available to providers and beneficiaries for claims determinations resulting from TRICARE Claimcheck coding logic.

ADDRESSES: TRICARE Management Activity, Medical Benefits and Reimbursement Systems, 16401 E.

Centretch Parkway, Aurora, CO 80011-9043.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Stephen E. Isaacson, Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Health Affairs)/TRICARE Management Activity, telephone (303) 676-3572, or Ann N. Fazzini, Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Health Affairs)/TRICARE Management Activity, telephone (303) 676-3803.

Background

Commercial claims-auditing software can be a critical tool in addressing fraud and abuse, and commercial systems to detect inappropriate coding/billing have been available for several years. Both the General Accounting Office (GAO/AIMD-98-91), and the HHS Inspector General noted the potential value of such systems as early as 1991. The TRICARE Management Activity has taken a phased approach to implementation of TRICARE Claimcheck, a customized version of the commercially available HBOC/GPG ClaimCheck® software. TRICARE Claimcheck contains over 5 million edits that track appropriate billing. These edits include unbundling incidental procedures, medical visits, pre- and post-operative care, mutually exclusive procedures, assistant surgeons, duplicate procedures, and age/sex conflicts. Ninety-seven percent of claims pass through TRICARE Claimcheck audits without affecting reimbursement. TRICARE Claimcheck was first used in May 1996, and subsequently has been linked with the start of the TRICARE regional at-risk managed care support contracts. Prior to implementation, there was a less-intensive review system that provided only 246 rebundling edits as well as a list of about 250 procedures that were considered to be incidental to another procedure.

If TRICARE Claimcheck edits result in the denial or rebundling of submitted procedure codes, providers may receive lower than expected payments, and it is important that providers and beneficiaries have a recourse. The General Accounting Office (GAO/HEHS-98-80) in its review of TRICARE/CHAMPUS payments to physicians reported some provider concern about the TRICARE Claimcheck system. Congress mandated that the Department establish an appeals mechanism for providers and beneficiaries in section 714 of the National Defense Authorization Act for FY 1999. Rulemaking will be initiated to amend 32 CFR 199.10 to address TRICARE Claimcheck appeals procedures. We are

issuing this Notice prior to rulemaking to explain the current appeals process and to invite suggestions as to the form the intended TRICARE Claimcheck appeals mechanism should take.

Current TRICARE Claimcheck appeals process: A TRICARE Claimcheck appeal is an administrative review of auditing logic. The specific dollar amount of an allowance (e.g., the CHAMPUS Maximum Allowable Charge) is not formally appealable under TRICARE Claimcheck appeals or the appeals procedures established in 32 CFR 199.10. TRICARE Claimcheck appeals are made to the TRICARE Managed Care Support Contractor (MCSC) that processed the claim. The MCSC recovers the claim and related documents to completely review the case and verify the accuracy of the application of the TRICARE Claimcheck edits. This process includes: (1) verification of the correct procedure code(s) used; (2) review for clerical errors that may have resulted in incorrect application of the TRICARE Claimcheck edits; (3) medical review; (4) verification that all necessary medical documentation has been submitted; and (5) review to determine if medical circumstances existed that exceeded the expected circumstances upon which the edit is based. A determination that allows additional payment amounts results in an adjustment of the claim by the contractor with no further action required by the beneficiary or provider.

A corollary of the appeals process involves ongoing communications with our MCSC Medical Directors, Lead Agent Medical Directors, and professional societies and other organizations who have contacted the TMA regarding the appropriateness of specific edits of TRICARE Claimcheck. The TMA is working closely with these entities in reviewing comments and comparing them to the clinical/medical rationale of the TRICARE Claimcheck edit. When consistent with TRICARE policy, changes are made in conjunction with the TRICARE Medical Director. This process ensures that its edits do not result in improper denial or reduction of payment. Suggestions are welcome regarding existing TRICARE Claimcheck edits and recommendations for systemic changes to TRICARE Claimcheck. Clinical/medical rationale for the suggested change should be included for review of the recommendation by the TRICARE Medical Director.

Intended TRICARE Claimcheck appeals process: As stated above, rulemaking will be initiated to further implement the Congressional mandate

for a more formalized TRICARE Claimcheck appeals process. In cases where the current TRICARE Claimcheck appeals process described above results in an adverse determination, providers and beneficiaries will have a further level of appeal. Providers and beneficiaries will be able to submit an appeal along with supporting documentation to the TRICARE Management Activity. The requested for appeal will be considered on its own merits and a written response will be provided for each determination made. The appeal decision issued by the TRICARE Management Activity will be the final agency decision on the appeal.

Dated: December 24, 1998.

L.M. Bynum,

Alternate OSD Federal Register Liaison Officer, Department of Defense.

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BILLING CODE 5000-04-M

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Office of the Secretary

Defense Science Board Task Force on National Imagery and Mapping Agency (NIMA)

ACTION: Notice of Advisory Committee Meetings.

SUMMARY: The Defense Science Board Task Force on National Imagery and Mapping Agency (NIMA) will meet in closed session on January 14-15 and February 25-26, 1999 at Strategic Analysis Inc. (SAI), Arlington, Virginia.

The mission of the Defense Science Board is to advise the Secretary of Defense through the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Technology on scientific and technical matters as they affect the perceived needs of the Department of Defense. At these meetings the Task Force will review the objectives and plans of the National Imagery and Mapping Agency (NIMA) to meet the needs of the national and military intelligence customers as they enter the 21st Century.

In accordance with Section 10(d) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act, Pub. L. No. 92-463, as amended (5 U.S.C. App. II, (1994)), it has been determined that these DSB Task Force meetings concern matters listed in 5 U.S.C. 552b(c)(1) (1994), and that accordingly these meetings will be closed to the public.