

DENTAL BENEFITS FOR THOSE WHO SERVED LESS THAN 90 DAYS ON ACTIVE DUTY

Only a line-of-duty (LOD) dental condition that occurred while the RC soldier was activated for greater than 30 days, but less than 90 days, will be addressed at no charge upon DEMOB. It is important to distinguish that this is care for conditions that resulted from injury or disease occurring *during* Active Duty (AD), and not care for pre-existing dental conditions present prior to mobilization. All soldiers must have required follow-on dental treatment needs documented on the Standard Form (SF) 603 Health Record-Dental, or SF 603A, Health Record-Dental Continuation. Soldiers will require a completed DA Form 2173, documenting the dental disease/injury occurred while the soldier was activated. The soldier's unit will then coordinate with the Military Medical Support Office to facilitate the soldier's reimbursement for required civilian provided dental care. (<http://mmso.med.navy.mil>)

Transitional Health Benefits (THB), outlined in Title 10 USC, Section 1145, allow for the provision of dental services on a space available basis in military dental clinics. If soldiers have less than 6 years creditable service, they are eligible for 60 days of space-available dental care; if greater than 6 years service, they have 120 days. Unfortunately, space-available dental care in CONUS dental facilities is severely restricted. Staffing of military dental clinics is based on the supported active duty population; as a result, current staffing and policies governing dental readiness do not allow for any significant space-available treatment time. A DD214 form documenting the entry date, separation date and length of service is required in order for the dental treatment facility to determine if the soldier is eligible for space-available THB dental care.

Voluntary enrollment in the TRICARE Dental Program (TDP). Selected Reserve and IRR members are eligible for TDP, a government cost share dental insurance program, which provides reasonably priced access to comprehensive dental care from the civilian dentist of their choosing. To minimize costs, the enrollee is encouraged to utilize the TDP's participating network of dentists for their care. Enrollment in TDP requires a 12-month commitment and includes an optional family member benefit for an additional premium. RC soldiers, who were participating in the TDP prior to deployment and were dropped from the program when activated, will automatically be re-enrolled following DEMOB when their military status is updated in DEERS. RC soldiers should be made aware a small gap in coverage may occur between their deactivation date and the date TDP re-enrollment coverage begins. All TDP enrollees should contact the TDP contractor to verify coverage prior to seeking dental services after REFRAD. (<http://www.tricare.osd.mil/dental/>)