



# LEAVE WITHOUT PAY (LWOP) INFORMATION SHEET

**Initial Appointment Probationary Period** – Any nonpay time in excess of 22 workdays extends the probationary period by that number of days.

**Supervisory/Managerial Probationary Period** – Any nonpay time in excess of 30 calendar days for each period of absence extends the service date for career tenure by that number of days.

**Career Tenure** – Any nonpay time in excess of 30 calendar days for each period of absence extends the service date for career tenure by that number of days.

**Leave Earnings** – No annual or sick leave is earned when an employee is in nonpay status for an entire pay period. If nonpay time occurs during part of one or more of a fulltime employee's pay periods, the employee continues to earn leave until the nonpay time totals 80 hours. The employee does not earn leave accrual during the pay period that nonpay time reaches a multiple of 80 hours (80, 160, 240, etc.) LWOP.

**Service Computation Dates** – All LWOP in excess of 180 days in a calendar year will affect your retirement and leave service computation dates. (Excess time is added to employee's service computation date.)

## **Within-grade Increase (General Schedule)**

**Waiting Period for Step 2, 3, 4** – 80 hours nonpay time creditable for full-time employees. Excess time extends waiting period.

**Waiting Period for Step 5, 6, 7** - 160 hours nonpay time creditable for full-time employees. Excess time extends waiting period.

**Waiting Period for Step 8, 9, 10** – 240 hours nonpay time creditable for full-time employees. Excess time extends waiting period.

## **Within-grade Increase (Federal Wage System)**

**Waiting Period for Step 2** – 40 hours nonpay time creditable for full-time employees. Excess time extends waiting period.

**Waiting Period for Step 3** – 120 hours nonpay time creditable for full-time employees. Excess time extends waiting period.

**Waiting Period for Step 4, 5** – 160 hours nonpay time creditable for full-time employees. Excess time extends waiting period.

**Federal Employees Group Life Insurance (FEGLI)** – Coverage continues without cost to the employee for up to 12 months in nonpay status. Coverage is terminated after employee has been in nonpay status for 12 months. (Previous time in nonpay status counts toward the 12 months if employee did not return to duty for at least 4 consecutive months.) You will be given the option to convert to an individual policy when your life insurance terminates. When you return to your civilian position following LWOP, your FEGLI will be automatically reinstated.

**Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB)** – Unless employee cancels enrollment, coverage generally continues for up to 365 days in nonpay status, and employee is liable for his/her share of the premiums for this period. Human Resources (HR) will give you a written notice of your options to continue or terminate your FEHB as soon as possible after becoming aware of your nonpay status. You must elect to either continue enrollment or to terminate your enrollment and provide your notice containing an election document to HR. If you do not return the notice within 31 days of receiving the notice (45 days for employees residing overseas), your enrollment will automatically terminate. If you are subject to a court or administrative order to provide health benefits for your children, you do not have the option of terminating coverage. You may pay your premiums directly to your servicing payroll office while in LWOP status or incur a debt and repay the premiums once you return to a pay and duty status. If you terminate your enrollment while you are in leave without pay status, you may re-enroll within 60 days of returning to pay status in a position in which you are eligible for FEHB coverage. If you terminate your FEHB you may still meet the eligibility requirement for continued FEHB coverage in retirement. To be eligible to continue FEHB into retirement you must be covered by FEHB for a total of five years prior to retirement, or be enrolled in FEHB at your first opportunity and continuously covered by an FEHB enrollment for all periods of eligibility, if less than 5 years. TRICARE can be used to help meet the 5 year eligibility requirement.

**Civilian Employees Called to Active Military Duty** – You must be placed on LWOP-US unless you decide to separate. HR will give you a written notice of your options to continue or terminate your FEHB coverage as soon as possible after becoming aware that you are on LWOP-US or Separation-US. You must elect to either continue enrollment or to terminate your enrollment and must provide your notice containing an election document within 31 days of receipt. If you are subject to a court or administrative order to provide health benefits for your children, you do not have the option of terminating coverage. If you do not return the notice within 31 days of receiving the notice (45 days for employees residing overseas), your enrollment will automatically terminate. If you choose to continue your FEHB, your coverage may continue for up to 24 months and your 24 months begins on the date your LWOP begins. A termination is not considered a break in coverage for FEHB continuation in retirement as long as you have been enrolled in FEHB 5 years prior to retirement or enrolled at your first opportunity, and covered for all periods of eligibility if less than 5 years. Your premiums are paid by your agency if you are serving on a **Contingency Operation** title 10 USC section 101 (a) (13) and you continue your coverage. You must pay your premiums if you are not serving in a Contingency Operation and you decide to continue your coverage. You pay your regular

for the first 12 months. After the first 12 months, you must pay your premiums, and the government contributions, plus a 2% administrative fee for the second 12 months.

Most employees are covered under premium conversion and may not cancel or change their FEHB coverage until there is an FEHB Open Season or they experience a Qualifying Life Event (e.g., you get married, divorced, have a baby, etc.). Entry into active duty military service is a Qualifying Life Event and you have the opportunity to cancel your FEHB or waive your participation in premium conversion.

**Thrift Savings Plan (TSP)** – You may not contribute to the TSP while on LWOP and no contributions will be made by your agency. If you are called to active military duty, you do have the option of contributing to the military TSP while on LWOP.

**NOTE: You must keep your supervisor, organization, and/or human resource office (HRO) informed of your status while on LWOP. Contact your supervisor if you want to extend your LWOP. Your organization must submit a Notification of Personnel Action, SF-52, to the HRO for any extension. If you accept another Federal position, contact your servicing HRO immediately to prevent erroneous processing of your resignation.**