

INQUIRY SERVICES DEPARTMENT - GENERAL

1.0. INQUIRY SERVICE DEPARTMENT OBJECTIVES

Contractors shall implement an inquiry processing service which ensures that all inquiries about TRICARE received from TRICARE beneficiaries, providers, and other interested parties are processed in a timely and consistent manner and that information delivered about the program is accurate. The services department shall be able to assist in settling TRICARE claims and provide program information whether the inquiry is by telephone, letter, electronic media, or walk-in. For inquiries regarding Active Duty Claims, contractors shall follow the procedures as outlined in [Chapter 18](#).

2.0. WRITTEN INQUIRIES

The contractor shall process both routine and priority correspondence meeting the standards and requirements set forth in [Chapter 1, Section 3](#).

3.0. TELEPHONES

The contractor shall provide the availability of telephone contact as a service to all TRICARE inquiries [beneficiaries, Regional Directors, providers, ASD(HA), TMA, HBAs, and congressional offices]. TRICARE has established a 1-800-TRICARE telephone number. This number will route incoming calls to the appropriate contractor for action. The MCSC and TDEFIC shall provide the Contracting Officer with the single telephone number to which these calls shall be routed no later than 150 calendar days prior to the start of services.

4.0. WALK-IN INQUIRIES

The contractor shall provide facilities and trained personnel to process walk-in inquiries promptly and accurately. The contractor shall provide for appropriate space and trained staff to enable it to handle walk-in inquiries, including a reception area to accommodate persons visiting its offices about TRICARE matters. This area shall provide sufficient privacy to preclude violation of the Privacy Act. The contractor staff shall be trained to meet with, and properly respond to, all visitors giving prompt, accurate answers to their concerns. Because personal interviews are difficult to monitor for quality of the contact, only the most skilled persons should be assigned.

5.0. TRAINING OF SERVICE REPRESENTATIVES

All representatives must be knowledgeable people with a high level of communications skills. Access to claims history and all other necessary information is essential. Service representatives must be thoroughly trained in the areas outlined in [Chapter 1, Administration](#). Special emphasis should be placed on medical terminology, all pertinent

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instructions and program benefit policies (including both standard TRICARE and TRICARE Prime) and how they are applied in processing, Privacy Act and information requirements, Freedom of Information Act, contractor claims processing system capabilities, and communication skills, and training in the identification and reporting of potential fraud and abuse situations. In addition, the telephone representatives need special training in telephone procedures, including any special instructions on the telephone system, listening for content, customer contact and courtesy, and time management, and training in the identification and reporting of potential fraud and abuse situations.