

Questions and Answers Pertaining to Reservists being called up for Active Duty.

Q. I am a reservist and I think I will be called up. What can I do while I wait for my orders?

A. We recommend that you advise your supervisor of the possibility that you might be called to active duty since once you get your orders, it is common that you will be required to report within 24 - 48 hours. Your supervisor will need to be aware of your anticipated absence so that he/she can make arrangements for the continuation of your duties. And in addition, your supervisor will want to provide you the opportunity to help you make important employment decisions related to your absence. Upon receipt of your orders, you will have to provide your supervisor copies of your orders, with written notice of your departure that indicates decisions about your status while absent from your job.

Q. I would like to know how long I should expect to be on active duty?

A. We expect your orders to provide you this information, but you can anticipate that in accordance with Executive Order 13223, signed September 14, 2001, members of the Ready Reserve will not be called to active duty for more than 24 months.

Q. I am a reservist on a temporary appointment and am wondering if I will have reemployment rights when I am released from active duty?

A. Yes, you will have full job protection as long as you apply for reemployment with the specified time limits. However, your military time will not extend your temporary appointment and so you will only be able to work for the remaining time of your appointment.

Q. I am concerned about helping my family cope with the stress that they may experience related to my being called to active duty.

A. The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) provides, at no cost to employees, confidential counseling on personal and/or work related matters. Employees can contact the EAP by calling 1-800-222-0364. Additional information on EAP services is available at their website: <http://www.foh.dhhs.gov/>

Q. I am concerned about providing financially to my family during my absence since my military pay will not be as much as my Federal civilian pay?

A. You can elect to be on military leave or annual leave while on active duty. In either case, you will be entitled to receive pay from the military based on the terms and conditions of your military enlistment or commission and the Fish and Wildlife Service based on your current pay rate at the same time.

Q. I will want to use my military leave, but once it is exhausted will I have to be on leave without pay (LWOP) from my Federal civilian job?

A. You can elect to use your annual leave before being on LWOP. However, if you elect to go on LWOP instead, your annual leave will be held in abeyance in your account until your return.

Q. Is it true that if I am on LWOP I will lose my health benefits coverage?

A. You will be able to continue your health benefits coverage for a total of 18 months. For the first 12 months (365 days) you will pay for coverage at the same rate as you usually do and for the next 6 months you will be required to pay both the employee and the Government share. At the end of the 18 months, your health benefits coverage terminates, but you will get a 31 day extension of coverage.

Q. During active duty, I believe that the military will provide health coverage and so I won't need to continue my Federal Health Benefits coverage. Can I discontinue the Federal Health Benefits coverage while on active duty?

A. Yes, you can terminate your Federal Health Benefits coverage while on LWOP. Upon your return, as long as you are in a position included for coverage, you can enroll within 60 days of your return.

Q. After being released from active duty, do I just report to the same Federal civilian job I had when I was called up?

A. If you served on active duty less than 91 days, you are restored to the position as if your employment had not been interrupted. If your active duty is more than 90 days the agency has the option of placing you in a position for which qualified, of like seniority, status and pay.

Q. I am a new career conditional employee and still serving a probation period. Will I be given a new probation period upon my return?

A. No. The time spent in the military on active duty will be credited for your probation period as well as for successive within grade increases, career tenure, and annual leave accrual rate,

REFERENCES:

Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act of 1994 (USERRA)
<http://www.dol.gov/asp/programs/handbook/userra.htm>