

**§ 890.1004**

**5 CFR Ch. I (1–13 Edition)**

*Debarment* means a decision by OPM's debarring official to prohibit payment of FEHBP funds to a health care provider, based on 5 U.S.C. 8902a (b), (c), or (d) and this subpart.

*Debarring official* means an OPM employee authorized to issue debarments and financial sanctions under this subpart.

*FEHBP* means the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program.

*Health care services or supplies* means health care or services and supplies such as diagnosis and treatment; drugs and biologicals; supplies, appliances and equipment; and hospitals, clinics, or other institutional entities that furnish supplies and services.

*Incarceration* means imprisonment, or any type of confinement with or without supervised release, including but not limited to home detention, community confinement, house arrest, or similar arrangements.

*Limited waiver* means an approval by the debarring official of a health care provider's request to receive payments of FEHBP funds for items or services rendered in a defined geographical area, notwithstanding debarment, because the provider is the sole community provider or sole source of essential specialized services in a community.

*Mandatory debarment* means a debarment based on 5 U.S.C. 8902a(b).

*Office* or *OPM* means the United States Office of Personnel Management or the component thereof responsible for conducting the administrative sanctions program described by this subpart.

*Permissive debarment* means a debarment based on 5 U.S.C. 8902a(c) or (d).

*Provider* or *provider of health care services or supplies* means a physician, hospital, clinic, or other individual or entity that, directly or indirectly, furnishes health care services or supplies.

*Reinstatement* means a decision by OPM to terminate a health care provider's debarment and to restore his eligibility to receive payment of FEHBP funds.

*Sanction* or *administrative sanction* means any administrative action authorized by 5 U.S.C. 8902a or this subpart, including debarment, suspension, civil monetary penalties, and financial assessments.

*Should know* or *should have known* has the meaning set forth in 5 U.S.C. 8902a(a)(1)(D).

*Sole community provider* means a provider who is the only source of primary medical care within a defined service area.

*Sole source of essential specialized services in a community* means a health care provider who is the only source of specialized health care items or services in a defined service area and that items or services furnished by a non-specialist cannot be substituted without jeopardizing the health or safety of covered individuals.

*Suspending official* means an OPM employee authorized to issue suspensions under 5 U.S.C. 8902a and this subpart.

**MANDATORY DEBARMENTS**

**§ 890.1004 Bases for mandatory debarments.**

(a) *Debarment required.* OPM shall debar a provider who is described by any category of offense set forth in 5 U.S.C. 8902a(b).

(b) *Direct involvement with an OPM program unnecessary.* The conduct underlying the basis for a provider's mandatory debarment need not have involved an FEHBP covered individual or transaction, or any other OPM program.

**§ 890.1005 Time limits for OPM to initiate mandatory debarments.**

OPM shall send a provider a written notice of a proposed mandatory debarment within 6 years of the event that forms the basis for the debarment. If the basis for the proposed debarment is a conviction, the notice shall be sent within 6 years of the date of the conviction. If the basis is another agency's suspension, debarment, or exclusion, the OPM notice shall be sent within 6 years of the effective date of the other agency's action.

**§ 890.1006 Notice of proposed mandatory debarment.**

(a) *Written notice.* OPM shall inform a provider of his proposed debarment by written notice sent not less than 30 days prior to the proposed effective date.

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(b) *Contents of the notice.* The notice shall contain information indicating the:

- (1) Effective date of the debarment;
- (2) Minimum length of the debarment;
- (3) Basis for the debarment;
- (4) Provisions of law and regulation authorizing the debarment;
- (5) Effect of the debarment;
- (6) Provider's right to contest the debarment to the debarring official;
- (7) Provider's right to request OPM to reduce the length of debarment, if it exceeds the minimum period required by law or this subpart; and
- (8) Procedures the provider shall be required to follow to apply for reinstatement at the end of his period of debarment, and to seek a waiver of the debarment on the basis that he is the sole health care provider or the sole source of essential specialized services in a community.

(c) *Methods of sending notice.* OPM shall send the notice of proposed debarment and the final decision notice (if a contest is filed) to the provider's last known address by first class mail, or, at OPM's option, by express delivery service.

(d) *Delivery to attorney, agent, or representatives.* (1) If OPM proposes to debar an individual health care provider, it may send the notice of proposed debarment directly to the provider or to any other person designated by the provider to act as a representative in debarment proceedings.

(2) In the case of a health care provider that is an entity, OPM shall deem notice sent to any owner, partner, director, officer, registered agent for service of process, attorney, or managing employee as constituting notice to the entity.

(e) *Presumed timeframes for receipt of notice.* OPM computes timeframes associated with the delivery notices described in paragraph (c) of this section so that:

- (1) When OPM sends notice by a method that provides a confirmation of receipt, OPM deems that the provider received the notice at the time indicated in the confirmation; and
- (2) When OPM sends notice by a method that does not provide a confirmation of receipt, OPM deems that

the provider received the notice 5 business days after it was sent.

(f) *Procedures if notice cannot be delivered.* (1) If OPM learns that a notice was undeliverable as addressed or routed, OPM shall make reasonable efforts to obtain a current and accurate address, and to resend the notice to that address, or it shall use alternative methods of sending the notice, in accordance with paragraph (c) of this section.

(2) If a notice cannot be delivered after reasonable followup efforts as described in paragraph (f)(1) of this section, OPM shall presume that the provider received notice 5 days after the latest date on which a notice was sent.

(g) *Use of electronic means to transmit notice.* [Reserved]

### § 890.1007 Minimum length of mandatory debarments.

(a) *Debarment based on a conviction.* The statutory minimum period of debarment for a mandatory debarment based on a conviction is 3 years.

(b) *Debarment based on another agency's action.* A debarment based on another Federal agency's debarment, suspension, or exclusion remains in effect until the originating agency terminates its sanction.

### § 890.1008 Mandatory debarment for longer than the minimum length.

(a) *Aggravating factors.* OPM may debar a provider for longer than the 3-year minimum period for mandatory debarments if aggravating factors are associated with the basis for the debarment. The factors OPM considers to be aggravating are:

- (1) Whether the FEHBP incurred a financial loss as the result of the acts underlying the conviction, or similar acts that were not adjudicated, and the level of such loss. In determining the amount of financial loss, OPM shall not consider any amounts of restitution that a provider may have paid;
- (2) Whether the sentence imposed by the court included incarceration;
- (3) Whether the underlying offense(s), or similar acts not adjudicated, occurred repeatedly over a period of time, and whether there is evidence that the offense(s) was planned in advance;