

10 FAM 240 ACCIDENT AND SICKNESS PROGRAM FOR EXCHANGES (ASPE)

*(CT:PEC-20; 12-13-2011)
(Office of Origin: ECA)*

10 FAM 241 POLICY, SCOPE AND AUTHORITY

10 FAM 241.1 Policy

(TL:PEC-007; 03-29-2002)

- a. It is the policy of the Department of State to maintain a system that will provide limited accident and sickness insurance for participants in programs sponsored by the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) and for participants of certain other Department-sponsored programs enrolled for Bureau coverage.
- b. The Bureau's Accident and Sickness Program for Exchanges (ASPE) provides for the treatment of illnesses and medical emergencies. It is not for long-term treatment or convalescence. An exchange participant requiring extensive treatment or convalescence ordinarily will be returned to his or her home country for treatment as soon as the attending physician indicates the patient's condition has stabilized and the patient can be released for travel.

10 FAM 241.2 Definitions

(TL:PEC-007; 03-29-2002)

- a. Injury is an accidental bodily injury sustained and requiring medical treatment.
- b. Sickness is a sickness, illness, or disease requiring medical treatment.
- c. Hospital is a legally constituted and lawfully operated hospital which accepts registered in-patients.
- d. Physician is a professionally qualified individual duly licensed to practice medicine (including but not limited to surgery, dentistry, and

ophthalmology) in the State or country in which he or she resides or practices. The attending physician cannot be a member of the covered person's immediate family or anyone who lives with the covered person.

- e. Infirmary is a place for the care of the infirm, sick or injured; hospital; an institution which operates as a hospital pursuant to law for the care and treatment of sick or injured persons as in-patients.
- f. Qualified nurse is a professional, qualified individual duly licensed to care for the sick.

10 FAM 241.3 Authority

(TL:PEC-007; 03-29-2002)

Fulbright-Hays Act; see 1 FAM 046.5.

10 FAM 242 INSURANCE BENEFITS

10 FAM 242.1 Accident and Sickness Medical Expenses

(TL:PEC-007; 03-29-2002)

- a. ASPE will pay for the expenses actually incurred by an exchange participant over and above the first \$25.00 when injury or sickness requires the following:
 - (1) Treatment by a physician;
 - (2) Confinement within an infirmary or a hospital;
 - (3) Employment of a qualified nurse;
 - (3) X-ray examination;
 - (5) Use of ambulance or therapeutic services;
 - (6) Laboratory services, supplies or medicines deemed necessary by the attending doctor;
 - (7) Dental care for the emergency alleviation of pain and including cosmetic dentistry, false teeth and bridgework, when necessitated by injury to the participant;

- (8) The replacement of eyeglasses, contact lenses, and/or glass eye when broken as the result of an injury; and
 - (9) Treatment for pregnancy, including resulting childbirth or miscarriage or any complication of pregnancy, during the period of the participant's coverage.
- b. ASPE will pay expenses of medical treatment for conditions other than pregnancy during the ensuing 52 weeks from the date of the accident or the commencement of the sickness not to exceed \$50,000.00 in the aggregate, as the result of any one injury or sickness. Medical claims payments are made only for usual, customary, and reasonable charges.

10 FAM 242.2 Death Expenses

(TL:PEC-007; 03-29-2002)

In the event of the death of an exchange participant during coverage, ASPE will pay the actual charges for preparing and transporting to his or her former home (in accordance with applicable international requirements) the remains of any such participant who may die while away from their homes, but not to exceed \$7,500.00.

10 FAM 242.3 Benefits Limitations

(TL:PEC-007; 03-29-2002)

ASPE does not cover the following:

- (1) Costs associated with a pre-existing condition. A pre-existing condition is any condition which;
 - (a) Had its origins (determined by medical staff as occurring prior to participant's coverage whether previously diagnosed or not);
 - (b) A Physician was consulted prior to participant's coverage;
 - (c) Treatment or medication was received prior to participant's coverage; or
 - (d) Would have caused any prudent person to seek medical advice or treatment prior to the covered person's effective date.
- (2) Such injury or such sickness for which any benefits are provided by

Worker's Compensation or occupational disease acts, welfare programs or any other valid and collectible insurance policy.

- (3) Such injuries or such sickness contracted or sustained by the participant:
 - (a) While in active duty in military or naval service of any country at war; or
 - (b) Which is the result of, or is caused by, any act of war.
- (4) Dental care, unless required by an accidental injury to the insured. Any claim for dental treatment will be rejected when not accompanied by proof of an accidental injury to the participant. However, the emergency alleviation of pain shall be covered subject to a \$500.00 maximum limitation. For the purpose of this subchapter, Pyorrhea is a disease and falls under sickness expense benefits.
- (5) Routine physical or any other examinations where there are no objective indications of impairment to normal health.
- (6) Birth control expenses, including surgical procedures and devices.
- (7) Eye examinations, fitting, and prescriptions. However, in the event eye glasses, contact lenses, and/or glass eye become broken or destroyed as the result of an accidental injury to the individual, ASPE will pay claims for replacement of such eye glasses, contact lenses and/or glass eye as may be prescribed by an optometrist, oculist or ophthalmologist.
- (8) Expenses incurred for the treatment of an injury or sickness after 52 weeks from the time of the injury or onset of the sickness.

10 FAM 243 INSURANCE COVERAGE PERIOD

(TL:PEC-007; 03-29-2002)

The period of insurance coverage for all participants is the period from the date a participant departs his or her home, during direct travel to the place of assignment and during participation in an exchange activity, until the time he or she returns home by the most direct route. This period includes any periods of academic recess during an academic year and any travel performed within the country of assignment during those periods or travel performed as an adjunct of a participant's study/research/teaching activity. Insurance coverage is not provided during an extended stopover or during

diversionary travel while en route to or from the place of assignment or during an interruption in the exchange activity for personal reasons.

10 FAM 244 INSURANCE COVERAGE GUIDELINES FOR BUREAU PROGRAMS

10 FAM 244.1 International Visitor Program

(TL:PEC-007; 03-29-2002)

- a. All International Visitors are provided coverage under ASPE. Escorts of international visitors are not covered by ASPE.
- b. Voluntary visitors to the United States are not covered by ASPE.

10 FAM 244.2 Insurance Coverage for Academic Programs

(TL:PEC-007; 03-29-2002)

- a. All U.S. and foreign Fulbright grantees whose grants are approved by the J. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarships Board are provided with ASPE coverage. Coverage is provided to these grantees regardless of the source of funding.
- b. Fulbright grantees who are enrolled in a self-paid or a mandatory university or institutional health benefit plan are still covered by ASPE. However, they can obtain benefits from the ASPE only after their university or institutional plan benefits are exhausted. ASPE will cover these grantees during their travel from and return to their homes, subject to the limitations in 10 FAM 243, when this is necessary to ensure that there is no gap in coverage.
- c. Academic Specialists traveling under Bureau grants to lecture or conduct consultations or symposia abroad are provided with ASPE coverage.
- d. Hubert H. Humphrey Fellows are provided ASPE coverage unless the program managers arrange comparable alternative coverage.
- e. Teacher exchange participants are provided ASPE coverage. In "paired exchanges," in which participants exchange their classroom duties, the period of coverage extends from the earliest required departure date to the latest return date necessitated by any difference in the teaching years

of the paired exchange participants.

- f. Bureau-funded participants in American studies exchange programs, such as the American Studies Institutes program, are provided ASPE coverage.
- g. English Teaching Fellows, EFL Fellows and English language specialists under Bureau direct grants or Bureau grants administered by a non-profit private organization are provided ASPE coverage.
- h. Participants in "U.S. Based Training Programs" for educational advisors abroad are provided ASPE coverage.
- i. Participants in academic exchange activities funded by Bureau grants to Cooperating Private Institutions (CPIs), when the specific participants are not approved by the Board of Foreign Scholarships, are not provided ASPE coverage.

NOTE: Fulbright students, Fulbright lecturers/research scholars, Humphrey Fellows, and Teacher Exchange participants must provide a health clearance certificate, which must be filed at the post or with a Bureau Program Agency prior to the grant award.

- j. Spouses and dependents are not provided ASPE coverage (10 FAM 246).

10 FAM 244.3 Insurance Coverage for Citizen Exchange Programs

(TL:PEC-007; 03-29-2002)

- a. The ECA Bureau provides ASPE coverage to foreign participants in exchange activities conducted by non-profit private sector organizations when the Bureau provides funding for the exchange and determines the participants. The Bureau also provides ASPE coverage to U.S. participants engaged in program activities conducted abroad by non-profit private organizations that receive funding from the Bureau for these activities.
- b. The ECA Bureau provides ASPE coverage to participants in the Jazz Ambassador Program and the Cultural Specialist Program, beginning from time of departure for an activity abroad until direct return to point of origin, subject to the relevant limitations in 10 FAM 243.

10 FAM 244.4 Insurance Coverage for Youth Exchange Programs

(TL:PEC-007; 03-29-2002)

- a. U.S. and foreign participants in youth exchanges conducted by cooperating private organizations can be provided ASPE coverage if the Bureau provides the "primary funding" for the youth exchange, i.e., the Bureau provides at least 50% of the total funding for both program and administrative costs directly associated with the specific exchange, and the Bureau is responsible for determining specifically who participates in the exchange. (A grant of funds to an organization as a contribution to the direct expenses of individuals who are also funded by other sources is not primary funding). Otherwise, the cooperating private organizations responsible for conducting the program are responsible for providing ASPE coverage to Youth Exchange Program grantees.
- b. Participants in youth exchange programs for which the sponsoring organizations receive only facilitative funding (funding which does not include travel and per diem for participants) from the Bureau are not provided ASPE coverage.

10 FAM 244.5 Other Department-Sponsored Programs

(TL:PEC-007; 03-29-2002)

Participants in other Department-sponsored programs not mentioned in this subchapter may be enrolled in ASPE with the written approval of the Executive Director for the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs.

10 FAM 245 EMERGENCY BENEFITS

10 FAM 245.1 Medical Evacuation Coverage

(TL:PEC-007; 03-29-2002)

- a. In the event that emergency Medical Evacuation (MEDEVAC) of an exchange participant is required because of a life-threatening situation and the participant does not have insurance to cover medical evacuation costs, the ASPE will pay the expenses of the medical evacuation. The participant's return airline ticket will be used for a portion of this expense.
- b. Determination of what constitutes a medical emergency is made by the Bureau on a case-by-case basis. In the Bureau's view, each medical emergency is unique and it is impossible to establish a policy for all situations.
- c. Paramount is the protection of the health of grantees, and the Bureau

expects the post and the embassy to take whatever steps are necessary. In general, the participant should be afforded the same treatment as an officer at the post, with respect to evacuation. The Bureau requires that medical evacuation be the result of specific advice from an embassy-approved medical authority that the grantee's medical situation is life-threatening and that the medical evacuation is required.

- d. As soon as possible after a medical evacuation is determined by the post's medical personnel to be necessary, the post should contact the Bureau Office of the Executive Director and the appropriate program officer in the Bureau to explain the situation. The Office of the Executive Director needs to know the type of MEDEVAC arrangements required by the situation and an estimate of costs. The program officer can provide assistance with the notification of relatives, arrangements for the patient's reception in the United States, and arrangements regarding the grantee's professional commitments.

10 FAM 245.2 Emergency Medical Benefits

(TL:PEC-007; 03-29-2002)

- a. Program officers in contract agencies or posts abroad/Fulbright Commissions must notify the Bureau program officer promptly when a grantee sustains an accident or illness which may result in costly medical treatment.
- b. See 10 FAM 247 for claims procedures.

10 FAM 246 INSURANCE COVERAGE FOR DEPENDENTS OF EXCHANGE PARTICIPANTS

(TL:PEC-007; 03-29-2002)

The ECA Bureau's ASPE coverage and the MEDEVAC procedure (see 10 FAM 245.1) do not apply to the spouse or dependent children of exchange program participants. Participants should be advised by post or sponsoring organization to purchase at their own expense health and MEDEVAC insurance for a spouse and dependent children.

10 FAM 247 PROCESSING CLAIMS

10 FAM 247.1 Claims Processor

(TL:PEC-007; 03-29-2002)

- a. ECA contracts with a claims processor to provide a review of medical claims for consistency with Bureau policy and standard medical practices. ECA officials do not have the authority to guarantee verbally or in writing the payment of any medical expenses. All claims must be submitted on the ASPE claim form to the claims processor for review.
- b. Bureau program officers should not deal with participants on the handling of medical claims when a Bureau Program Agency or Cooperating Private Institution is involved in the administration of the participant's program. It is the responsibility of the Program Agency or Cooperating Private Institution to assist participants with claims preparation and communication with the claims processor.
- c. All communications with posts, Program Agencies, Cooperating Private Institutions, or binational commissions on the status of hospitalized grantees must be coordinated with the Bureau's Office of the Executive Director (ECA/EX).

10 FAM 247.2 Coordinating Benefits

(TL:PEC-007; 03-29-2002)

Each participant must report on the claim form submitted to the claims processor any other health and accident insurance coverage which the participant may have, including any mandatory university or institutional plan. If the participant has health and accident insurance from another source, the Bureau pays medical expenses, subject to applicable ASPE limits, only after the other insurer pays its benefits in full.

10 FAM 247.3 Emergency Medical Claims

(TL:PEC-007; 03-29-2002)

- a. A Bureau grantee may request emergency medical benefits not covered by ASPE, if during the period of a Bureau grant a grantee incurs medical expenses which exceed \$50,000 or are otherwise not covered by ASPE, and if these expenses cannot be paid by other insurance or the grantee's personal funds. The Bureau will consider such requests if judged to be in the overall interest of the program, if the grantee cannot pay the expenses, and subject to the availability of appropriated funds.
- b. The Bureau program officer is primarily responsible for ensuring that payment by the Bureau for such expenses is justified because the grantee

cannot pay such expenses and must obtain concurrence of the Program Office Director and the Bureau Executive Director when it is recommended that the Bureau pay emergency medical benefits.

- c. Program officers in contract agencies or posts abroad/Fulbright commissions must ensure that immediately after medical services are rendered to the grantee, the grantee files a claim with the Department's claims processor and with any other insurance carrier for benefits purchased by or for the grantee.
- d. The Bureau program officer reviews the case and determines whether to recommend payment of a grantee's medical expenses as an emergency medical benefit. To recommend payment of such benefits, the program officer submits a memorandum requesting emergency medical benefits through the Division Chief and Program Office Director to the Bureau Executive Director. The memorandum must be accompanied by the following:
 - (1) Term of claimant's Bureau grant;
 - (2) Physician's description of case;
 - (3) Tabulation of payments made by insurance companies, if any, and/or the grantee;
 - (4) All medical bills related to the claim;
 - (5) A memorandum from the program agency/Fulbright Commission which justifies the payment of emergency medical benefits. The justification should indicate that the Emergency Medical Benefit claim has been discussed with the grantee and the grantee cannot cover these costs personally;
 - (6) Statement that there is no university or other insurance coverage and participant has no personal insurance or personal resources to pay the remaining medical bills; and
 - (7) A copy of each claim payment check from the claims processor.
- e. The Bureau Office of the Executive Director reviews each request and considers the justification and availability of appropriated funds for the grantee's medical expense. If the request for emergency medical benefits is approved, ECA/EX will initiate payment of the claim and advise the program officer that the claim is being processed. If the request is denied, the program officer is notified, through the Office Director and Division Chief, with the reason(s) for denial.

10 FAM 248 AND 249 UNASSIGNED