



*(December 30, 2015)*

In order to further improve the lines of communication and to respond to the concerns between the National VA Council and you our members, I have established a National VA Council Briefing. This NVAC Briefing will bring you the latest news and developments within DVA and provide you with the current status of issues this Council is currently addressing. I believe that this NVAC Briefing will greatly enhance the way in which we communicate and the way in which we share new information, keeping you better informed.

**Alma L. Lee**  
National VA Council, President

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**In This Briefing: FEHBP sees 600K in transactions during 2015 open season**

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FEDERALTIMES  
Carten Cordell, Senior Writer 2:07 p.m. EST December 22, 2015

John O'Brien is the director of health care and insurance at the Office of Personnel Management. Officials at the Office of Personnel Management are predicting a banner year for the Federal Employee Health Benefits program, thanks to the new Self Plus One plan.

Open season for federal employees to enroll in or change their health insurance closed on Dec. 14, and OPM has projected that 600,000 FEHB enrollment transactions were processed.

The figure surpasses 2014's mark of more than 430,000 transactions processed and was aided by the inclusion of the new Self Plus One policy for smaller households, officials said.

[FEDERAL TIMES](#)  
[FEHBP premium rates jump 6.4 percent for 2016](#)

"This year, with the new Self Plus One enrollment type available, it was more important than ever that enrollees review the plans available to them and to make an informed decision... and they did," said John O'Brien, OPM director of Healthcare and Insurance, in a statement. "We emphasized the need to shop around, to do what is best for you and your family's healthcare needs. And, all at the same time, perhaps saving you money."

The offering allowed federal employees and retirees to enroll in a family plan that covered them and one beneficiary, providing projected savings for some households by not charging the same rates for larger family coverage.

[FEDERAL TIMES](#)

[Self plus one adds up to zero for many](#)

The plan was widely anticipated this fall, though some analysis shows the savings varies for some beneficiaries and could cost more for others.

OPM officials are now offering employees that didn't have a chance to sign up for Self Plus One coverage during open season another chance come February, with the limited enrollment period that will run Feb. 1-29. It's open to "employees who pay their insurance premiums before taxes and are currently enrolled in Self and Family," OPM officials said.

The limited enrollment period only allows employees to shift their enrollment from Family and Self plans to Self Plus One plans. There will be no increases in enrollment or changes in policies or coverages, unless it's to Self Plus One.

"Even with this high number of enrollment transactions, we know there are enrollees who missed open season and can benefit from Self Plus One," said O'Brien. "Because of this, we will be holding a limited enrollment period to give employees another bite at the apple."