



Iranian Armed Forces Change Health Insurance Procedures

OE Watch Commentary: International coverage of the Iranian military tends to focus almost entirely on its capabilities or support for insurgencies and terrorist groups. The Iranian military, however, is a huge bureaucracy with nation-wide reach. While the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps is a volunteer and elite organization, the regular Iranian army is conscript-based, incorporating almost all 18 and 19 year-old men in the country.

Consistently, one of the primary complaints from Iranian veterans is poor health care. In the excerpted article from Iran’s official defense press service, the chief executive officer of the Armed Forces Health Service Insurance highlights recent changes to make the process less bureaucratic for its customers and to diminish the need for its staff to hold in-person meetings. While armed forces and veterans’ health care reform is long overdue in Iran, one of the reasons why the bureaucracy was so large was the Islamic Republic’s need to provide jobs for its most politically-connected adherents. Any reforms that allow customers to bypass various offices and processes, leading to layoffs, may ultimately increase employment pressure on Iranian authorities.

It appears that COVID-19 is forcing long-resisted bureaucratic reforms, a telling sign that the disease is not as under control as Iranian authorities now claim. **End OE Watch Commentary (Rubin)**



A Sample Iranian Armed Services Health Insurance Card.
Source: Imam Hossein Hospital of Mashhad, <https://www.imhh.ir/images/bime/niro.jpg>

“We hope to be good servants for the great and honorable society of the armed forces”

Source: “Hazaf-e Tarikh-e ‘Etebar az Daftarcheh Bimah Khodmat Darmani Niruha-ye Moslah (Remove the Validity Date from the Armed Forces Health Insurance Booklet),” *Defa Press*, 30 June 2020. <https://defapress.ir/fa/news/403635>

Remove the validity date from the Armed Forces Health Insurance Booklet

Amir Norouzi informed the executive units of the organization about the instructions for removing the credit renewal process for medical records of the armed forces. According to the Press Defense Social Group, Amir Norouzi, CEO of the Armed Forces Health Services Insurance, stated that the necessary plans have been made to eliminate the process of renewing the medical records of the Armed Forces and that, in the future, there is no need to refer the insured and their dependents to the organization’s electronic services branches and offices.

Nowruzi emphasized that this plan is not subject to the employees and their families covered, and stated that, in the first phase of this plan starting from 21 June 2020, the date of validity of the booklet was removed, only for retired and employed supervisors (except for contract employees) and their spouses. On the letterhead and papers of the above-mentioned insured’s booklet, the text “Credit up to the last page of the booklet” has replaced the booklet’s validity date and, in the second phase, after necessary examinations, if possible, it will be operational for various groups and insurance associated organizations.

The managing director of the Armed Forces Health Services Insurance Organization named “Sakhid,” said it is conducted to promote the dignity and satisfaction of the target community, reducing the insureds’ visits to branches and offices of the organization across the country, preventing transmission and coronavirus virus, and saving the booklet as one of the main reasons for this action and added that, “We hope that in order to play the role and social responsibility of the organization, we can take big steps and be good servants for the great and honorable society of the armed forces.” In order to prevent disruption in the provision of services to caregivers and their spouses, all contracting centers have been notified to accept and perform services via text messages.