

Healthcare premiums to increase nearly eight percent for federal workers in 2009.

On the front page of its Business section, the [Washington Post](#) (9/26, D1, Davidson) reports, "Health insurance premiums for federal employees will jump almost 8 percent, on average, in 2009, a sharp increase over the 2.9 percent increase this year and the 2.3 percent increase in 2007, the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) announced yesterday." The Post notes, however, that most workers will face even higher increases next year. According to Nancy Kichak, OPM's associate director for strategic human resources policy, the projected rates "are the lowest possible in keeping with preservation of benefits and stability in the program." Kichak credited "'the cost of services' and previous estimates on healthcare costs that were too low," as well as "utilization of services, technology, and medical inflation" for the increase. Enrollees will pay an additional "\$11.12 out of pocket at each biweekly pay period next year" for those with family coverage, "or \$4.83 for those with individual coverage."