



WSFC SERVICE OFFICER'S NEWSLETTER A QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 1, NUMBER 4

Hello all! Its time for the 4th issue of the WSFC Service Officer's Newsletter. This is the last issue for this year. First, I would like to wish all of you a great and enjoyable summer. If you plan to do any traveling I hope you have a safe and enjoyable trip.

I will be doing a Service Workshop during the convention and look forward to seeing many of you. I have enjoyed working with all of you this year and it has been a rewarding year. I would have loved to had each chapter with a Service Officer and my hopes are that someone will step forward and take the position of Chapter Service Officer in the chapters where the position is vacant. Service is one of our great benefits we have in NARFE.

The articles I have in this issue will be the following: 1. Changes that can easily be changed by the telephone; 2. Your personalized Booklet on Your Retirement Benefits; 3. Representative Payees; 4. Thrift Savings Plan Withholding Options; 5. Reminders; 6. A handout on Procedures to follow in case of the death of a spouse; and 7. A handout on Instructions and Information on the Designation of Beneficiary (SF-2823).

ARTICLE #1 – CHANGES THAT MAY BE CHANGED WITH OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT (OPM) BY PHONE ARE:

1. Change in address by calling 1-888-767-6738; 2. Change in your Federal Tax Withholding. 3. Change in your Financial Institution by calling 1-888-767-6738 and you will need your name, CSA/CSF#, SSAN, & current mailing address, the name and address of your financial institution and also the routing indicator number. 4. Change your PIN number. 5. Report a lost or missing payment. The telephone number to make these changes is 1-888-767-6738.

ARTICLE #2 – YOUR PERSONALIZED BOOKLET ON YOUR FEDERAL RETIREMENT BENEFITS --- FOR THOSE OF YOU THAT DOESN'T HAVE THIS PERSONALIZED BOOKLET FROM OPM – I HIGHLY RECOMMEND THAT YOU CALL OPM AND REQUEST A COPY. IT IS VERY INFORMATIVE AND GIVES YOU YOUR PERSONAL INFORMATION SUCH AS: PERSONAL STATISTICS, YOUR MONTHLY BENEFIT, SURVIVOR BENEFITS, HEALTH INSURANCE BENEFITS, LIFE INSURANCE BENEFITS, CONTRIBUTIONS AND TAX INFORMATION, HOW TO CONTACT OPM, INFORMATION FOR DISABILITY RETIREES, COST OF LIVING, ADJUSTMENTS AND NOTICES, AND OTHER INFORMATION.

**THE TELEPHONE NUMBER TO CALL TO REQUEST A COPY IS: 1-888-767-6738.
YOU WILL NEED YOUR CSA/CSF#, SSAN, YOUR CURRENT ADDRESS ETC.**

ARTICLE #3 – REPRESENTATIVE PAYEES – The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) will not accept your designated power of attorney to conduct business with them on your behalf. Should you become unable to manage your own finances, a designated individual may become your Representative Payee. Further information about the Representative Payee process is available by calling OPM at 1-888-767-6738. The Representative Payee Application is RI-20-7.

An original or a certified copy of a court order appointing a guardian or fiduciary to handle the affairs of the individual should be submitted so that the Office of Personnel Management can determine whether the applicant is or was mentally incompetent or otherwise unable to handle his or her financial affairs. Uncertified photocopies are not acceptable. The court order should show the entire period of time which is in question for the determination and should address whether the alleged incompetency occurred in the past or is currently present.

ARTICLE #4 – THRIFT SAVINGS PLAN WITHDRAWAL OPTIONS:

1. Employees that separate from federal service, should receive a TSP Withdrawal Package from their agency. The package contains a booklet entitled “Withdrawing Your TSP Account after Leaving Federal Service”. This booklet has three sections: 1. Leaving Your Money in the TSP; 2. Withdrawing Your TSP Account, and 3. Special Considerations.
 2. After the employing agency has notified TSP about the employees’ separation, TSP will mail a current account and withdrawal information and a tax notice.
 3. If you have an outstanding TSP Loan, TSP will send information about closing the loan. (Note: An outstanding loan will delay any withdrawal. Loans must be repaid prior to a withdrawal or the loan declared taxable distribution.)
 4. Partial Withdrawal – Retirees may make a one-time only withdrawal of part of the TSP account if if they did not make an age-based-in-service withdrawal while an employee. The withdrawal must be in the amount of \$1,000.00 or more.
 5. Full Withdrawal – Retirees can make a full withdrawal of the entire TSP account in either a single payment, a series of monthly payments or a life annuity, or a mixture of all three. For FERS participants who are vested in the agency automatic contributions (usually after completing 3 years of Federal civilian service) and CSRS participants, if the account balance is less than \$200.00 after you have left Federal service, the full account will be paid automatically in a single direct payment to you.
 6. Required Minimum Distribution: The IRS requires you to receive a portion of your TSP account beginning in the calendar year you become 70 ½. If you do not withdraw your account balance or begin receiving payments from your account, the TSP is required to make the required distribution to you by April 1 of the following year. Minimum distribution amounts cannot be transferred or rolled over.
 7. Changes to your account: If you have your entire account balance (if it is over \$200,00) after you retire you can make interfund transfers at anytime. There is no longer a requirement to wait until an annual open season for this.
 8. Contacts and Web sites: Write to Thrift Savings Plan, P.O. Box 385021, Birmingham, AL 35238 or call: 1-877-968-3778 or Web site: www.isp.gov
- 5. REMINDERS:** 1. Service Officers please get all your request for reimbursements to me no later than June 15th to allow me time to get the request to the WSFC Treasurer. The fiscal year for WSFC ends June 30th. Any expenses I get with the date later than 30 June will not be approved for payment. 2. All of you that are receiving a Social Security Payment will receive a one-time payment of \$250.00 by the end of May. If you are receiving a Social Security Payment, VA, Medicaid, or SSI you will only receive one payment of \$250.00.

3. Any retired Military should have received an increase in your retirement do to a change in the Federal Income Tax Withholding effective 1 May.
4. I recommend each of you to get the F-100 (11/06) pamphlet – Be Prepared for Life’s Events and complete the 5 page form – Guide for Annuitant & Survivor Benefits. Be sure to let your family know where you have stored the form.

ARTICLE #6 -- PROCEDURES TO FOLLOW WHEN A RETIREE’S SPOUSE DIES

When an annuitant’s spouse dies, the annuitant should act as soon as possible to send the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) a certified copy of the death certificate, along with other applicable requests and statements. These matters are discussed below.

Where an annuitant has elected a reduction in his or her annuity to provide spousal survivor benefit and the annuitant’s spouse later dies, the annuitant is entitled by law to:

- a. Have the reduction eliminated
- b. Receive the full annuity rate retroactive to the first of the month after the spouse’s death

The annuitant should, without delay, write directly to: OPM, Employee Service and Records Center, Boyers, PA 16017 or contact the Chapter’s Service Officer at 253-531-4514 or go directly to the Service Center, located at the Lakewood Senior Center.

OTHER IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS

FEDERAL EMPLOYEE HEALTH BENEFITS PROGRAM (FEHBP) – If there are no minor or disabled children, the annuitant should request a change in enrollment from family to self only.

DESIGNATION OF BENEFICIARY – If the annuitant wishes to designate a new beneficiary For Federal Employees Group Life Insurance (FEGLI) and any unexpended balance in the Civil Service retirement System (CSRS) or Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) Fund, The letter should request the following standard forms:

- a. Designation of Beneficiary for FEGLI, SF-2823
- b. Designation of Beneficiary for CSRS, SF-2808
- c. Designation of Beneficiary for FERS, SF-3102

FAMILY LIFE INSURANCE – If the deceased spouse was covered by Option-C-Family of Life Insurance, the annuitant should also request FEGLI Form, FE-6 DEP Statement of Claim.

REVIEW OF WILL AND OTHER DOCUMENTS – The annuitant’s legal advisor should be consulted to review the annuitant’s will and all important financial and estate-related documents.

I recommend that all the documents be mailed to OPM by certified mail with a receipt.

You will need several certified copies of the death certificate.

This is a handout I developed years ago for Service Workshops and training.

ARTICLE #7 -- INFORMATION FOR DESIGNATION OF BENEFICIARY (SF-2823) LIFE INSURANCE FOR CSRS and FERS RETIREES

The following list may help you avoid common errors, which will make your designation beneficiary unacceptable. We want to insure that benefits are paid exactly as you desire under current regulation.

1. Your designation must be accomplished in full detail, including your full name (no nickname) and your signature.
2. Two people, neither of whom may be named as a beneficiary, must witness your designation.
3. You must provide the full given name and last name of each beneficiary.
4. Complete this form in duplicate. Type or print in ink all entries except signatures. OPM will note receipt of the form and return a copy to you as evidence that the original has been received and filed. Keep the duplicate copy in a safe place along with other important papers.
5. Attachments are acceptable only when each sheet is signed by you and the same two witnesses who signed your designation.
6. If you designate more than one beneficiary, be sure that the shares to be paid add up to 100 percent.
7. You can change your beneficiary at any time, without the knowledge or consent of a previous beneficiary.
8. You cannot change or cancel a designation of beneficiary in a letter or in a last will or testament unless you have signed your will, two people who witnessed your signature sign your will and OPM receives your will before the insured's death.
9. Be sure your designation of beneficiary is free of corrections, erasures, or alterations to avoid confusion or questions when authorizing payment.
10. You do not need to make a designation if you are satisfied with the order of precedence that the law provides. That order of precedence follows: First to the beneficiary/ies; second to the widow or widower; third to the insured's child or children in equal shares; fourth to the insured's parents in equal shares; fifth to the court appointed executor or administrator of the insured's estate and sixth to the insured's next of kin.
11. The Designation of Beneficiary isn't required to be notarized.
12. If you wish to designate a trust fund as your beneficiary, please contact our office for more information.
13. Always keep your Addresses up-to-date for the beneficiary.

Retirement Operations Center
P. O. Box 45

Telephone #: 1-888-767-6738

If the Chapter Service Officer, Marion Wilson can assist you please contact her at 253-531-4514 or e-mail: drssweety@comcast.net.

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