

7 FAM 580

OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

(TL:CON-85; 08-27-2004)
(Office of Origin: CA/OCS/PRI)

IDESK Telephone: 202-606-0933

E-mail: Idesk@opm.gov

FAX: 202-606-2339

- a. The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) is the Federal government's human resources agency. OPM and the Department of State have been long-term partners in benefits payments for annuitants covered by the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) and the Federal Employees' Retirement System (FERS) who are residing abroad.
- b. Our joint mission is to provide efficient and effective service to beneficiaries abroad. To further assist our posts abroad, OPM has set up an International Desk (IDesk) exclusively to assist the Federal Benefits Units (FBU) with post-retirement inquiries. The IDesk resides in the Quality Control and Authorization Branch of the Operations Support Group and handles most retirement and survivor benefits, both case and systems related, including all aspects of international payments.

7 FAM 581 WHAT IS THE CONSULAR OFFICER'S AUTHORITY AND RESPONSIBILITY REGARDING OPM ANNUITIES PAID ABROAD?

7 FAM 581.1 Authorities

(TL:CON-79; 05-06-2004)

5 U.S.C. 8331-8351, Part III, Subpart G (Chapter 83 – Retirement, subchapter III – Civil Service Retirement)

5 U.S.C. 8401-8470 – (Chapter 84 Federal Employees' Retirement System)

5 U.S.C. 8701-8716 (Chapter 87 – Life Insurance)

5 U.S.C. 8901-8914 (Chapter 89 – Health Insurance)

5 U.S.C. 9001-9009 (Chapter 90 – Long Term Care Insurance)

22 U.S.C. 3904 (3) (Functions of Service)

7 FAM 581.2 What is the Role of the Consular Officer?

(TL:CON-73; 04-21-2004)

- a. Federal law mandates entitlement to Federal benefits. Each Federal benefits-paying agency establishes policies and procedures under which the laws are administered. When policies and procedures are applied outside the United States, your assistance is required.
- b. Initial applications for retirement and related benefits must be submitted through the human resources office of the individual's employing agency. In the case of Department of State employees abroad, Foreign Service posts' administrative offices will lend proper assistance.

Once the individual has been issued a claim number, all future inquiries should be directed to the Consular Section and/or CA/OCS/PRI.

7 FAM 581.3 What is the Role of CA/OCS/PRI?

(TL:CON-73; 04-21-2004)

- a. The Office of Policy Review and Interagency Liaison (PRI) is the Department's liaison with the Office of Personnel Management and other benefits-paying agencies and consular posts abroad as well as with members of the public and Congress. PRI provides guidance, disseminates information and implements new programs and procedures at OPM's direction.
- b. In essence, PRI shares the administrative and managerial responsibilities with the Office of Personnel Management and other Federal benefits-paying agencies for the Federal benefits programs abroad to ensure efficient and fraud-free payment of benefits as well as the provision of services.
- c. We have also set up ASKPRI@state.gov, an e-mail address within OCS/PRI, where you may send questions and be assured that the appropriate person gets your question and responds as soon as possible. We encourage you to also provide complex case examples on ASKPRI@state.gov so PRI can share them with other posts for advice/suggestions or for their information.

7 FAM 581.4 Are there Limitations on Consular Officers Regarding Annuities and Disclosure of Information (Privacy Act)?

(TL:CON-79; 05-06-2004)

Information contained in a name-retrievable system of records concerning annuitants of Federal retirement systems may not be disclosed except:

- As expressly authorized by OPM
- By written authorization by the individual who is the subject of the record
- In accordance with the 12 exceptions to the conditions of disclosure in the Privacy Act, as amended (5 U.S.C. 552a (b)(1)-(12). See CA/OCS Intranet Privacy Act Feature.

Any unauthorized disclosure is subject to criminal penalties pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 552a (Privacy Act, as amended).

7 FAM 582 DEFINITIONS

(TL:CON-73; 04-21-2004)

- a. **Annuitant** - A person who participated in a Federal retirement system or is the survivor or beneficiary who meets the requirements for receiving an annuity under the system.
- b. **Annuity** - A sum of money payable at specified intervals to individuals who participated in a Federal retirement system.
- c. **Retirement** - Official separation from one's Federal employment or position upon meeting the requirements of years of service and age for entitlement to benefits under pertinent laws and regulations.

7 FAM 583 INQUIRIES ABOUT BENEFITS

(TL:CON-73; 04-21-2004)

Contacting OPM. See Contacting OPM on the CA/OCS Intranet site.

7 FAM 583.1 How does an Individual Apply for Benefits when Living Abroad?

(TL:CON-79; 05-06-2004)

- a. **Application:**

To qualify for payments from the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) or the Federal Employees' Retirement System (FERS), an individual must submit a retirement application, Form SF-2801 Application for Immediate Retirement (CSRS) or Form SF-3107 Application for Immediate Retirement (FERS). OPM has a number of on-line forms including retirement application forms at OPM Retirement Application Forms.

If the individual has been separated from Federal service for more than 30 days, submit your application to the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM). If you are still working, submit it to your employing agency.

b. Medical Examination:

When a medical examination for disability retirement is required for an applicant or annuitant, you will be informed by OPM by letter enclosing a blank examination form for disability retirement. You should:

Promptly arrange for the examination by a qualified physician.

Advise the applicant of the time and place of the appointment.

NOTE: If a Federal government physician is available, the examination is to be conducted by that physician at no additional cost to the government or the employee concerned.

- Promptly return the completed examination form to:

Compensation Group
Retirement and Insurance Programs
Office of Personnel Management
Washington, DC 20415

7 FAM 583.2 Reporting a Change of Status

7 FAM 583.2-1 Change of Address, Marriage and/or Divorce of an Annuitant

(TL:CON-73; 04-21-2004)

- a. **Changes of Address** should be sent to either of the following addresses.

U.S. Office of Personnel Management
Idesk
Operations Support Group
Room 4416
1900 E Street NW
Washington, DC 20415
Telephone: 202-606-0933
FAX: 202-606-2339
E-mail: IDESK@OPM.GOV

or

U.S. Office of Personnel Management
Retirement Operations Center
P.O. Box 45
Boyers, PA 16017-0045
Telephone: 724-794-2005
FAX: 724-794-1112
E-mail: Retiree@opm.gov

b. Marriage

Many different benefits handled by different offices are affected by post-retirement marriage. Send notification of marriage to the following office and all appropriate offices will be notified of the change.

U.S. Office of Personnel Management
Retirement Operations Center
P.O. Box 45
Boyers, PA 16017-0045
Telephone: 724-794-2005
FAX: 724-794-1112
E-mail: Retiree@opm.gov

c. Divorce

Immediately provide all divorce decrees and support orders to the Court Ordered Benefits Branch, because the date of receipt affects the effective date of payment. Please forward these to:

U.S. Office of Personnel Management
Court Ordered Benefits Branch
PO Box 17
Washington DC 20044-0017
Telephone: 202-606-0222
FAX: 202-606-0785

7 FAM 583.2-2 Death of an Annuitant

(TL:CON-73; 04-21-2004)

There are three ways to report a death:

- a. Use the online website when possible (to report the death of an annuitant).
- b. Contact the IDesk by e-mail or FAX. Provide as much of the following information as possible:
 - Name of annuitant (first, middle initial and last)
 - Annuitant's claim number

- SSN of deceased
- Date of death
- Survivor's name
- Relationship to deceased
- Survivor's address, telephone number, and e-mail

c. Contact OPM's Retirement Operations Center:

U.S. Office of Personnel Management
Retirement Operations Center
PO Box 45
Boyers, PA 16017-0045
Telephone: 724-794-2005
FAX: 724-794-1112
E-mail: Retiree@opm.gov

7 FAM 583.3 What if a Benefit Check is not Received?

(TL:CON-73; 04-21-2004)

See 7 FAM 523.

a. Contact the IDesk nonreceipt specialist:

U.S. Office of Personnel Management
Idesk
Attention: Nonreceipt
Room 4416
1900 E Street NW
Washington, DC 20415
Telephone: 202-606-0933
E-mail: Idesk@opm.gov or esmith@OPM.gov
Subject heading: Nonreceipt

b. You need to inform OPM of:

- Name and current address of the beneficiary
- Annuitant's claim number
- Date of the check (EX: January 2, 2002)
- Type of annuity (CSRS, FERS)

7 FAM 584 THROUGH 589 UNASSIGNED