

Retirement Made EZ

Employees can calculate what their annuities would look like using different dates.

This summer federal employees will find that the Office of Personnel Management plans to make retirement EZ for federal employees ready to make the transition into retired life.

Reginald Brown, Director of Modernization for OPM, said that OPM's new electronic retirement program, known as RetireEZ is a tool that enables employees to calculate different annuity scenarios and the ability to process their retirement online. RetireEZ will be available to some as early as this summer, as OPM continues a series of rollouts through February 2009.

"If someone is near retirement and comes to the benefits officer and says, 'I want to start things going for my retirement,' they can sit down with RetireEZ and figure out what it would look like at different dates," said OPM Director Linda Springer. Employees must go to a benefits officer to use the resource, but they eventually will be able to access it through their home or work computers. Because benefits officers are "more savvy," she said, OPM plans to gather feedback on

whether the system needs "additional tweaking" before rolling it out to the rest of the population.

Here's what you can expect from RetireEZ: After logging in to Your Benefits Resource using a secure user identification and password,



you will be given information on dates you can retire with a reduced annuity and with a full annuity. The system then allows you to enter the date and age that you plan to retire. You would also enter information on what you believe your pay growth will be based on projected step and grade increases as well as any additional income, such as an inheritance or other retirement nest egg. You also can enter projections on your Thrift Savings Plan balance based on current rates of return and future contributions. RetireEZ links directly to the TSP's Web site and automatically reads your balance for its calculations.

After reviewing the various

retirement scenarios, you can process your retirement online. You would choose a date of separation, an annuity start date and enter any survivor information. The system will automatically include special details about your employment, i.e. if you

served as a law enforcement officer or air traffic controller and have special rules surrounding your service. You also would make choices about

your pension, health insurance, opting for a life-only, full survivor or partial survivor annuity. Within three business days, you should receive a package with forms for your signature. For more information on retirement and RetireEZ please go to www.opm.gov.

The Army Benefits Center (ABC-C) is currently analyzing this initiative to understand how RetireEZ will interface with the Army's processing of retirement applications. Information will be disseminated to the federal workforce as soon as it becomes available. To contact ABC-C go to <https://www.abc.army.mil>

GERMS WORKING OVERTIME ON DESK

According to 2006 American Dietitian Association survey, 57 percent of workers snack at their desks at least once a day. More than 75 percent of workers "only occasionally" clean their desks before eating; 20 percent never do, the survey found. Additionally a study which was funded by the Clorox Company, found that the phones, desk and keyboards regularly used by teachers, accountants, and

bankers harbored nearly two to twenty times more bacteria per square inch than other professions. Phones ranked as the #1 home for office germs, followed by desks, keyboards and computer mice. In one study conducted by Dr. Charles Gerba and his researchers from the University of Arizona found that an infected person can leave a trail of viruses on every surface they touch - and vi-

ruses can survive on surfaces for up to three days. Dr. Gerba recommends frequent hand-washing and using disinfecting wipes daily on surfaces in your cubicle or office to kill illness-causing germs!



Show Me the Money!!!



During your federal employment, have you ever?

- Transferred?
- Had a change to your servicing payroll office?
- Separated from federal service and did NOT take a refund of your retirement contributions?

These are some events that would warrant the "transfer" of your retirement contributions to OPM. Such contributions are not reflected in the cumulative retirement total on your leave and earnings statement since the date of the event. If you would like to inquire about your retirement balance, write to:

**U.S. Office of Personnel Management
Retirement Operations Center
Post Office Box 45
Boyers, PA 16017**

In your correspondence, include your name, SSN, address, phone number, estimated dates of service, etc. OPM will send your response to your home address.

Do you have to do this? No. Why would you want to do this? Perhaps you are considering resignation and you would like to know approximately how much your refund would be. Perhaps your retirement contributions were transferred to OPM several times and you simply want to know what you have in there. Such inquiries have proven helpful in terms of OPM being able to properly identify employee contribution records prior to retirement - some inquiries identified problems and prevented a delay in the final adjudication of annuity.

EEO - ITS THE LAW

PROCEDURES FOR PROCESSING INDIVIDUAL COMPLAINTS OF DISCRIMINATION



If you believe you have been discriminated against in the workplace based on your race, color, religion, sex (including sexual harassment), national origin, age, physical and mental disability or reprisal for previous participation in the EEO process, the following procedures should be followed and you can expect the following:

- ‡ Contact EEO Office or Army Director of EEO within 45 calendar days of (a) awareness of alleged discriminatory act or (b) effective date of alleged discriminatory personnel action
- ⌘ EEO Counselor assigned, offers option of mediation, makes inquiry by collecting information, attempts resolution, issues Notice of Final Interview (Informal stage ends here)
- ‡ When resolution attempt has failed during the informal stage, a formal complaint may be filed within 15 calendar days of receipt of Final Interview Notice
- ‡ Upon acceptance, of the formal complaint, the EEO will request assignment of and investigator from OCI
- ‡ Investigation conducted, complainant provided copy of investigation report
- ‡ Complainant notified of right to request EEOC hearing or Final Army Decision
- ⚡ If Complainant does not respond, EEO Office requests Final Army Decision
- ‡ Final Army Decision made based on file
- ⌘ If hearing requested, EEOC assigns Administrative Judge
- ‡ EEOC Administrative Judge makes decision
- ‡ Army takes final action
- ⚡ A Complainant has right to file Notice of Appeal on Army's final decision to EEOC's Office of Federal Operations

For prompt service, contact EEO Office, US Army Garrison Fort Belvoir
Commercial: (703) 805-2006 Fax: (703) 805-2951 DSN: 655
Mail: EEO Office, US Army Garrison,
9725 Belvoir Road, Fort Belvoir, VA 22060-5563

**29 Code
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THE LEGAL EAGLE

Has this ever happened to you? Someone walks into your office asking for you. A co-worker points you out and says, “there she is.” The visitor then walks up to you and asks if you are _____?” You reply, “Yes,” and the visitor hands you some papers and says, “Consider yourself served.” What do you do now? This article will help ensure that you know what to do if you are approached or served by a process server.

Process is a legal document that compels a person to appear in court or to comply with a court’s demands. Some examples of legal process are summons, subpoenas, restraining orders, civil law suits, arrest warrants, indictments, and contempt orders. Service of process is the delivery of the document to the person to notify him or her of the action proceeding in court. As a federal employee, you may be subpoenaed to appear

and testify about your official duties or to provide documents that you are responsible for creating or maintaining in the course of your duties. For example, a doctor employed at the hospital may treat a victim of a car accident and later may be subpoenaed to a trial to testify about the accident victim’s medical condition. As someone who lives or works on Fort Belvoir, you may also receive process on the installation that involves personal matters, such as a dispute with a tenant or landlord, a divorce proceeding, or a criminal matter.

The vast majority of Fort Belvoir, to include all residential areas, is under exclusive federal jurisdiction. The State of Virginia, however, has reserved the right to serve legal process on the installation in accordance with state law, once the state has complied with restrictions set by the installation commander.

If you are approached to accept or facilitate service of process, then do not accept service without first consulting with an attorney. Inform the person requesting service to contact the Office of the Staff Judge Advocate or the military police desk.

If you are served about a matter that involves your official duties, then immediately contact the Administrative Law Division of the Office of the Staff Judge Advocate (703-805-4393/5013/4389). Attorneys there will work with you to protect your rights and the rights of the United States. If you are served about a personal matter, then immediately seek assistance from an attorney. For those who are eligible, Legal Assistance attorneys in the Office of the Staff Judge Advocate are available to ensure that your rights are protected and to help you respond to any court matters (703-805-

Compliments of the Ft Belvoir SJA Office

Management Without Fear — Tele-work



Did you know that all employees are considered eligible for tele-work except the following: Employees whose positions require, on a daily basis (i.e., every work day), **direct handling of secure materials** or **on-site activity** that cannot be handled remotely or at an alternative worksite, such as face-to-face personal contact in some medical, counseling, or similar services; hands-on contact with machinery, equipment, vehicles, etc.; or other physical presence/site dependent activity, such as forest ranger or guard duty tasks; and Employees whose last performance rating of record (or its equivalent) is below fully successful (or the agency’s equivalent) or whose conduct has resulted in disciplinary action within the last year. (NOTE: Agencies may require a rating of record higher than fully successful for eligibility, but must still report as eligible all employees rated fully successful or higher.) For more information on tele-work and other work-life programs you may contact John Crone at the Ft Belvoir CPAC at 703-704-3020.

Worker's Compensation — A Tip for Supervisors

“Supervisors are encouraged to Use Discretion when issuing Form CA-16, Authorization for Treatment when employees are injured.”

When an employee sustains a work related traumatic injury that requires medical treatment, the Agency may authorize such care by issuing a form CA-16, *Authorization for Treatment*. Generally, the form CA-16 should be completed within four hours of the injury; however, the CA-16 need not be issued in all traumatic injury claims. If an employee reports an injury several days after the fact, or did not request medical treatment within 24 hours of the claimed injury, the supervisor may still issue the CA-16. The Agency is **NOT** required to issue the CA-16 more than one week after the occurrence of the claimed injury on the basis that the immediate need for treatment has passed. Agency



officials are encouraged to use discretion in issuing the CA-16 because it essentially guarantees that the Agency will be liable for medical expenses incurred within 60 days of its issuance. The U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) may pay medical bills without the CA-16 form as long as the medical evidence supports the work-injury. A CA-16 may **NOT** be issued for occupational illness/disease claims, except with specific permission from DOL. If you have any questions about this issue or other Workers' Compensation related issues, whether you are a supervisor or employee, please give me a call at (703) 704-3023 and I will be happy to assist you in any way I can..

*Cisy Newman
Injury Compensation
Program Administrator*

Effects of Leave — WITHOUT PAY!!



Leave without pay (LWOP) is a temporary non-pay status and absence from duty that, in most cases, is granted at the employee's request. However, LWOP, in most cases is a matter of supervisory discretion and may be limited by your agencies internal policies. You should be aware that LWOP may affect your entitlement to or eligibility for certain Federal benefits. See the chart below to see how LWOP may affect you.

Effect of Extended Leave Without Pay (LWOP) (or Other Non-pay Status) on Federal Benefits and Programs

Type of Benefit/Program	The amount of LWOP that is considered creditable service for purposes of determining an employee's entitlement to or eligibility for the following Federal benefits and programs:
Career tenure	The first 30 calendar days of each non-pay period is creditable service.
Completion of probation	A total of 22 workdays in a non-pay status is creditable service.
Time-in-grade requirements (requirements for promotion)	Any non-pay status is creditable service.
Retirement benefits	A total of 6 months in a non-pay status in any calendar year is creditable service. Coverage continues at no cost to the employee while in a non-pay status. When employees are in a non-pay status for only a portion of a pay period, their contributions are adjusted in proportion to their basic pay .
Health benefits	Enrollment continues for no more than 365 days in a non-pay status. The non-pay status may be continuous or broken by periods of less than 4 consecutive months in a pay status . The Government contribution continues while employees are in a non-pay status. The Government also is responsible for advancing from salary the employee share as well. The employee may choose between paying the agency directly on a current basis or having the premiums accumulate and withheld from his or her pay upon returning to duty.
Life insurance	Coverage continues for 12 consecutive months in a non-pay status without cost to the employee or to the agency. The non-pay status may be continuous, or it may be broken by a return to duty for periods of less than 4 consecutive months.
Within-grade increases	A total of 2 workweeks in a non-pay status in a waiting period is creditable service for advancement to steps 2, 3, and 4 of the General Schedule; 4 workweeks for advancement to steps 5, 6, and 7; and 6 workweeks for advancement to steps 8, 9, and 10. For prevailing rate employees (WG, WL, and WS schedules), a total of 1 workweek in a non-pay status is creditable service for advancement to step 2, 3 workweeks for advancement to step 3, and 4 workweeks for advancement to steps 4 and 5.
Accrual of annual and sick leave	When a full-time employee accumulates 80 hours of LWOP during a pay period, the employee does not earn annual leave or sick leave during that pay period. The employee earns leave in the next succeeding pay periods until he or she again accumulates 80 hours of LWOP during a pay period. When a part-time employee is in a non-pay status, he or she will accrue less annual leave and sick leave, since part-time employees earn leave on a pro-rata basis--i.e., based on hours in a pay status. For purposes of computing accrual rates for annual leave (i.e., 4, 6, 8 hours each pay period), 6 months of non-pay status in a calendar year is creditable service.
Reduction in force (determining years of service)	A total of 6 months of non-pay status in a calendar year is creditable service.
Severance pay	Non-pay status time is fully creditable for the 12-month continuous employment period to qualify for severance pay. However, for purposes of computing an employee's actual severance payment, any time in a non-pay status that is not creditable for leave accrual must be excluded from his or her creditable service.
Thrift Savings Plan (TSP)	Agencies should refer to the Thrift Savings Plan Bulletin for Agency TSP Representatives, No. 01-22, dated May 3, 2001. For additional information, agency representatives may contact the Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board at (202) 942-1460. Employees should refer to the TSP Fact Sheet - Effect of Non-pay Status on TSP Participation. Both issuances are available from the TSP internet web site at www.tsp.gov .
Military duty or workers' compensation	Non-pay status for employees who are performing military duty or being paid workers' compensation counts as a continuation of Federal employment for all purposes upon the employee's return to duty.