

U. S. Office of Personnel Management
1999 Federal Benefits Conference
Benefits in the New Millennium
June 8-11, 1999



**Join us for our last conference of the century,
*Benefits in the New Millennium.***

We've changed the name from the Benefits Officers Conference to the Federal Benefits Conference to reflect the broader focus of human resource specialists. With increased focus on customer service, it becomes increasingly important for everyone to know how their actions interact with those of others and the effects on their customers. Payroll and personnel need a fuller understanding of each other's roles. This year we are expanding the focus of the conference to include payroll related topics and are providing sessions on interactions between payroll and personnel, new approaches to communicating benefits information, long term care, the Federal Employees Group Life Insurance (FEGLI) program, Workers Compensation, Social Security, the Thrift Savings Plan, and Military Retired Pay. The focus is broader and we're working hard to ensure that the eighth annual conference is the best one ever.

We all are challenged to carry out our responsibilities more effectively and provide better customer service. The new millennium will bring new challenges in the benefits area. Changing workforce demographics and new technologies will force changes in the benefits programs and the way that they are administered. Our ability to succeed in providing up-to-date information to our employees in a constantly changing environment requires constant efforts to expand our knowledge and skills. *Benefits in the New Millennium* will examine those changes and help prepare you to meet the new challenges.

While we look at the future, the present will not be forgotten at the conference. Sessions will provide the latest information on benefits programs. Experts will also examine the interrelationships among the programs administered by the Office of Personnel Management, the Social Security Administration, the Thrift Savings Investment Board, the Office of Workers Compensation, and the Department of Defense.

We guarantee that attending *Benefits in the New Millennium* will increase your knowledge of the Federal benefits programs, provide you with information you can use in your job now, and be an experience you won't forget.

Check out the pre-conference workshops, the planned plenary and breakout sessions, and register now for the conference.

Conference Sessions

Benefits in the New Millennium will provide you the information you need about retirement, insurance, and payroll related issues. With the increased focus on customer service, it becomes increasingly important for everyone to know how their actions interact with those of others and the effects they have on their customers. Human resource professionals who have responsibility for benefits administration, payroll, or employee relations are encouraged to attend.

Attendance at the conference or pre-conference workshops meets the requirement in 5 U.S.C. 8350(3) that "once each year, each retirement counselor of an agency shall successfully complete a training session conducted under the [U.S. Office of Personnel Management] training program."

Topics under Consideration for Plenary Sessions:

- The Expanding Partnership Between the Social Security Administration and the Office of Personnel Management
- Long Term Care Proposals
- Communicating Benefits Information to Employees
- Thrift Savings Plan Update
- Retirement Systems Modernization Early Wins

Breakout Sessions under Consideration:

Pay for Special Groups such as Firefighters and Law Enforcement Officers · Agency Showcase on Office of Workers Compensation Programs · Family-Friendly Workplace Arrangements · Child Support Enforcement · Fair Labor Standards Act Issues · Federal Employees Group Life Insurance Open Season Changes · Revised Office of Workers Compensation Programs Regulations · Military Retired Pay, Survivor Benefits and Social Security · Health Insurance Issues · Social Security Basics · Medicare and Federal Employees Health Benefits · Coverage Error Corrections · Relationship Between Agency Payroll and Finance Offices and OPM · Retirement, Health Benefit and Life Insurance Audits' Impact on Agency Payroll and Finance Operations · What OPM Does with All the Information Payroll Offices Submit · Payroll System Reviews Required by OMB Bulletin 98-08 · Death-in-Service Pilot · OPM/SSA Disability Project · Aging of Separation/Quality of Agency Submissions · Retirement Processing Issues · Resources Available and How to Use Them · Setting your Employees' Pay · Getting Benefits Programs Noticed · Using the Web for Benefits Work

Pre-Conference Workshops

Before the conference we'll offer two days of pre-conference workshops. These workshops offer an intensive, high-energy learning experience on the selected topics.

Monday June 7	Tuesday June 8
Understanding Military Retirement	
Coverage Determinations	Counseling Employees in Crises
Introduction to Federal Employees Group Life Insurance	Advanced Federal Employees Group Life Insurance
Government Pensions & Social Security	Spousal Benefits
Deposits Under CSRS & FERS	Federal Leave Programs

Understanding Military Retirement

[2-Day, June 7 and 8, Cost \$225]

This 2-day workshop will provide benefits counselors with information about military benefits that they need in counseling employees and retirees who are receiving military retired pay. This course will describe the retirement benefits payable from the military, including survivor benefits and benefits for former spouses. It will examine the interface between military retirement benefits, Department of Veterans Affairs disability compensation, and Social Security. It will review the various offset issues associated with retired military personnel employed in Federal civilian positions (reduction in military retired pay, dual compensation pay cap, exemptions, etc). In addition, it will discuss key points benefits counselors should cover with military retirees, and it will outline the various issues military retired personnel must resolve when making decisions that affect their military benefits. This workshop will not cover issues relating to the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act of 1994 (USERRA).

This course will be team-taught by staff from the Department of Defense and the Office of Personnel Management.

Retirement Coverage Issues

[1-Day, June 7, Cost \$150]

This 1-day workshop is designed to provide participants information on retirement coverage issues, including application of the coverage rules, opportunities to transfer to FERS, and deemed FERS elections. This workshop is for human resource specialists who need the basics in determining retirement coverage or need a refresher in coverage rules.

Introduction to Federal Employees Group Life Insurance (FEGLI)

[1-Day, June 7, Cost \$150]

This 1-day workshop is an introductory class for human resource specialists who work with the Federal Employees' Group Life Insurance Program as part of their daily jobs. Your instructors will be Office of Personnel Management staff who have extensive hands-on operational and policy-making experience in the FEGLI program. Instructors will present real life FEGLI scenarios as practical working exercises for participants.

We recommend this class for those who have little or no working experience in the FEGLI Program or for those who would like a refresher course.

In this workshop you will learn:

- How to calculate the FEGLI Basic Insurance Amount.
- How to apply the laws, regulations and rules about enrollment and coverage.
- The different types of life insurance coverage under the FEGLI program.

- What happens to FEGLI when an employee retires.
- Who pays FEGLI benefits.
- How to recognize a valid Designation of Beneficiary form.

Topics to be covered include: Program Design · Types and Amounts of Insurance · Elections and Waivers · Cancellation of Waivers · Breaks in Service · Incontestability · Reemployed Annuitants and Compensationers · Termination and Conversion · Retirement and Post-65 Reductions · Order of Precedence · Designation of Beneficiary

Interrelationship of Government Pensions and Social Security Benefits

[1-Day, June 7, Cost \$150]

The goal of this 1-day workshop is to provide human resource personnel with an understanding of the interrelationships of Civil Service Retirement System and Federal Employees Retirement System and Social Security benefits. The workshop will cover the reduction factors to these benefits through the Government Pension Offset, Windfall Elimination Provision, Civil Service Retirement System Offset, and "Catch 62" reduction for military service credit. The workshop will also examine the impact caused by the interrelationship of the benefits for individuals under each retirement system on disability retirement, pre- and post-56 military credit, military retirement pay, and survivor benefits.

Calculators are provided to class participants.

Military and Civilian Deposits under CSRS and FERS

[1-Day, June 7, Cost \$150]

Do you know how an application to make a deposit for civilian service is processed once it leaves your agency? Can you explain how interest on a civilian or military deposit is computed? If someone asks how you got the military deposit amount, can you explain how the numbers were derived? Through lecture and practical exercises, this 1-day workshop will focus on processing applications for civilian and military deposits under the Civil Service and Federal Employees Retirement Systems (CSRS and FERS) and redeposits under CSRS. We'll cover the application process, at the agency and OPM, from the completion of the application for deposit to billing to receiving payments and follow-up billings. We'll walk through computations of CSRS and FERS civilian and military deposits, and, time permitting, you'll even have an opportunity to try some yourself. This workshop will not cover issues relating to the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act of 1994 (USERRA).

Counseling Employees in Crisis

[1-day, June 8, Cost \$150]

This 1-day workshop, presented by a psychologist in OPM's Office of Workforce Relations and staff from the Agency Services Division, focuses on the wide array of skills needed to provide benefits counseling

in emotionally charged situations such as death of a family member, retirement because of disability, or involuntary retirement. In these situations, the benefits counselor needs to pull together a wide range of technical information, and to respond in a caring, sensitive manner to customers who may be in severe distress. In large scale emergencies, the benefits staff may face an overwhelming workload while dealing with their own personal responses to the tragic event. The workshop will use role playing, small group discussions, and other experimental learning approaches to help participants practice and refine their skills. It will introduce not only counseling issues, but also issues related to planning for crisis situations, locating resources, and supporting staff members engaged in emotionally draining work.

Finally, we will discuss how and when to request enhanced liaison with OPM for emergencies or disasters, how to initiate our "fast track" processing for terminal illness or financial hardship, and exceptions to normal evidentiary requirements under extraordinary circumstances.

Advanced Federal Employees Group Life Insurance (FEGLI)

[1-Day, June 8, Cost \$150]

This 1-day workshop is an advanced class for human resource specialists who work extensively with the Federal Employees' Group Life Insurance Program as part of their daily jobs and have a need for more in-depth information about the program. Your instructors will be Office of Personnel Management staff who have extensive hands-on operational and policy-making experience in the FEGLI program. Instructors will present real life FEGLI scenarios as practical working exercises for participants. We recommend this class for human resources specialists who have a good, general understanding of the FEGLI program and some working experience in the program and/or have taken an Introduction to FEGLI course.

In this workshop you will learn:

- The rules of portability of Option B
- Who can make direct payment of premiums
- The rules of unreduced Option B & C
- The rules about the amounts of coverage under Option C
- How to determine eligibility of foster children
- The effect of court orders on FEGLI
- Information about the open enrollment period under P.L. 105-311
- The rules about assignments and living benefits

Topics to be covered include: Assignment · Living Benefits · Court Orders · Eligibility of Foster Children · ; Public Law 105-311 (Please note that issues relating to the new FEGLI legislation will also be discussed at breakout sessions at the conference.)

Everything You Wanted to Know about Spousal Benefits and Were Afraid to Ask

[1-day, June 8, Cost \$150]

Survivor elections...Former spouses...Court orders...Federal Employees Retirement System death benefits...

Spousal benefits generate a lot of employee questions. This 1-day workshop focuses on the various benefits available to spouses and former spouses under the Civil Service Retirement System, the Federal Employees Retirement System, and the Federal Employees Health Benefits program.

The workshop will take a look at the entire range of benefits for spouses (and former spouses) and provide you with what you need to know about spousal benefits to answer employee questions.

Federal Leave Programs--Putting the Pieces Together

[1-Day, June 8, Cost \$150]

A challenging 1-day workshop for employees and supervisors on how the various leave programs interact, including how the Family and Medical Leave Act and Federal leave sharing program fit in with other family friendly initiatives. An update on current leave initiatives and policies may also be discussed.

Presented by the Office of Compensation Administration, Workforce Compensation and Performance Service, OPM.

How to Register

Registration Forms

Each attendee must submit a registration form. If you have any special needs or dietary restrictions (e.g., diabetic, vegetarian), please note them on the registration form.

We must receive both the registration form and payment information (either credit card information or completed Standard Form (SF) 182 or Department of Defense (DD) 1556 at the time of registration.

Conference registration deadline is April 30, 1999

We must receive your complete registration form (including payment information) by that date.

Methods of Payment

The preferred method of payment is to charge the conference tuition fees to a government credit card. We will accept only government issued Visa and MasterCard credit cards. We cannot accept personal credit cards, or U.S. Government American Express and Discover cards. An SF 182 is not required if you are paying by credit card.

If you do not pay by credit card, we will bill your agency. If your agency wants to be billed, you must

submit both the SF 182 (or DD 1556) with your conference registration form.

SF 182 or DD1556: It is important that ALL BLOCKS on SF 182 be completed. Put the following codes across the top: Office of Personnel Management ALC: 24000001; Index:BC230A; Project: C230B9AB—071500 Be sure to complete all blocks on SF 182, including complete accounting information in Block 21 and your agency's ALC in Block 24. In item 25, include the finance office designation and phone number.
Authority: 31 U.S.C. 1535.

We prefer that agencies use Treasury's Online Payment and Collection System if you are not charging the conference fees to a credit card.

Your registration is not complete until we receive both the conference registration and a completed and approved SF 182 or DD 1556.

Hotel accommodations are NOT included in the conference registration. You must make your own room reservations at the Sheraton Baltimore North.

Submitting Registrations

You may fax, mail, or hand deliver the registration form.

Fax us the registration form and, if not paying by credit card, the Standard Form 182 or DD 1556 on: (202) 606-1108 or 606-4327.

Mail your Registration Form and, if not paying by credit card, completed Standard Form 182 or DD 1556 to:

Office of Personnel Management
Retirement and Insurance Service
Attention: Federal Benefits Conference
P.O. Box 57
Washington, DC 20044-0057

Hand Deliver your Registration Form and, if not paying by credit card, completed Standard Form 182 or DD 1556 to:

Office of Personnel Management
1900 E Street, NW., Room 4351
Washington, DC 20415-0001

Confirmation

We will send confirmations of both pre-conference workshop and conference registrations by fax.

Cancellations

Cancellations must be in writing. No refunds will be made for cancellations received after May 21, 1999. Substitutions may be made after that date.

Costs

The tuition for the conference is \$495. This fee includes the conference notebook and all conference materials and the following meals during the conference: opening reception and dinner on June 8; dinner on June 9; and lunches on June 9 and 10.

Hotel accommodations are NOT included in the conference registration. You must make your own room reservations directly with the Sheraton Baltimore North.

Pre-conference Workshops.

The tuition for the pre-conference workshops is \$150 for each 1-day workshop and \$225 for the 2-day workshop. Tuition is per workshop. There is no discount for taking multiple workshops. Lunch is not included in the cost of the workshops. Tuition includes the following:

Workshop Handbook -- Filled with reference materials and extra space for your notes, this handy reference guide will be an indispensable resource back at the office. Keep it close at hand for future reference.

Certificate of Completion -- Upon conclusion of the workshop you'll receive a certificate suitable for framing, a copy makes an excellent addition to your official personnel file.

Conference Location

All official conference activities will be held at the Sheraton Baltimore North Hotel. Conference attendance may require us to use additional hotels in the immediate area of the conference hotel.

Hotel accommodations are NOT included in the conference registration. You must make your own room reservations directly with the Sheraton Baltimore North.

A block of rooms at the government rate of \$110, plus tax, has been reserved. Attendees who will be staying overnight should indicate that they are attending the OPM training. This will insure the proper rate is charged for overnight accommodations. The telephone number for reservations is (410) 321-7400.

Hotel reservations must be made by May 10, 1999, to insure receiving the government rate. Reservations received after May 10th, will be accepted on a space available and rate available basis. Reservations at the Sheraton Hotel are on a "first come, first served" basis. Complimentary shuttle service will be provided between hotels if spill-over space is required. Parking at all hotels is free. All hotels are convenient to the Baltimore-Washington International (BWI) Airport.

SHERATON BALTIMORE NORTH HOTEL
903 Dulaney Valley Road
Towson, Maryland 21204
Tel: (410) 321-7400
Fax: (410) 296-9534

Directions to the Hotel.

From I 695 (the Baltimore beltway) Exit 27A

Follow Dulaney Valley Road, South 1/4 mile

Take second left "Southerly Road"

Take second right and follow drive up to hotel



Additional Information

For more information you may contact us via any of the following:

Fax: (202) 606-4327;

Email: emeader@opm.gov;

Phone: (202) 606-0777, extension 038; or

Visit: www.opm.gov/asd.

U.S. Office of Personnel Management
1999 Federal Benefits Conference
Benefits in the New Millennium

To Register for the **Benefits in the New Millennium**, fax this form to (202) 606-4327 or mail to: U.S. Office of Personnel Management, Agency Services Division, P.O. Box 57, Washington DC 20044-0057

First name: _____ Last name: _____

Agency: _____

Address: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ FAX: _____

Email: _____

Special Needs (Handicap and Dietary Restrictions): _____

Pre-Conference Workshops

<input type="checkbox"/> Understanding Military Retirement (June 7-8, \$225)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Coverage Determinations (June 7, \$150)	<input type="checkbox"/> Counseling Employees in Crises (June 8, \$150)
<input type="checkbox"/> Basic FEGLI (June 7, \$150)	<input type="checkbox"/> Advanced FEGLI (June 8, \$150)
<input type="checkbox"/> Government Pensions & Social Security (June 7, \$150)	<input type="checkbox"/> Spousal Benefits (June 8, \$150)
<input type="checkbox"/> Deposits Under CSRS & FERS (June 7, \$150)	<input type="checkbox"/> Federal Leave Programs (June 8, \$150)

Conference Tuition: **\$495**

Total Cost of Workshops:

TOTAL CHARGE:

Payment Method: Credit Card SF 182 or DD1556 Check

[If payment is by SF 182 or DD 1556, the completed form MUST be attached.]

Name on Card: _____

Card Number: _____ Expiration Date: _____

Telephone Number of Card Holder: _____

Signature of card holder: _____