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U.S. GOVERNMENT
INFORMATION
GPO

841.202 Applications required.
841.203 Withdrawal of applications.
841.204 Deemed application to protect survivors.

Subpart C—Claims Processing

841.301 Purpose.
841.302 Definitions.
841.303 Applications filed with agencies.
841.304 Applications filed with OPM.
841.305 Decisions subject to reconsideration.
841.306 Reconsideration.
841.307 Final decisions without reconsideration.
841.308 Appeals to MSPB.
841.309 Competing claimants.

Subpart D—Government Costs

841.401 Purpose and scope.
841.402 Definitions.
841.403 Categories of employees for computation of normal cost percentages.
841.404 Demographic factors.
841.405 Economic assumptions.
841.406 Determination of normal cost percentages.
841.407 Notice of normal cost percentage determinations.
841.408 Effective date of normal cost percentages.
841.409 Agency appeal right.
841.410 Contents of petition for appeal.
841.411 Appeals procedure.
841.412 Rates determined by appeal.
841.413 Determinations of amount due from each agency.

APPENDIX A TO SUBPART D OF PART 841—TABLE OF NORMAL COST PERCENTAGES

Subpart E—Employee Deductions and Government Contributions

841.501 Purpose.
841.502 Definitions.
841.503 Amounts of employee deductions.
841.504 Agency responsibilities.
841.505 Correction of error.
841.506 Effect of part 772 of this chapter on FERS payments.
841.507 Correction of unjustified or unwarranted personnel action.
841.508 Effective date.

Subpart F—Computation of Interest

841.601 Purpose.
841.602 Definitions.
841.603 Rate of interest.
841.604 Interest on service credit deposits.
841.605 Interest included in the unexpended balance.
841.606 Interest on survivor reduction deposits.
841.607 Interest on overpayment debts.

Subpart G—Cost-of-Living Adjustments

841.701 Purpose and scope.
841.702 Definitions.
841.703 Increases on basic annuities and survivor annuities.
841.704 Proration of COLA's.
841.705 Increases on basic employee death benefits.
841.706 Increases on combined CSRS/FERS annuities.
841.707 COLA's affecting computation of survivor supplements.
841.708 Special provisions affecting retired military reserve technicians.

Subpart H—Waiver of Benefits

841.801 Purpose.
841.802 Definitions.
841.803 Waiver of annuity.
841.804 Waiver and court orders.

Subpart I—[Reserved]

Subpart J—State Income Tax Withholding

841.1001 Purpose.
841.1002 Definitions.
841.1003 Federal-State agreements.
841.1004 OPM responsibilities.
841.1005 State responsibilities.
841.1006 Additional provisions.
841.1007 Agreement modification and termination.
841.1008 Authority to use the Federal Personnel Manual System.

AUTHORITY: 5 U.S.C. 8461; §841.108 also issued under 5 U.S.C. 552a; subpart D also issued under 5 U.S.C. 8423; §841.504 also issued under 5 U.S.C. 8422; §841.507 also issued under section 505 of Pub. L. 99–335; subpart J also issued under 5 U.S.C. 8469; §841.506 also issued under 5 U.S.C. 7701(b)(2); §841.508 also issued under section 505 of Pub. L. 99–335.

Subpart A—General Provisions

SOURCE: 52 FR 19242, May 21, 1987, unless otherwise noted.

§ 841.101 Purpose.

The purpose of this subpart is to state the administrative rules governing the operations of the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) that have general application to the basic benefits under FERS.

§ 841.102 Regulatory structure for the Federal Employees Retirement System.

(a) This part contains the following subparts:

(1) General provisions (subpart A);
(2) Applications for benefits (subpart B);
(3) Claims processing (subpart C);
(4) Government costs (subpart D);
(5) Employee deductions and Government contributions (subpart E);
(6) Computing interest (subpart F);
(7) Cost–of–Living Adjustments (subpart G);
(8) Waiver, allotment, or assignment of benefits (subpart H);
(9) Court orders affecting benefits (subpart I); and
(10) State income tax withholding (subpart J).

(b)(1) Part 842 of this chapter contains information about basic annuity rights of employees and Members under FERS.

(2) Part 843 of this chapter contains information about death benefits and employee refunds under FERS.

(3) Part 844 of this chapter contains information about disability retirement benefits under FERS.

(4) Part 845 of this chapter contains information about debt collection.

(5) Part 846 of this chapter contains information about election rights available to employees who are eligible to join FERS.

(c)(1) Part 831 of this chapter contains information about the Civil Service Retirement System.

(2) Part 835 of this chapter contains information about debt collection from FERS benefits.

(3) Part 837 of this chapter contains information about reemployment of FERS annuitants.

(4) Part 838 of this chapter contains information about court orders affecting FERS benefits.

(5) Part 847 of this chapter contains information about elections under the Civil Service Retirement System or FERS relating to periods of service with a nonappropriated fund instrumentality under the jurisdiction of the armed forces.

(6) Parts 294 and 297 of this chapter and §§ 831.106 and 841.108 of this chapter contain information about disclosure of information from OPM records.

(7) Part 581 of this chapter contains information about garnishment of Government payments including salary and CSRS and FERS retirement benefits.

(8) Parts 870, 871, 872, and 873 of this chapter contain information about the Federal Employees Group Life Insurance Program.

(9) Part 890 of this chapter contains information about coverage under the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program.

(10) Chapter II (parts 1200 through 1299) of this title contains information about appeals to the Merit Systems Protection Board.

(11) Chapter VI (parts 1600 through 1699) of this title contains information about the Federal Employees Thrift Savings Plan.

[52 FR 19242, May 21, 1987, as amended at 55 FR 14229, Apr. 17, 1990; 61 FR 41720, Aug. 9, 1996]

§ 841.103 Definitions.

In this subpart—

CSRS means the Civil Service Retirement System as described in subchapter III of chapter 83 of title 5, United States Code.

FERS means the Federal Employees Retirement System as described in chapter 84 of title 5, United States Code.

§ 841.104 Special terms defined.

(a) Unless otherwise defined for use in any subpart, as used in connection with FERS (parts 841 through 846 of this chapter), terms defined in section 8401 of title 5, United States Code, have the same meanings assigned to them by that section.

(b) Unless otherwise defined for use in any subpart, as used in connection with FERS (parts 841 through 846 of this chapter)—

Agency means an executive agency as defined in section 105 of title 5, United States Code; a legislative branch agency; a judicial agency; and the U.S. Postal Service and Postal Rate Commission.

Associate Director means the Associate Director for Retirement and Insurance in OPM, or his or her designee.

OPM means the Office of Personnel Management.

§ 841.105 Administration of FERS.

(a) OPM has charge of the adjudication of all claims for basic benefits arising under FERS and of all matters directly or indirectly concerned with these adjudications.

(b) In the adjudication of claims arising under FERS, OPM will consider and take appropriate action on counterclaims filed by the Government as set-offs against amounts payable from the Civil Service Retirement Fund.

§ 841.106 Basic records.

(a) Agencies having employees or Members subject to FERS must establish and maintain retirement accounts for those employees and Members.

(b)(1) The individual retirement record required by § 841.504(c) is the basic record for action on all claims for annuity or refund, and those pertaining to deceased employees, deceased Members, or deceased annuitants.

(2) When the official records repository for the records in question certifies that the records in question are lost, destroyed, or incomplete, OPM will accept such inferior or secondary evidence that it considers appropriate under the circumstances, and such inferior or secondary evidence is then admissible.

(3) Except as provided in paragraph (b)(2) of this section, inferior or secondary evidence will not be considered.

[52 FR 19242, May 21, 1987, as amended at 57 FR 32154, July 21, 1992]

§ 841.107 Computation of interest.

Interest, when applicable, will be computed under subpart F of this part.

§ 841.108 Disclosure of information.

(a)(1) Except as provided in section 8461 of title 5, United States Code, OPM has in its possession or under its control records containing the following types of information:

(i) Documentation of Federal service subject to FERS.

(ii) Documentation of service credit and refund claims made under FERS.

(iii) Retirement and death claims files, including documents supporting the retirement application, health benefits and life insurance eligibility, medical records supporting disability claims, and designations of beneficiaries.

(iv) Claims review and correspondence files pertaining to benefits under the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program.

(v) Documentation of claims made for life insurance and health benefits by annuitants under a Federal Government retirement system other than FERS.

(2) These records may be disclosed to the individual to whom the information pertains, or, with prior written consent of the individual, to any agency or other person, except that medical evidence about which a prudent physician would hesitate to inform the individual, will be disclosed only to a licensed physician designated in writing for that purpose by the individual or by his or her representative.

(3) Federal employee retirement records will be disclosed consistent with the provisions of the Privacy Act of 1974 (5 U.S.C. 552a), including, but not limited to, disclosures pursuant to a routine use promulgated for such records and printed in OPM's periodic publication of notices of systems of records. However, a beneficiary designated in accordance with FERS (5 U.S.C. 8424(c)) will, during the lifetime of the designator, be disclosed to the designator only, at his or her signed written request. Such beneficiary designations that may appear in records being disclosed to other than the designator must be removed before the record is disclosed. If information pertaining to a designation of beneficiary is specifically asked for by a court of competent jurisdiction, it may be released to the court, but with a written notice that it is released under protest.

(4) Except as provided in paragraphs (a)(2) and (a)(3) of this section, OPM will not disclose information from the files, records, reports, or other papers and documents pertaining to a claim filed with OPM, whether potential, pending, or adjudicated. This information is privileged and confidential.

(b) On written request OPM will return, to the person entitled to them, certificates of discharge, adoption papers, marriage certificates, decrees of divorce, letters testamentary or of administration, when they are no longer

needed in the settlement of the claim. If papers returned constitute part of the material and essential evidence in a claim, OPM will retain copies of them or of the parts of them that appear to be of evidentiary value.

§ 841.109 Computation of time.

In computing a period of time for filing documents, the day of the action or event after which the designated period of time begins to run is not included. The last day of the period is included unless it is a Saturday, a Sunday, or a legal holiday; in this event, the period runs until the end of the next day which is not a Saturday, a Sunday, or a legal holiday.

§ 841.110 [Reserved]

Subpart B—Applications for Benefits

SOURCE: 52 FR 19244, May 21, 1987, unless otherwise noted.

§ 841.201 Purpose.

This subpart states the general application requirement applicable under the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS). Specific application requirements for particular benefits are contained with the regulations concerning those benefits.

§ 841.202 Applications required.

(a) No benefit is payable under FERS, until after the claimant has applied for the benefit in the form prescribed by OPM.

(b) An employee, Member, or survivor may exercise any option or make any election authorized by FERS only in the form prescribed by OPM.

§ 841.203 Withdrawal of applications.

(a) Except as provided in paragraphs (b) and (c) of this section, an applicant for benefits under FERS may withdraw his or her application for benefits until a payment based on that application has been authorized, but not thereafter.

(b) An applicant for benefits under FERS may not withdraw his or her application for benefits after OPM has received a certified copy of a court order (under part 581 of this chapter or subpart I of this part) affecting the benefits.

(c) When an ''appropriate authority'' determines that the separation upon which payment has been based is an ''unjustified or unwarranted personnel action'' as these terms are defined in § 550.804 of this chapter, an individual may withdraw his/her application for FERS benefits within 60 days of the decision. As provided in § 550.805, any FERS payments must be deducted from any back pay award.

§ 841.204 Deemed application to protect survivors.

(a) A former employee is deemed to have filed an application for annuity if the former employee—

(1) Was not reemployed in a position subject to FERS under subpart A of part 842 of this chapter on the date of death;

(2) Dies after separation from Federal service but before actually filing an application for benefits; and

(3) At the time of separation from Federal service, was eligible for an immediate annuity under § 842.204(a)(1) and was eligible to elect to postpone the commencing date of that annuity under § 842.204(c) of this chapter.

(b) For the purpose of determining entitlement to a survivor annuity, a former employee who is deemed to have filed an application under paragraph (a) of this section is considered to have died as a retiree.

(c) For purposes of determining the amount of a survivor annuity, the annuity of a former employee who, under paragraph (a) of this section, is deemed to have filed an application is computed as though the commencing date were the first day of the month after the former employee's death.

[55 FR 994, Jan. 11, 1990, as amended at 55 FR 41179, Oct. 10, 1990]

Subpart C—Claims Processing

SOURCE: 52 FR 19244, May 21, 1987, unless otherwise noted.

§ 841.301 Purpose.

(a) This subpart explains—