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§ 831.2005 Designation of beneficiary for lump-sum payment.

(a) The Designation of Beneficiary must be in writing, signed, and witnessed,and received in OPM before the death of the designator.

(b) No change or cancellation of beneficiary in a last will or testament, or in any other document not witnessed and filed as required by this section, has any force or effect.

(c) A witness to a Designation of Beneficiary is ineligible to receive payment as a beneficiary.

(d) Any person, firm, corporation, or legal entity may be named as beneficiary.

(e) A change of beneficiary may be made at any time and without the knowledge or consent of the previous beneficiary, and this right cannot be waived or restricted.

§ 831.2006 Designation of agent by next of kin.

When a deceased employee, Member, or annuitant has not named a beneficiary and one of the next of kin entitled makes a claim for lump-sum benefit, other next of kin entitled to share in the lump-sum benefit may designate the one who made the claim to act as their agent to receive their distributive shares.

§ 831.2007 Notification of current and/or former spouse before payment of lump sum.

(a) Payment of the lump-sum credit based on a refund application filed on or after May 7, 1985, may be made only if any current spouse and any former spouse (from whom the employee or Member was divorced after May 6, 1985) are notified of the former employee's or Member's application.

(b)(1) Notification of the former spouse will not be required if the marriage to the former spouse was of less than 9 months duration or if the employee has not completed a total of 18 months of creditable service covered under the retirement system.

(2) Applicants for payment of the lump-sum credit must certify on a form prescribed by OPM whether the applicant has a current or former spouse subject to the notification requirement.

(c) Proof of notification will consist of a signed and witnessed Statement by the current and/or former spouse on a form provided by OPM acknowledging that he or she has been informed of the former employee's or Member's application for refund and the consequences of the refund on the current or former spouse's possible annuity entitlement. This Statement must be presented to the employing agency or OPM when filing the Application for Refund of Retirement Deductions.

(d) If the current and/or former spouse refuses to acknowledge the notification or the employee or Member is otherwise unable to obtain the acknowledgement, the employee or Member must submit—

(1) Affidavits signed by two individuals who witnessed the employee's or Member's attempt to personally notify the current or former spouse. The witnesses must attest that they were in the presence of the employee or Member and the current or former spouse when the employee or Member gave or attempted to give the notification form to the current or former spouse and that the employee's or Member's purpose should have been clear to the current or former spouse; or

(2) The current mailing address of the current or former spouse. OPM will attempt to notify (by certified mail—return receipt requested) the current or former spouse at the address provided by the employee or Member. Except as provided in paragraph (e) of this section, the lump-sum credit will not be paid until at least 20 days after OPM receives the signed return receipt.

(e) If an OPM notice sent under paragraph (d)(2) of this section is returned and OPM has no reason to believe that the current or former spouse does not live at the address to which the notice was sent, OPM will re-mail the notice by first class mail and wait at least 20 days after the notice has been re-mailed before paying the refund.

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