

Bulletin for all TSA Employees – 03/30/2020

Temporary Process Changes for Military Service Deposits, Voluntary Retirement Process, and Benefits Changes During Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Due to the impact of the Coronavirus (COVID-19), the Human Capital (HC) Personnel Services (PS) Benefits Team is in full-time telework status with extremely limited office access. Therefore, until further notice, the process for military service deposits, voluntary retirements and benefits has changed as follows:

Military Service Deposit Payments

- **Established Payroll Deductions** will continue without interruption.
- **New Requests for Payroll Deductions** will be continue to be processed per established time frames. Employees are strongly encouraged to pay deposits via payroll deductions. Employees wishing to pay their deposit faster should consider increasing their deduction amount.
- **Lump Sum Payments (check or money order)** are discouraged unless an employee is imminently retiring or is trying to avoid additional interest from accruing. Lump sum payments must be stamped received by Human Capital prior to the Interest Accrual Date (IAD) to avoid additional interest. Be aware that there may be a *considerable delay* in processing these payments.

Please Note: The law does not provide a provision to waive interest on unpaid deposits or extend the time an employee has to pay their deposit. There is no exception, including the impact of COVID-19 on agency operations. Interest will continue to accrue on all unpaid balances based on the employee's Interest Accrual Date (IAD). Military Service Deposits must be paid in full prior to separation.

Voluntary Retirement Applications

We are no longer accepting **mailed** voluntary retirement applications; to include Voluntary Early Retirement Authority (VERA) applications. Effective immediately, employees applying for voluntary retirement must submit their application to HC Access by email at helpdesk@mailserver-hraccess.tsa.dhs.gov or fax to 877-872-7993. Employees should maintain a copy of the original application in case they are asked to provide it in the future.

As a reminder, a complete voluntary retirement package includes the following:

- [SF 3107](#) (FERS) or [SF 2801](#) (CSRS), Application for Immediate Retirement
- [SF 2818](#), Continuation of Life Insurance Coverage
- Marriage certificate; if applicable
- [W4-P](#), Withholding Certificate for Pension and Annuity Payments
- DD 214, Military Orders, or Statement of Service, if applicable

We encourage employees to submit their voluntary retirement application packages at least 90 days prior to their retirement date.

Disability Retirement Applications

Employees applying for disability retirement must continue to submit the application packages by mail to HC Access Shared Service Center, 6363 Walker Lane, Suite 400, Alexandria, VA 22310. Due to privacy concerns, neither fax or email is acceptable for receiving the medical documentation that is required to support the disability.

During these difficult times, please remember that we are all in this together. The HC Access Helpdesk is available to answer any questions you may have.

Benefits Forms

HC Access will continue to timely process Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) and Federal Employees' Group Life Insurance (FEGLI) forms to include, but not limited to:

- New enrollments;
- Changes to enrollments due to a qualifying life event (QLE);
- Certification of coverage under the FEGLI program; and
- Acceptance of documents related to these programs (e.g., FEGLI Designation of Beneficiary form).

Fax and email submission of benefits forms will be accepted for processing. Emails sent to HC Access containing personally identifiable information must be password protected.

We are encouraging the discontinuance of hardcopy forms mailed to HC Access at this time through June 30th or until an update is provided. Specifically, during this limited time, all beneficiary forms will be accepted via fax or email to include:

- [SF 2823](#), FEGLI Designation of Beneficiary;
- [SF 3102](#), Designation of Beneficiary, Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS); and
- [SF 1152](#), Unpaid Compensation of Deceased Civilian Employee.

Questions?

Due to the current COVID-19 pandemic, the HCAccess Help Desk hours of operation have temporarily changed. Live agents will be available from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Eastern Time (ET), Monday through Friday, excluding Federal holidays, and closed Saturday through Sunday until further notice. Employees can contact the HCAccess Help Desk by phone at 1-877-872-7990, by fax at 1-877-872-7993, or by email at this [link](#). Employees can visit the HCAccess website [here](#) for valuable Human Resources (HR) information on a wide variety of topics and visit Human Capital online at this [link](#).