

Pension Newsletter

Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation
United States Government Agency

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PBGC Will Not Let You Down

By Interim Director Charles E. F. Millard

It was a great honor when President Bush nominated me to be Director of PBGC earlier this year. I am very excited by this opportunity to work on the challenges faced by the world of pensions and retirement security. I look forward to working with the Congress and the pension community on behalf of President Bush to ensure that the federal pension insurance system remains solvent and strong.

My first few months on the job have given me a greater appreciation of PBGC's vital mission and its critical importance to your personal and individual retirement security. As vested participants in pension plans that could no longer keep their pension promise, you know the feeling of being let down. But you can rest assured that PBGC will not let you down.

As our customers, you are entitled to excellent service from us at all times. To this end, we aim to provide answers to your information requests within one business day. Most of your requests we can answer almost immediately, or before the day is out. And if it's something that will take some time to research, we will update you and let you know when we expect to have your answer ready.



Charles E. F. Millard

To make sure our service to you is always prompt and courteous, we strive continually to improve our methods of contact. Our Customer Contact Center is open to receive your calls weekdays from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. Eastern Time. And our services on the PBGC Web site, www.pbgc.gov, are designed to keep you abreast of news and information at the agency and allow

you to conduct many transactions with us electronically. For example, our online service—My Pension Benefit Account (**MyPBA**)—is a convenient way for you to conduct business with us, and it's available 24/7. The brochure included walks you through the steps of opening a **MyPBA** account. It also shows the transactions you may make with **MyPBA** and the advantages of using it.

If you have any questions, or should you ever incur any problems with your pension, our Participant Problem Resolution Officer stands ready to assist you. The Problem Resolution Officer can be reached by phone at: 1-800-400-7242 ext. 4014, by e-mail at: participant.pro@pbgc.gov, or by writing to: Problem Resolution Officer, Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, 1200 K St., N.W., Room 12527, Washington, D.C., 20005.

Inside this issue

Page 2

Is 50 the New 30?
PBGC Contact Center
Field Benefit Offices Work for You

Page 3

Customer Satisfaction Rebounds
Social Security Online
Help with Health Insurance Costs
Don't Lose Out on Benefits

Page 4

Información en Español
Keep Us Informed

KEEP THIS NEWSLETTER WITH YOUR IMPORTANT PENSION PAPERS

Is 50 the New 30?

People today are living longer than ever. And they are taking better care of themselves and aging gracefully, so much so that even at age 50 and older—once considered “over the hill”—many are more like 30-year-olds in thinking, behavior, viewpoint, attitude, and even physique. And they remain committed to staying that way for as long as humanly possible.

Why and how is this national phenomenon happening? Lifestyle changes, including far fewer people smoking, along with greater emphasis on diet and exercise, according to internist Hal Hockfield, M.D. “Everything has changed today,” he says. “People are working longer, and thinking and dressing younger, staying involved in the things they love to do, and are more active overall.”

In his view, people age 55 today are the 40-year-olds of two decades ago, while those who are 75 are the 55-year-olds of 20 years ago. “Nothing makes me happier than having an 85-year-old come to the office on the way to work,” said Hockfield, who specializes in geriatric medicine.

(Source: www.jewishexponent.com/article/3731/)

PBGC Field Benefit Offices Work for You

Washington, D.C., is not the only location where PBGC conducts its business. Along with our headquarters site in the nation’s capital, the agency operates ten Field Benefit Administration (FBA) offices around the country.

Employees at our FBA offices conduct identical tasks as at headquarters. The work done by pension analysts at the FBA offices includes administration of pension plans and initiation of payments to new retirees and their beneficiaries. In addition, a number of the offices specialize in pension plans of certain industries such as steel or airlines.

From Routine to Urgent, PBGC’s Contact Center Aims to Resolve Calls Quickly

The urgent call came into PBGC’s Customer Contact Center. A disabled airline employee confined to a wheelchair had not received her benefit check and stood in danger of being evicted from the motel where she was living. “We rushed the transaction to ensure the woman received the check as soon as possible,” said Henry, the customer service representative who took her call. After receiving the check, the retiree phoned the contact center to acknowledge that she had gotten the payment, and she followed up the call with a card of thanks. “It gave me an extremely good feeling to have helped the woman,” Henry said. “It’s very gratifying.”

Henry’s feelings are echoed by Carolyn, another customer service representative. “Every time I talk to a person and can resolve their issue, I get a good feeling,” Carolyn said. “I’m more than happy to relieve the person of their concern by helping them.”

Every day, the contact center receives hundreds of calls from people in the pension plans that PBGC administers. Many of the calls are for routine requests, but others, like the airline retiree’s call, are of critical importance to the caller. And with every call received, the contact center’s goal is to resolve the person’s request as quickly and accurately as possible.

Don’t Lose Out on Benefits

Millions of older adults are eligible for various benefits from federal, state and local agencies—both private and public—but don’t know about them, says Scott Parkin, a spokesperson for the National Council for the Aging. In response, the Council launched BenefitsCheckUp® (www.benefitscheckup.org), an online tool with information about some 1,150 different programs in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. “These include everything from energy assistance and property tax relief to things like the Golden Passport, which gives you a discount on admission to all national parks,” Parkin says. “There’s nothing quite like it.”

(Source: *WebMD*, October 2005)

Survey Shows Customer Satisfaction with PBGC Has Rebounded

PBGC's annual survey of people who recently called or e-mailed our Customer Contact Center rebounded strongly after slipping the year before. According to the American Customer Satisfaction Index, based on a survey by the University of Michigan, our service score rose from 75 to 78.

Those surveyed noted significant improvements in the timeliness of receiving benefit estimates from PBGC, as well as in our responsiveness and accuracy in resolving their pension issues. People contacting us also said our written communication is timely, clear, and helpful. Comments received highlighted some of our strengths in serving you through our Contact Center:

- They're always there. Questions are answered. They know what they're talking about. I get follow-ups with letter. So many things are frustrating, and with them I can call and get the correct answers and get on with my life.
- It has been a pleasure to deal with them and is refreshing to find a government agency that is competent and capable.
- Everyone I've talked to has been very courteous and responsive.

We continue to focus on the best ways to provide you with quality service via our Contact Center.

Social Security Information Is Available Online

The Social Security Administration maintains a Web site (www.ssa.gov) where you may apply for benefits, replace your lost, stolen or damaged Medicare card, report a change in your address or phone number, locate a Social Security office in your area, and perform other transactions online. In addition, the site includes information on retirement planning, the Medicare Prescription Drug Plan, disability qualifications, and receiving help with these and other situations.

(Source: Social Security Administration)

Get Help with Health Insurance Costs When You Retire

Individuals receiving PBGC benefits who are age 55 or older and not eligible for Medicare may be eligible for a tax credit that helps pay for qualified health insurance. If you are eligible for the Health Coverage Tax Credit (HCTC), which is administered by the Internal Revenue Service, you may also be able to apply for National Emergency Grant (NEG) funds, which are available in certain states to help individuals pay for qualified health coverage until they begin receiving the monthly tax credit through the HCTC Program. Contact the U.S. Department of Labor at 1-877-US-2JOBS (1-877-872-5627) and ask if your state has a NEG Program. For more information about the HCTC, visit the IRS Web site at www.irs.gov (IRS Keyword: HCTC), or call the HCTC Customer Contact Center at 1-866-628-4282 (TTD/TTY: 1-866-626-4282).

Información en Español

Para recibir la Hoja Informativa en español, llame a nuestro Centro de Contacto del Cliente al 1-800-400-7242. Para los usuarios del servicio TTY/TDD, llame al Servicio de Retransmisión Federal, al número telefónico gratuito, 1-800-845-6136, y pida que lo comuniquen con el 1-800-400-7242. Además hay varias publicaciones de PBGC en español y todas están disponibles bajo el icono "en Español" que se encuentra en la parte superior de la página principal de nuestro sitio Web, www.pbgc.gov.

Las coordinadoras de servicios en español para la PBGC son Orfanny Vanegas y Linette Henry. Si usted necesita ayuda, llame al 1-800-400-7242, envíe un mensaje a foreignlanguage.supportteam@pbgc.gov, o escriba a: PBGC, Contacto de Habla Hispana, PBGC, P.O. Box 151750, Alexandria, VA 22315-1750.

Keep Us Informed. Call 1-800-400-7242


It is important to let us know when you have a change in address, name, or telephone number. You can do this by using our online service, **MyPBA**, which is available at www.pbgc.gov/mypba, or by calling our Customer Contact Center toll-free at **1-800-400-7242**. You may also write to us at: PBGC, P.O. Box 151750, Alexandria, VA 22315-1750. If you write in, please include at least your Social Security Number on your correspondence. TTY/TDD users may call the Federal Relay Service toll-free at 1-800-877-8339 and ask to be connected to PBGC's toll-free number.

Our Customer Contact Center is available to receive your calls Monday-Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Eastern time.

To view our pamphlet about **MyPBA** click here

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