



Pension Newsletter

Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation Fall/Winter 1998

PBGC Prepares for the Year 2000

You've heard about the "Year 2000" problem with computers. We want you to know that PBGC is on target to have all information systems ready before the Year 2000. This ensures that the computer systems that issue your benefit checks are ready to correctly handle dates before and after January 1, 2000. Your checks will continue on time and dealings with PBGC will not be affected.

We are working with our business partners as well to ensure their readiness for the Year 2000.

A Frequent Question

What should I do if I haven't received my check after the first of the month?

It rarely happens, but if you haven't received your check when you normally do around the beginning of the month, call the Customer Service Center toll-free. PBGC will take immediate action to verify the check has been sent and reissue a new one if necessary.

A good way to avoid any delay in receiving your check is to have it electronically deposited directly into your bank account. This way, your benefit will always be available to you at the start of each month.

Call the Customer Service Center (1-800-400-7242) to sign up for Electronic Direct Deposit.

PBGC Remains Rock Solid

PBGC remains financially strong despite the recent ups and downs of the stock market. We anticipate that, overall, our investments will produce a positive return for the year. PBGC is a long term investor. Our diversified investment program is well-positioned to withstand changes in the bond and stock markets.

As we near our quarter-century mark, PBGC remains rock-solid in its protection of defined benefit pensions. This means that PBGC will always have enough money to pay your pension benefit according to the terms of your pension plan and the law. Before PBGC, there was no insurance for pensions when companies could not honor the promises they made, and thousands of people lost part or all of the benefits they counted on for retirement.

Since it was created in 1974, PBGC has taken over more than 2,500 pension plans because companies could no longer fund them. As a result, today more than 205,000 people receive pensions they might otherwise not have. Another 260,000 people will receive benefits from PBGC when they reach retirement age.

Spreading the Word About PBGC



Attendees at a recent Illinois AFL-CIO convention in Chicago learn about PBGC and how it protects their pensions.

Monthly Benefits Now Available to More People

We are making changes to help some retirees who receive their pension benefits from PBGC on a once-a-year basis, but would prefer monthly payments.

PBGC generally pays pension benefits on a monthly basis. However for people receiving monthly benefits of \$50 or less, the agency makes one annual payment. For example, if the monthly benefit would be \$40, we would pay the person \$480 (12 times \$40 equals \$480).

In a few cases, some retirees have expressed an interest in receiving a monthly payment. To accommodate them, PBGC will offer the option of receiving payment monthly rather than yearly, if the monthly benefit is \$20 or more.

If you are receiving a yearly benefit payment and would prefer to receive checks from PBGC on a monthly basis, contact the Customer Service Center to request the change.

“Sherlock Holmes” on the Internet

“No one told me I had a pension. I am glad to know that there is a government agency like PBGC that took the time to look for me and give me my pension.” This was the reaction of an Atlanta, Ga. woman who learned that PBGC was holding a pension for her from her former employer in New York.

PBGC created the Pension Search Directory on its Internet homepage to help unite people with their pensions. These are workers who couldn't be located when their pension plans ended. People who have changed jobs sometimes forget to tell former employers they have moved, or changed their name.

You can help us in this effort by searching our website to find out if

someone you know is listed. Perhaps even you are owed a pension from a job you held many years ago.

You can search the Directory by an individual's or company's name, or state where a company's headquarters is located.

Since PBGC launched its electronic Pension Search Directory nearly two years ago, we have located nearly 1,400 people owed more than \$4 million.

The Directory currently lists almost 7,200 people owed nearly \$13 million in pension benefits.

For those of you with access to the Internet, the address is <http://search.pbgc.gov>. Or you can call our toll-free Customer Service Center number.

It's Easy to Stay in Touch

In today's global society, there are several ways to communicate with PBGC. You can call our Customer Service Center toll-free at 1-800-400-7242. For the hearing impaired who need to use the TTY/

TDD system, call the federal relay service toll-free at 1-800-877-8339 and ask to be connected to 1-800-400-7242.

Although the toll-free number is not available internationally, those who live in a foreign country may contact PBGC in a number of ways. PBGC currently pays more than 700 retirees living in foreign countries.

To communicate with us from another country, either write to PBGC, P.O. Box 19153, Washington, DC, 20036-9153, or send an Internet e-mail to: webmaster@pbgc.gov.

No matter how you contact us, we can respond more quickly if you always have your name, address, social security number, and plan name and number handy.

Please remember to notify PBGC of any personal changes (e.g., name, marital status, change of address) to ensure that PBGC can always be in touch with you.

People Owed Benefits or Assistance By PBGC

