



***Retirement and Insurance Service
Benefits Administration Letter***

Number: 99-108

Date: August 19, 1999

Subject: Educating Employees About Their Retirement Package

Purpose: The General Accounting Office (GAO) recently released the attached report entitled *Federal Retirement Key Elements Are Included in Agencies' Education Programs*. The purpose of the review was to determine how well agencies are doing in carrying out their responsibilities to educate employees about their retirement package.

GAO consulted with a group of retirement experts who are experienced with retirement education issues to identify the most essential elements of a retirement education program. GAO then looked at our guidance to agencies, products for agency and employee use, and the services we provide, such as training classes. Next, GAO interviewed officials at 12 agencies to determine what their practices are. GAO found that the experts with whom they consulted and OPM generally held consistent views regarding the recommended content, presentation formats, and timing of retirement education programs. They also found consistency between the topics recommended by the experts and OPM and what the sample agencies reported they do.

The experts validate the need for agencies to provide retirement information early and often throughout an employee's career so that retirement is simply the culmination of a long planning process. They also confirm the importance of making information available in a variety of ways to meet employees' needs.

To view the report go to :

<http://www.gao.gov/AIndexFY99/abstracts/gg99027.htm/>

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mary Sugar".

Mary M. Sugar, Chief
Agency Services Division
Retirement and Insurance Service

Attachment