

CHAPTER 1. ADMINISTRATION AND GENERAL PROVISIONS

Table of Contents

Chapter 1. Administration and General Provisions	i
Subchapter 1A. About this Handbook	1
Part 1A1. General Information	1
Subpart 1A1.1. Overview and Definitions.....	1
Section 1A1.1-1. Overview.....	1
A. Organization of this Chapter	1
B. Topics Covered.....	1
C. Organization of Subchapter.....	1
D. Statement of Authority	1
Part 1A2. Organization	2
Subpart 1A2.1. Information	2
Section 1A2.1-1. Presentation of Information	2
A. Format	2
B. Structure	2
Section 1A2.1-2 Subdivisions.....	3
A. Chapters.....	3
B. Subchapters	3
C. Parts and Subparts	3
D. Sections	3
E. Paragraphs	3
F. Links.....	3
Subchapter 1B General Information	4
Part 1B1. General Information.....	4
Subpart 1B1.1. Overview.....	4
Section 1B1.1-1 Overview.....	4
A. Topics Covered.....	4
B. Organization of Subchapter.....	4
C. Statement of Authority	4
Section 1B1.1-2 Civil Service Retirement System	5
A. Type of System.....	5
B. Benefits.....	5
C. Contributions	5
D. Voluntary Contributions.....	5
E. Thrift Savings Plan.....	5
F. CSRS Offset Contributions	5
G. CSRS Offset Benefit	5
Section 1B1.1-3 Federal Employees Retirement System	6
A. General	6
B. Social Security.....	6
C. Basic FERS Annuity	6
D. Contributions.....	6
E. Thrift Savings Plan.....	6

- Subchapter 1C OPM and Agency Responsibilities 8
 - Part 1C1 Overview..... 8
 - Subpart 1C1.1. Overview..... 8
 - Section 1C1.1-1 Overview 8
 - A. Introduction 8
 - B. Topics Covered..... 8
 - C. Organization of Subchapter 8
 - D. Statement of Authority 8
 - Part 1C2 OPM Responsibilities 9
 - Subpart 1C2.1. OPM Responsibilities 9
 - Section 1C2.1-1 OPM Responsibilities 9
 - A. Administration of CSRS and FERS 9
 - B. Regulations and Instructions 9
 - C. Individual Retirement Record 9
 - D. Claims Adjudication..... 9
 - E. Account Maintenance..... 10
 - F. Financial Records 10
 - G. Continuing System Administration 10
 - H. Retirement Services..... 10
 - Part 1C3 Agency Responsibilities 11
 - Subpart 1C3.1. Agency Responsibilities 11
 - Section 1C3.1-1 Agency Responsibilities..... 11
 - A. Agency Head 11
 - B. Agency Human Resources Specialist (Employee Benefits)..... 11
 - C. Centralized and Local Level Benefits Offices 12
 - D. Payroll Offices..... 12
- Subchapter 1D Job Aids..... 13
 - Part 1D1 Job Aids 13
 - Subpart 1D1.1. Job Aids 13
 - Section 1D1.1-1 Copies of Job Aids..... 13
 - A. Description 13
 - B. Job Aid: Agency Human Resources (Employee Benefits) Responsibilities 14

Subchapter 1A. About this Handbook

Part 1A1. General Information

Subpart 1A1.1. Overview and Definitions

Section 1A1.1-1. Overview

A. Organization of this Chapter

This subchapter provides information about the "CSRS and FERS Handbook for Personnel and Payroll Offices." It explains how the information is presented and describes the subdivisions of the Handbook. The CSRS and FERS Handbook for Personnel and Payroll Offices is available online only at <http://www.opm.gov/retirement-services/publications-forms/csrsfers-handbook/>.

B. Topics Covered

This subchapter contains:

- An explanation of how information is presented;
- A description of the subdivisions of the Handbook; and
- Information about how to obtain the Handbook.

C. Organization of Subchapter

This subchapter has three parts with a total of four sections.

Part	Name of Part	Name of Section	Page
1A1.1-1	Overview	Overview	1
1A2.1-1	Organization	Presentation of Information	2
1A2.1-2	Organization	Subdivisions	3

D. Statement of Authority

This subchapter and its contents are based on the laws and regulations cited below.

- United States Code: chapter 83 and chapter 84 of title 5;
- parts 831, 841, 842, 843, 844, 845, and 846 of title 5, Code of Federal Regulations

Part 1A2. Organization

Subpart 1A2.1. Information

Section 1A2.1-1. Presentation of Information

A. Format

The information in this Handbook is presented in a format that is somewhat different from most OPM publications. The information is subdivided as follows:

- Chapters
- Subchapters
- Parts
- Subparts
- Sections
- Paragraphs

See [section 1A2.1-2](#) below for an explanation of these subdivisions.

B. Structure

Most chapters in this Handbook have as their first two subchapters, a subchapter on the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) and a subchapter on the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS). The CSRS subchapter gives complete information about the Chapter subject and how it pertains to CSRS. The FERS subchapter states what CSRS information also applies for FERS and contains the information that is different for FERS.

EXCEPTION: In some chapters, (such as this chapter and the coverage chapter) the CSRS and FERS information is merged into a single subchapter

Section 1A2.1-2 Subdivisions

A. Chapters

Chapters are the major subdivisions of this Handbook. Each Chapter is identified with a number and a title.

EXAMPLE: Chapter 10 Coverage

B. Subchapters

Chapters are divided into subchapters. Subchapter topics are limited to specific categories-CSRS, FERS, Examples, Charts, Illustrations, and Form/Facsimiles for Local Reproduction. In some chapters, the last three items are combined as "Job Aids." Each subchapter has a title and is identified with a capital letter that follows the Chapter number.

EXAMPLE: Subchapter 10B Examples of Application of Coverage Rules

C. Parts and Subparts

Subchapters may be divided into parts and subparts for cohesion, but not all subchapters have them. Each part has a title and is identified with a number following the Chapter and subchapter identifiers. To identify a subpart, the Handbook system places a period (.) after the part identifier, followed by a number.

Example of a part identifier:

Part 10B1 New Hires

Example of a subpart identifier:

Subpart 10A1.2 Historical Background

D. Sections

Sections are the basic informational units of this Handbook. A subchapter may have no parts or subparts, but it always has sections. Each section has a number preceded by all the identifiers for the subpart and a dash. (If there is no part or subpart, the identifier for the missing subdivision is 1.)

EXAMPLE: Section 10A1.2-1 Background: Retirement System Coverage

This numbering system allows users to locate any section in the Handbook by its number without needing to consult an index or table of contents.

E. Paragraphs

Sections are organized in paragraphs. Each paragraph has a label appearing in bold type to its left and identified by a capital letter (for example, A). Paragraphs may be composed of narrative information, charts, lists, or any other device that lends itself to clear presentation of the information.

F. Links

Links to other resources are included throughout the electronic document, and can be accessed by clicking on the link.

Subchapter 1B General Information

Part 1B1. General Information

Subpart 1B1.1. Overview

Section 1B1.1-1 Overview

A. Topics Covered

This subchapter contains:

- A brief description of the CSRS; and
- A brief description of the FERS.

B. Organization of Subchapter

This subchapter has three sections.

Part	Name of Part	Name of Section	Page
1B1.1-1	General Information	Overview	4
1B1.1-2	General Information	Civil Service Retirement System	5
1B1.1-3	General Information	Federal Employees Retirement System	6

C. Statement of Authority

- chapters 83 and 84 of title 5, United States Code
 - Code of Federal Regulations Parts 831, 841, 842, 843, 844, 845, and 846
-

Section 1B1.1-2 Civil Service Retirement System

A. Type of System

The Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) is a defined benefit, contributory retirement system. Employees share in the expense of the annuities to which they may become entitled.

B. Benefits

CSRS benefits are based on the employee's "high-3" average pay and the years of service. Under the general formula, 30 years of service provide 56.25 percent of the "high-3" average salary.

C. Contributions

CSRS-covered employees contribute 7, 7.5 or 8 percent of pay to CSRS. While they generally pay no Social Security, survivor, and disability (OASDI) taxes, they must pay the Medicare tax (currently 1.45 percent of pay). The employing agency matches the employee's CSRS contributions.

D. Voluntary Contributions

Employees may contribute up to 10 percent of basic pay for their creditable service to a voluntary contribution account. Accounts earn a market rate of interest. The employee may withdraw the funds from the account at any time or use them to purchase an additional annuity at retirement. The additional annuity is \$7 a year for each \$100 in the account, plus \$.20 for each full year the person is over age 55 at retirement.

E. Thrift Savings Plan

Employees may contribute up to the (IRS) deferral limit, (\$19,000 as of 2019), to the Thrift Savings Plan (see [section 1A1.1-3D](#)). The maximum amount of catch-up contributions that can be contributed in a given year by participants age 50 and older is \$6,000 as of 2019. It is separate from the elective deferral and annual addition limit imposed on regular employee contributions. There is no Government contribution.

F. CSRS Offset Contributions

CSRS Offset employees are subject to both CSRS and Social Security coverage (see [chapter 10](#) for an explanation of how CSRS employees can also be subject to Social Security coverage). For these employees, their OASDI withholdings are offset from their CSRS contributions, so that the combined Social Security and CSRS contributions are the same as for employees who have CSRS coverage only.

G. CSRS Offset Benefit

When CSRS Offset employees retire, they receive full CSRS benefits until they are eligible for Social Security benefits, generally at age 62. At that time, the CSRS benefit is offset by the portion of their Social Security benefit that represents the period of time when they were covered by both CSRS and Social Security.

Section 1B1.1-3 Federal Employees Retirement System

A. General

The Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) is a three-tiered plan consisting of Social Security, a basic FERS annuity, and the Thrift Savings Plan (TSP).

B. Social Security

Employees under FERS pay the full Social Security tax rate. The Social Security tax rate for 2019 is 7.65 percent of pay (6.2 percent for retirement and 1.45 percent for Medicare). Social Security's Old-Age, Survivors, and Disability Insurance (OASDI) program limits the amount of earnings subject to taxation for a given year. This is called the contribution and benefit base or the taxable minimum. Annual earnings in excess of the contribution and benefit base (\$132,900 in 2019) are not subject to the OASDI tax, but are still subject to the Medicare tax. See the Social Security Administration's "[Social Security Handbook](#)" for more information.

C. Basic FERS Annuity

The basic FERS annuity is based on the employee's length of service and the "high-3" average pay. For most employees, the formula for computing the annual annuity is 1 percent of average pay for each year of creditable service.

[Public Law 112-96](#), Section 5001, the "Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act of 2012," established the FERS-Revised Annuity Employee (FERS-RAE). In general, employees hired after December 31, 2012, who were not excluded from FERS coverage became subject to FERS-RAE coverage and pay higher employee contributions for the FERS basic benefit than employees subject to the original FERS coverage. The amounts and benefits payable under FERS did not change. The basic benefit for Congressional employees and Members of Congress covered under FERS-RAE is the same as the basic benefit for those covered under FERS.

Section 401 of the "[Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013](#)," signed into law by the President on December 26, 2013, created another class of FERS coverage, the FERS-Further Revised Annuity Employee (FERS-FRAE). In general, employees hired after December 31, 2013, who were not excluded from FERS coverage became subject to FERS-FRAE coverage and pay higher employee contributions for the basic benefit than FERS or FERS-RAE employees. The basic benefit for Congressional employees and Members of Congress covered under FERS-FRAE are the same as the benefits for those covered under FERS and FERS-RAE.

D. Contributions

Most employees covered by FERS currently contribute 0.8% of pay to FERS for the basic benefit.

Most employees covered by FERS-RAE currently contribute 3.1% of pay to FERS-RAE for the basic benefit.

Most employees covered by FERS-FRAE currently contribute 4.4% of pay to FERS-FRAE for the basic benefit.

E. Thrift Savings Plan

The Internal Revenue Service's (IRS) annual limit on "elective deferrals" is defined as the maximum amount (\$19,000 for tax year 2019) that employees can contribute to the Thrift Savings Plan (TSP). These tax-deferred contributions are the combined total of traditional employee contributions (deducted from basic pay before taxes are withheld) and Roth contributions

(contributed after taxes have been withheld). Each pay period, the employee's agency or service will deduct the TSP contributions in the amount of the employee's choosing and will send the contributions to the Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board. If the employee is covered by FERS, the agency or service will contribute an amount equal to 1% of basic pay (Automatic Contribution), each pay period, to the Federal Retirement Thrift Savings Board. The Automatic Contribution is not deducted from the employee's pay. The agency or service will make the Automatic Contribution of 1% even if the employee does not elect to contribute to the TSP.

NOTE: Employees covered by FERS and hired after July 31, 2010, are automatically enrolled in the TSP, and 3% of basic pay is deducted from the employee's pay each pay period and deposited in the traditional balance of the TSP account, unless the employee makes an election to change or stop contributions.

In addition to the Automatic Contribution, the agency or service will make matching contributions on the first 5% of pay that an employee contributes each pay period. The first 3% of pay is matched dollar for dollar and the next 2% of pay is matched at \$0.50 on the dollar.

TSP participants who are age 50 or above can make tax-deferred "catch-up" contributions from their basic pay to their TSP accounts. These contributions are a supplement to the participant's regular employee contributions and do not count against the Internal Revenue Code's elective deferral limit. The catch-up contribution has its own annual limit and eligibility criteria. The limit for 2019 is \$6,000. The Thrift Savings Plan is administered by the Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board. See their publication titled, "Summary of Thrift Savings Plan" for more information.

Subchapter 1C OPM and Agency Responsibilities

Part 1C1 Overview

Subpart 1C1.1. Overview

Section 1C1.1-1 Overview

A. Introduction

This subchapter covers the respective responsibilities of OPM and employing agencies for retirement matters.

B. Topics Covered

This subchapter covers:

- OPM's responsibilities for administering CSRS and FERS;
- General agency responsibilities for retirement matters;
- The responsibilities of the agency headquarters level Human Resources Specialist (Employee Benefits), as the agency's program manager for retirement;
- The responsibilities of retirement counselors in local and/or centralized installations; and
- The responsibilities of payroll offices.

C. Organization of Subchapter

This subchapter has three sections:

Part	Name of Part	Name of Section	Page
1C1.1-1	Overview	Overview	8
1C2.1-1	Overview	OPM Responsibilities	9
1B3.1-1	Overview	Agency Responsibilities	11

D. Statement of Authority

This subchapter is based on the laws and regulations cited below:

- section 8350 of title 5, United States Code
- part 841 and part 831 section 102 of title 5, Code of Federal Regulations

Part 1C2 OPM Responsibilities

Subpart 1C2.1. OPM Responsibilities

Section 1C2.1-1 OPM Responsibilities

A. Administration of CSRS and FERS

OPM has overall responsibility for administering the CSRS and FERS. Its major responsibilities are outlined below.

B. Regulations and Instructions

OPM issues regulations and instructions to administer the retirement systems. The retirement regulations are published in Parts 831 through 850 of title 5, Code of Federal Regulations inclusive of both CSRS and FERS. Implementing instructions are published in this Handbook.

C. Individual Retirement Record

The Individual Retirement Record (SF 2806/SF 3100) is maintained by the agency for each employee subject to CSRS or FERS. OPM maintains individual retirement records of separated employees and prior records of employees who have transferred between agencies. OPM also maintains CSRS designations of beneficiary of active and separated employees and FERS designations of beneficiary of separated employees and annuitants.

D. Claims Adjudication

OPM responsibilities for claims adjudication include the following activities:

- OPM receives retirement packages from agency payroll offices and adjudicates CSRS and FERS retirement and survivor claims, as well as applications for refunds of retirement monies and for service credit payments for civilian service.
- In adjudicating claims for retirement, OPM's Legal Administrative Specialists review all documents to verify entitlement to annuity, health benefits coverage, and life insurance coverage. Additional documentation may be obtained by the Legal Administrative Specialist if necessary to verify entitlement to benefits. The specialists determine benefit entitlement under the applicable provisions of law, coordinate benefit entitlements as required with Social Security, OWCP, etc., and authorize payment of annuity.
- In adjudicating claims for death benefits, OPM determines survivors' eligibility for benefits and the type of benefit due.
- OPM determines applicants' eligibility for refunds of retirement deductions and authorizes payment of refunds. OPM also determines applicants' eligibility to make deposits and redeposits for service, confirms creditability of service for retirement, and computes the amount due the Civil Service Retirement and Disability Fund (the Fund).
- In carrying out its responsibilities for claims adjudication, OPM must also apply pertinent provisions of law requiring payment of benefits to former spouses of employees and retirees, collection of debts owed the U.S. Government, collection of

Federal and State income taxes, and collections of overpayments from the Fund.

E. Account Maintenance

OPM serves as the "personnel and payroll office" for approximately 2.6 million retirees and survivors. In this capacity, OPM carries out activities such as the following:

- Recalculates benefits when agencies submit additional information about an employee's employment history, or when events such as a post-retirement change in marital or family status change a retiree's or survivor's entitlement.
- Conducts the Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) open season activities for annuitants and survivors.
- Responds to inquiries from annuitants and maintains annuitant accounts when they move, change tax withholdings, or health benefits and life insurance, etc.
- Carries out various survey and matching programs to verify annuitants' continued entitlement to benefits.

F. Financial Records

OPM accounts for retirement monies received by OPM and disbursed to benefit recipients, insurance carriers, and Federal and State tax entities; maintains retirement control accounts; and determines the financial condition of the Fund.

G. Continuing System Administration

OPM prepares forms and informational materials for use by employees, agencies, and annuitants, provides training for agency personnel, responds to inquiries from agency headquarters Human Resources Specialists (Employee Benefits), and makes recommendations to the President and Congress for changes to improve the retirement system.

H. Retirement Services

OPM's Retirement Services (RS) carries out the agency's responsibilities for administering CSRS and FERS.

Part 1C3 Agency Responsibilities

Subpart 1C3.1. Agency Responsibilities

Section 1C3.1-1 Agency Responsibilities

A. Agency Head

An agency head or his or her designee is responsible for designating the agency headquarters-level Human Resources Specialist (Employee Benefits) (e.g., Benefits Officer or Retirement Counselor) and designating certifying officers. Agencies should notify OPM at: benefits@opm.gov or 202-606-0788 of any change in the designated headquarters-level Benefits Officer or Retirement Counselor. The notification should come from the Director of Personnel or equivalent official, to the Benefits Officers Development and Outreach.

The agency head also bears overall responsibility for the quality and timeliness of submissions of records to OPM. Agencies are responsible for insuring that all records and required documentation are received by OPM no later than 30 days after the date of separation (or death in the case of a deceased employee). For disability retirements, agencies are to ensure that all records and supporting documentation will be received by OPM no later than 30 days after the date on which the employee files the application with the employing agency.

B. Agency Human Resources Specialist (Employee Benefits)

1. The agency headquarters level Human Resources Specialist (Employee Benefits) is the agency headquarters level program manager for retirement matters. Responsibilities include:
 - Managing retirement program matters within the agency;
 - Serving as the agency liaison with OPM and other agencies on retirement matters;
 - Interpreting policy directives, reviewing and commenting on proposed policy changes affecting government-wide programs, formulating agency policies, and seeking assistance from OPM if needed to resolve questions not addressed in OPM's written instructions;
 - Providing training and education of local personnel who are responsible for retirement matters and employee counseling programs; and
 - Evaluating the accuracy and timeliness of retirement submissions to OPM, assessing the effectiveness of agency pre-retirement counseling programs, and making recommendations to agency management.
2. An agency Human Resources Specialist (Employee Benefits) does not normally:
 - Provide one-on-one retirement counseling to employees; or
 - Become involved in individual retirement cases.
3. Subchapter 1D contains a more detailed description of agency retirement counselor responsibilities for agency use in agency retirement counselors' position descriptions

C. Centralized and Local Level Benefits Offices

Centralized Benefits Offices and/or local level benefits offices are responsible for:

- Determining employees' retirement coverage correctly;
- Providing pre-retirement counseling for employees, groups and individual;
- Counseling employees concerning service credit payments, post-56 military deposits, and assisting employees with applications;
- Verifying creditability of service;
- Verifying retirees' eligibility to retain health and life insurance in retirement, certifying life insurance coverage and amounts in death-in-service cases, and transferring necessary documentation of health and life insurance coverage to OPM;
- Providing employees and survivors of deceased employees estimates of expected benefits and assisting them in the preparation of retirement or refund applications and related documentation;
- Certifying the personnel office portion of applications for retirement, refunds, death benefits, and service credit payments;
- Directing annuitants and their survivors and other former employees who have questions about their benefits to OPM for assistance; and
- Requesting assistance, as needed, from the agency headquarters Retirement Counselor about retirement matters.

For a complete discussion of agency responsibilities in assisting employees to plan for retirement and apply for annuity, see [Chapter 40: Planning and Applying for Retirement](#).

D. Payroll Offices

Agency payroll offices are responsible for:

- Withholding retirement deductions from employees' pay, making the correct agency contribution, and transmitting these monies to the Fund;
 - Preparing and maintaining an individual retirement record for each employee who is covered by CSRS or FERS;
 - Maintaining post-56 military deposit accounts;
 - Certifying individual retirement records and related records, and ensuring the correctness of data in these records;
 - Certifying that the payroll office portion of applications for retirement and survivor benefits is accurate and complete; and
 - Maintaining retirement control accounts and preparing retirement accounting reports.
-

Subchapter 1D Job Aids

Part 1D1 Job Aids

Subpart 1D1.1. Job Aids

Section 1D1.1-1 Copies of Job Aids

A. Description

This subchapter contains the following job aid for agency use:

- Description of Agency Human Resources Specialist (Employee Benefits) responsibilities

B. Job Aid: Agency Human Resources Specialist (Employee Benefits) Responsibilities

The agency headquarters Human Resources Specialist (Employee Benefits) is responsible for establishing and coordinating department/agency retirement policies and efficient retirement processing procedures and assuring policy compliance among the various operating offices.

These activities involve functioning as a liaison within the department/agency between payroll and personnel offices, and in large departments, between the central policy-making branch and operating personnel offices. In carrying out external liaison activities with other agencies, primarily OPM, the Human Resources Specialist (Employee Benefits) will be an active member of the Benefits Officer Network group of employee benefits specialists, attending meetings and participating in subcommittees.

The combination of extensive knowledge of Federal retirement systems and of department/agency operations uniquely qualifies the agency Human Resources Specialist (Employee Benefits) to formulate and provide input on administering retirement benefits at the department/agency level and to respond as the department/agency spokesperson when asked for input on retirement matters.

The Human Resources Specialist (Employee Benefits) is also responsible for assuring that employees are able to make informed decisions regarding their retirement benefits. This may be best accomplished via a comprehensive retirement counseling program, including on-demand counseling by trained, knowledgeable HR specialists and regularly scheduled pre-retirement seminars. If such a program is already in existence, the Human Resources Specialist (Employee Benefits) will be involved in evaluating its effectiveness and instituting enhancements where necessary. If no program exists, it may be necessary to develop a retirement counseling policy and implement a program.

In carrying out these responsibilities, a Human Resources Specialist (Employee Benefits) is typically engaged in the following activities:

1. Management
 - Oversees and provides direction to the department/agency retirement counseling program.
 - Serves as the central point for the dissemination of policy and procedural guidance to appropriate headquarters and field operating personnel offices.
 - Serves as the authoritative resource in department/agency for technical information regarding retirement matters.
 - Serves as departmental/agency liaison with OPM and other agencies on retirement matters.
 - Manages a communication network within the department/agency of retirement counselors and processors, and coordinates the flow of information between them and external agencies (OPM, SSA, IRS, and Thrift Board).
 - Coordinates retirement processing and policy issues among internal offices such as payroll, classification, staffing, etc.
 - Regularly exchanges information with OPM regarding retirement-related issues, including legislative and regulatory activity and court cases.
 - Develops and submits an annual Retirement Financial Education Plan.

Resources

- Maintains or has access to up-to-date copies of OPM publications, including technical and processing manuals.
 - Access to knowledgeable sources at OPM.
 - Attends regular Benefits Officers Network meetings.
 - Attends special training to include FERCCA Workshops and Benefits-Related Webcasts.
2. Policy Development and Interpretation
- Formulates departmental/agency policies and provides overall direction and guidance on retirement matters.
 - Reviews and comments on proposed legislation and regulations affecting government-wide benefits programs.
 - Interprets policy, regulations, legislation, and develops department/agency operating procedures.

Resources

- Timely receipt of proposed, interim, and final regulations from OPM.
 - Advance consultation with OPM when possible about upcoming changes that may significantly impact department/agency operations.
3. Training and Education
- Provides training to headquarters and field and processors through in-house or external HR specialists.
 - Provides for the delivery of pre-retirement seminars and counseling to employees through in-house or external sources.
 - Publicizes changes in retirement benefits, open season deadlines, etc. through in-house publications such as employee memos and newsletters.

Resources

- Up-to-date information about interagency training resources.
- Information exchange about courses and materials available from external sources.

4. Evaluation

- Conducts evaluations of operating personnel office responsibilities, such as coverage decisions, retirement coding, quality and timeliness of agency submissions of retirement documents to OPM, and takes appropriate steps to improve performance when needed.
- Evaluates the effectiveness of department/agency-wide pre-retirement counseling programs and takes appropriate steps to improve their quality as needed.

Resources

- OPM-developed criteria for measuring acceptable performance in operating programs.
- Basic pre-retirement counseling program standards and criteria to be used when expanding a program.

5. Duties Not Normally Performed by the Agency Human Resources Specialist (Employee Benefits)

- Does not function as an expeditor of retirement cases at OPM, except in extraordinary situations.
 - Does not provide one-on-one retirement counseling to employees. However, Agency Human Resources Specialists (Employee Benefits) at smaller agencies may also be responsible for providing counseling services.
-