

U.S. Railroad Retirement Board

# Customer Service Plan



# Standards

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When you apply for these benefits under the Railroad Retirement or Railroad Unemployment Insurance Acts, you can expect us to process your application within the number of calendar days shown below and on the next page.

<b>Type of application</b>	<b>We will make a decision within...</b>
<p><b><i>Employee and spouse retirement benefits</i></b></p> <p>Filed in advance of the beginning date of your annuity</p>	<p>35 days of the beginning date of your annuity</p>
<p>Not filed in advance of the beginning date of your annuity</p>	<p>60 days of the date you file your application</p>
<p><b><i>Initial survivor benefits</i></b></p>	<p>60 days of the beginning date of your annuity or the date you file your application (whichever is later)</p>
<p><b><i>Conversion from spouse to survivor benefits</i></b></p>	<p>30 days of first notice of the employee's death</p>
<p><b><i>Lump-sum death benefits</i></b></p>	<p>60 days of the date you file your application</p>
<p><b><i>Unemployment and sickness insurance benefits</i></b></p> <p>Unemployment and sickness applications</p>	<p>10 days of the date we receive your application</p>
<p>Subsequent claims for unemployment and sickness benefits when found entitled</p>	<p>10 days of the date we receive your claim</p>

<b>Type of application</b>	<b>We will make a decision within...</b>
<p><b><i>Disability benefits</i></b></p> <p>Note: Processing applications for disability benefits is more complex than our other benefits due to the need to develop medical evidence. When you file an application for disability benefits, our field office staff will provide you with additional information on our processing times for decisions and payments.</p>	<p>100 days of the date you file your application</p>

## **After our decision is completed**

### **Notice of Award or Denial**

You should receive a decision notice within 2 weeks.

### **Benefit Payment**

If you are entitled to benefits, generally you can expect that the payment will be deposited in your bank account within 1 week of our decision.

### **Additional Information**

Occasionally, claims for some benefits may take longer to handle than others if they are more complex. In addition, an application can be delayed if certain documents necessary to determine eligibility are needed from you or your employer. It is important to submit all necessary eligibility information at the same time you file your application.

If you do not receive your payment or decision notice within the time periods stated in our standards, contact us toll-free at 1-877-772-5772 to obtain your current status.

# Openness

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- We will display in each office annually how well we are meeting the established standards.
- When you visit our offices, the staff you see will identify themselves by name.
- When you telephone us, we will identify ourselves by name.

# Accessibility

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- If you have access to the Internet, you can get more information on the Railroad Retirement Board (RRB) and its programs through our website, [www.rrb.gov](http://www.rrb.gov). The agency's ***Benefit Online Services*** at [www.rrb.gov](http://www.rrb.gov) provides information regarding services that are currently available online. If you take advantage of these options, generally you can expect to receive services faster than if you handled these transactions by traditional methods, though these are still available. You can also send a secure message to a field office via our website.
- If you have a question about your benefits, you can speak to an RRB representative by calling us toll-free at 1-877-772-5772 from 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. If you leave a message, we will generally return your call within the next 2 business days. Through automated services available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, you can also find the locations of RRB field offices, obtain information on unemployment and sickness benefits or statements of creditable service and compensation, request a letter to verify your current monthly benefit rate, secure a replacement Medicare card, or request a duplicate Railroad Retirement Act tax statement.
- Before visiting one of our offices, we encourage you to make an appointment to enable us to service you more promptly. If you cannot come to our offices, we may be able to visit you at one of our regularly scheduled Customer OutReach Program service locations.

- When inquiring with us by letter, we will respond to you in a timely fashion. Generally this will be within 2 to 4 weeks depending on the nature of your letter. If we cannot answer your question fully within that time frame, we will acknowledge your contact and let you know when you can expect to receive a full response.

## Accountability

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- If things go wrong, at the very least you are entitled to a good explanation and an apology.
- If you don't agree with our decision about your benefits, you have the right to ask for review and to appeal. We will tell you about these rights each time we make a decision about your benefits.
- We understand that the services we provide our customers are very important and we hold employees at all levels of the organization accountable for providing quality, courteous, and timely service.
- The information you provide us is protected under the provisions of the Privacy Act.

## Feedback

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- A Customer Assessment Survey form is available in every office for you to tell us how we did and how we can improve our service.
- If you have compliments or complaints with our service, you may contact the manager of the office. See also **Contact Us** on our website to send a secure e-mail to your local field office with comments regarding our customer service.

- Since 2001 the RRB has participated in the American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI). The ACSI is an independently conducted survey that measures customer satisfaction of those who receive our benefit payments and who use our website. We will continue to participate in the ACSI to obtain feedback in the future.

## Customer Service Pledge

The Railroad Retirement Board recognizes that all of its services are financed by our customers: the nation's railroad workers and employers. They are entitled to high quality service, responsive to their needs, provided efficiently and at a reasonable cost. This has been recognized in the agency mission statement:

*In carrying out its mission, the Railroad Retirement Board will pay benefits to the right people, in the right amounts, in a timely manner, and will take appropriate action to safeguard our customers' trust funds. The Railroad Retirement Board will treat every person who comes into contact with the agency with courtesy and concern, and respond to all inquiries promptly, accurately and clearly.*

The *Customer Service Plan* is centered on the following principles of public service: standards; openness; accessibility; accountability; and feedback. It is published nationally and posted in each office of the RRB in order to communicate these standards to our customers and to reinforce them with our employees. There is a clear presumption that our service will progressively improve as our operations become more efficient. The plan will be reviewed and updated periodically as we compare our service with the best in the country.

## **Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disability**

Under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and Railroad Retirement Board regulations, no qualified person may be discriminated against on the basis of disability. The RRB's programs and activities must be accessible to all qualified applicants and beneficiaries, including those with impaired vision and/or hearing. Individuals with disabilities needing assistance (including auxiliary aids or program information in accessible formats) should contact the nearest RRB office. Complaints of alleged discrimination by the RRB on the basis of disability must be filed within 90 days in writing with the Director of Administration, U.S. Railroad Retirement Board, 844 North Rush Street, Chicago, Illinois 60611-2092. Questions about individual rights under this regulation may be directed to the RRB's Director of Equal Opportunity at the above address.

# **Fraud, Waste and Abuse Hotline**

## **1-800-772-4258**

The Railroad Retirement Board's Office of Inspector General established its Hotline as a public service. The Hotline provides individuals with a means to report or discuss any suspected misconduct relating to the Railroad Retirement Board, its programs or employees.

If you believe a doctor, hospital or other health care provider is billing Medicare for services not provided or for unnecessary medical procedures or supplies; someone is illegally receiving Railroad Retirement Board benefits; or you wish to report or discuss any other suspected misconduct relating to the Railroad Retirement Board, its programs or employees, please contact the Office of Inspector General at:

**Toll-Free Hotline:** 1-800-772-4258

**U.S. Mail:**

RRB-OIG Hotline Officer  
844 North Rush Street, 4th Floor  
Chicago, IL 60611-2092

**Fax:** (312) 751-4342

**E-mail:** [hotline@oig.rrb.gov](mailto:hotline@oig.rrb.gov)

Please review the Railroad Retirement Board's e-mail notice and Internet privacy policy at [www.rrb.gov](http://www.rrb.gov) before submitting information online.

**Note:** Please do not contact the Office of Inspector General's Hotline with questions regarding benefit eligibility requirements, delayed payments or similar issues. These types of matters should be directed to a Railroad Retirement Board office.