

APHIS DIRECTIVE 417.1  
9/27/83

RETIREMENT UNDER THE FOREIGN SERVICE RETIREMENT AND DISABILITY SYSTEM

I. PURPOSE

This Directive provides information for APHIS employees in the Department of State Foreign Service Retirement and Disability System. This system pays retirement benefits in later years, affords employees a measure of income protection in case of disability, and provides an annuity for survivors in case of death.

II. COVERAGE

Employees who hold career and/or career candidacy appointments in the Foreign Service (FS) are automatically covered under the Foreign Service Retirement and Disability System. Each employee contributes 7 percent of base salary to the system, and the Federal government contributes an amount equal to the individual employee's contribution.

III. POLICY

It is APHIS policy to:

- A. Encourage planning for retirement by providing advance counseling in order to:
  - 1. Ensure that employees are aware of and derive maximum personal advantage from retirement.
  - 2. Facilitate APHIS organization, administration, and planning for positions in the FS.
- B. Encourage employees to advise supervisors and headquarters officials as soon as possible of retirement plans in order to allow advance planning for organizational staffing needs.

IV. GENERAL

Service and contributions to the Foreign Service Retirement System and the Civil Service Retirement System are generally interchangeable when an employee moves from one type of appointment to the other. Extra credit for service at unhealthful posts is only applicable to the Foreign Service Retirement System. The type of appointment (e.g., FS, GS,) determines which retirement system covers the employee. Employees do not have the option to select on retirement system or the other.

V. RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. The International Programs Management and Liaison Staff/Human Resources Division (IPMLS/HRD) will:
  - 1. Counsel FS employees on individual retirement matters.
  - 2. Conduct a systematic program to advise eligible employees of retirement benefits based on age, length of service, and special conditions.
  - 3. Serve as the primary office for receipt of the OF Form 136, Application for Retirement. This responsibility will include reviewing the application to ensure that the applicant is eligible for retirement, recommending to the appropriate management official that the request by

approved, and maintaining liaison functions with the Department of State Retirement Division in regard to individual retirement cases.

4. Advise FS employees of new retirement benefits and developments.
  5. Periodically compile, analyze, and make available to the programs various statistics relating to FS retirement.
- B. The appropriate Assistant Deputy administrator for International Programs or the Assistant Deputy administrator (ADA) for Management will.
1. Approve or disapprove effective retirement dates requested by applicants. When disapproved, a new effective date must be established by the appropriate ADA. However, under no circumstances may the retirement be prolonged more than 180 days from the initial date requested.
  2. Letter of Appreciation. Solicit background information from the retiree's immediate supervisor and prepare an appropriate Letter of Appreciation.
  3. Certificate of Appreciation. Arrange to have a Certificate of Appreciation lettered with name, date of retirement, and years of service.

The Letter and Certificate of Appreciation must be forwarded, through appropriate channels, to the Administrator's office for signature. Upon return, arrangements will be made by the appropriate AdA for presentation prior to retirement.

- C. The Field Servicing Office, through Accounting and Property Services (APS), will:
1. Maintain and keep current DS Form 765, Foreign Service Retirement Fund Participant Record, on each employee in the FS. This record will be maintained manually and contain an up-to-date record of individual contributions to the FS retirement system.
  2. Upon notification by IPMLS of a proposed retirement, forward a photocopy of the DS Form 765 to IPMLS.
  3. Upon posting the final deductions, certify the DS Form 765 and forward the original to IPMLS.

## VI. GENERAL ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

- A. Service Requirements. To be eligible for an annuity, a participant in the Foreign Service Retirement and Disability System must have completed at least 5 years of civilian Government service and have the approval of the appropriate ADA for International Programs or the ADA for Management.
- B. Mandatory Requirements. Generally employees must be separated at the end of the month in which they reach age 65 under the Foreign Service Retirement and Disability System. Retirement is also mandatory for: (1) completion of maximum time in class, (2) relative performance within the FS, and (3) former Presidential appointees who are not reassigned.
- C. Retirement on Immediate Annuity. Employees are eligible to retire

at age 50 with 20 years of creditable service.

- D. Disability. Any age, after 5 years of service, if totally disabled or incapacitated.
- E. Deferred Annuity. Any employee with at least 5 years of service who separates from the service and is not eligible for an immediate annuity is entitled to a deferred annuity at age 60.
- F. Credit for Service at Unhealthful Posts. From time to time, the State Department provides a listing of places which by reason of climatic or other extreme conditions are classified as unhealthful posts. Each year of duty serviced at these posts can be counted as 1 1/2 years when computing the length of service for the purpose of retirement. However, no extra credit will be given in the participant is paid a differential for the same period of service.
- G. Refunds.
  - 1. A participant who is separated from the Service with less than 5 years of service will receive a lump-sum payment.
  - 2. A participant who is separated from the Service with at least 5 years of service may elect to receive a lump-sum payment or to leave the contribution in the fund and receive a deferred annuity.
  - 3. When a participant is separated to accept a position in the Federal Government under another retirement system, the provisions of preceding items 1 and 2 apply, or the participant may have the lump-sum credit transferred to the gaining retirement system.

#### VII. PROCEDURES FOR FILING RETIREMENT APPLICATIONS

Employees retiring under the Foreign Service Retirement and Disability System must request approval to retire and must file their applications 90 days prior to the proposed effective date of retirement. OF Form 136 is considered by APHIS to be the formal request for approval. This form must be submitted to IPMLS 90 days prior to the proposed effective date. The employee will be notified by cable or letter when the approval has been granted.

#### VIII. DEATHS BENEFITS

Refer questions pertaining to death benefits under the Foreign Service retirement and Disability System to IPMLS.

Signed by:

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