

# CUSTOMER SERVICE PLAN



U.S. Railroad Retirement Board  
**RRB.gov**

# STANDARDS

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.

Type of application	We will make a decision within...
<b><i>Employee and spouse retirement benefits</i></b>	
Filed in advance of the beginning date of your annuity	35 days of the beginning date of your annuity
Not filed in advance of the beginning date of your annuity	60 days of the date you file your application
<b><i>Initial survivor benefits</i></b>	60 days of the beginning date of your annuity or the date you file your application (whichever is later)
<b><i>Conversion from spouse to survivor benefits</i></b>	30 days of first notice of the employee's death
<b><i>Lump-sum death benefits</i></b>	60 days of the date you file your application
<b><i>Unemployment and sickness insurance benefits</i></b>	
Unemployment and sickness applications	10 days of the date we receive your application
Subsequent claims for unemployment and sickness benefits when found entitled	10 days of the date we receive your claim
<b><i>Disability benefits</i></b> Applications for occupational, total, widow(er), and child	100 days of the date you file your application <b>Note:</b> 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 processing times for decisions.

## **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. Our field office staff will provide you with additional information regarding disability benefit payments.

### **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.

### **Benefit Adjustments**

The Railroad Retirement Board (RRB) is currently experiencing a high volume of pending annuity adjustment actions where benefit payment changes are due for currently entitled retirement, survivor, and disability beneficiaries. We are committed to prioritizing this work to ensure the accuracy of all retirement benefit payments. The following timeliness objective illustrates our commitment to reducing the volume of these cases by establishing a goal that reflects the high level of customer service we currently provide for paying initial benefits.

**We will process 80% of self-reported activities that may impact annuities payable under the Railroad Retirement Act within 180 days of receipt.**

# 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 call us, we will identify ourselves by name.

## WAYS TO GET INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR BENEFITS

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- RRB customers can request the following documents through self-service options available online at **RRB.gov/myRRB** and through the automated menu of the agency's toll-free number (1-877-772-5772):
  - replacement Medicare card
  - monthly rate verification letter
  - duplicate tax statement for the most recently completed tax year
  - statement of creditable railroad service and compensation.

Railroad employees with **myRRB** accounts can log in to get annuity estimates, apply for or claim unemployment benefits, claim sickness benefits, view Railroad Unemployment Insurance Act account statements, and review service and compensation history.

- If you have questions about your benefits, you can send a secure message to your local field office online by using **Field Office Locator** at **RRB.gov** and clicking on the link labeled **Send a Secure Message** under Contact Info on your local office's page. If you need to talk to an RRB representative, call our toll-free number (1-877-772-5772) between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m. each weekday, except Federal holidays. In addition to the self-service options listed above, you can also follow the automated menu prompts to find RRB field office locations and get information about your unemployment and sickness benefits.

The agency also maintains a TTY number, 312-751-4701, to accommodate those with hearing or speech impairments.

- Before visiting one of our offices, we encourage you to make an appointment to enable us to service you more promptly. Use the **Field Office Locator** tool at **RRB.gov** to get to the web page of any RRB office. Each office web page offers contact information for the office and a feature labeled **Send a Secure Message** to communicate directly with the office to request an appointment. If you cannot come to our offices, we may be able to schedule an in-person appointment at an alternative location closer to where you live.
- When communicating with us in writing (by mail, fax, or secure message), we will respond to you promptly. Generally, this will be within 2 weeks depending on the nature of your request. 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. When writing to us, please include a telephone number where you can be reached during business hours.

## **ACCOUNTABILITY**

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- If you disagree with our decision about your benefits, you have the right to ask for review and appeal. We will tell you about these rights each time we make a decision about your benefits. You can review our appeals procedure online at **RRB.gov/Resources/Appeals**.
- 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.
- You may contact the manager of the office if you have compliments or complaints with our service. To send a secure message to your local field office regarding our customer service, use **Field Office Locator** at **RRB.gov** and click on the link labeled **Send a Secure Message** under Contact Info on your local office's page.
- Since 2001 the RRB has participated in the American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI). The ACSI is an independently conducted survey measuring 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

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The RRB 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.*

Our *Customer Service Plan* 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. 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 RRB 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 Office of Equal Opportunity, U.S. Railroad Retirement Board, 844 North Rush Street, Chicago, Illinois 60611-1275. Questions about individual rights under this regulation may be directed to the RRB's Director of Equal Opportunity at the same address.

## **ACCESSIBILITY**

The RRB is committed to making its programs, benefits, services and facilities, and information and communications technology accessible to everyone, in accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act (29 U.S.C. 794d), and relevant implementing regulations. For individuals with limited physical mobility, during your contact to set up an in-person appointment you can discuss any concerns or assistance you may need in accessing the field office.

# **FRAUD, WASTE, AND ABUSE HOTLINE**

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

The RRB's Office of Inspector General (OIG) established its Hotline as a public service. The Hotline provides individuals with a means to report or discuss any suspected misconduct relating to the RRB, 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 RRB benefits; or you wish to report or discuss any other suspected misconduct relating to the RRB, its programs, or employees, please contact the OIG at:

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

**U.S. Mail:**

RRB-OIG Hotline Officer  
844 North Rush Street, 4th Floor  
Chicago, IL 60611-1275

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

**Email:** [hotline@oig.rrb.gov](mailto:hotline@oig.rrb.gov)

*Please review the RRB's email notice and Internet privacy policy at **RRB.gov** before submitting any information online.*

**Note:** Please do not contact the OIG's Hotline with questions regarding benefit eligibility requirements, delayed payments, or similar issues. These types of matters should be directed to a RRB field office.