



What's New?

From the Benefits and Entitlements Service Team (BEST)

22 April 2004

- **Flexible Spending Account 'Use or Lose' Deadline Coming Up.** If you participated in the Flexible Spending Account (FSA) program in 2003, you have until 29 Apr 04 to submit qualified health care or dependent care expenses incurred during 2003 for reimbursement. Unspent money will be forfeited. Only expenses incurred during the timeframe you were enrolled are eligible for reimbursement.
- **FSAFEDS Publishes Over-the-Counter Medicine Reference Guide.** FSAFEDS has issued guidelines for participants when filing claims for eligible OTC products in the form of a Quick Reference Guide, available on the FSAFEDS Website at https://www.fsafeds.com/forms/OTC_QRG000.pdf, or by entering the "Literature" area of their website. The guide provides a thorough overview of eligible and ineligible OTC expenses, as well as how to file reimbursement claims. The Internal Revenue Service announced last year that over-the-counter (OTC) medicines such as decongestants and antihistamines are eligible for reimbursement under a Health Care FSA, and the Office of Personnel Management advised the benefit would go into effect for Federal civilian employees beginning with plan year 2004.
- **E-mail Confirmation of Thrift Savings Plan Interfund Transfers.** When you make a Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) interfund transfer via the TSP website (www.tsp.gov), you can now ask to have the transaction confirmed via E-mail. This new feature will expedite the confirmation of your interfund transfer and reduce the amount of mail you receive. It also reduces the operating costs incurred by the TSP, which translates to greater earnings for TSP participants.

6 April 2004

- **Thrift Savings Plan Open Season Begins 15 April 2004 and Ends 30 June 2004.** CSRS employees may contribute 9 percent of basic pay and FERS employees may contribute 14 percent. The maximum amount any employee may contribute in 2004 is \$13,000. Highly-paid FERS employees should use this open season to review and change their contribution amount, as necessary, to avoid losing agency matching contributions by reaching the maximum amount prior to the end of the year. Air Force-serviced civilian employees will use the EBIS web application or the BEST automated phone line to conduct open season changes or enrollments.
- **Thrift Savings Plan Rates of Return Posted for March 2004.** The following chart of G, F, C, S, and I Fund returns represent the change in their respective share prices for the month of March 2004. The changes in share prices reflect net earnings after accrued TSP administrative expenses, trading costs and accrued investment managements fees have been deducted. Percentages in () are negative returns. The G, F, C, S, and I Fund returns for the last 12 months assume unchanging balances (time-weighting) from month to month, and assume that earnings are compounded on a

monthly basis. For more information, including share costs, go to the TSP Homepage at www.tsp.gov and click on Rates of Returns.

	G Fund	F Fund	C Fund	S Fund	I Fund
March 2004	0.29%	0.69%	(1.50%)	0.38%	0.60%
<u>Last 12 Months</u> (4/1/2003 - 3/31/2004)	4.09%	5.29%	34.93%	56.44%	56.56%