

**Subject: All CPF E-mail - PA Retiree Article**

**Sent: Sunday, 28 September 2003**

The purpose of this E-mail is to provide you a heads up copy of the Public Affairs article encouraging civilian employees to contact the Benefits and Entitlements Service Team (BEST) for retirement counseling/processing procedures.

We are fast approaching the end of year when we will have our next retirement "surge". Our goal is to ensure employees make informed retirement-related decisions. BEST has prepared several documents for retiring employees, which are located under "Retiring Employees" on the BEST Homepage ([www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/dpc/best/retiring.htm](http://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/dpc/best/retiring.htm)). We recommend at a minimum that employees review the Preparing for Retirement and Retirement Forms documents. We also highly recommend employees considering retirement contact BEST for full retirement counseling. In addition to providing retirement counseling, we'll discuss the forms needed for retirement.

We encourage employees to submit their retirement packages to BEST at least 90-120 days in advance of their retirement date. (Note -- the one exception is Air Reserve Technicians (ARTs) reaching High Year Tenure (HYT) or Mandatory Separation Date (MSD). These employees should submit their retirement packages after receipt of the notice proposing their separation if they wish to retire under discontinued service retirement provisions.)

**For full serviced CPOs:** If you have electronic capability, please forward this E-mail to all directorates and organizations at your base and ask that they forward it to all levels within their organizations. Employees wanting retirement counseling should contact a BEST Benefits Counselor at 1-800-997-2378, or commercial 527-2378 within the San Antonio TX area. Hearing impaired employees may reach a counselor by calling 1-800-382-0893, or commercial 565-2276 within San Antonio TX area. Benefit counselors are available Monday-Friday, 7:00 am CST to 6:00 pm CST.

**For limited serviced CPOs:** This E-mail is for your information only. If a limited serviced employee contacts BEST for retirement-related counseling, we refer the employee back to their servicing Civilian Personnel Flight counseling/processing procedures.

Chief, Special Operations Division  
AFPC/DPCM

Attachment:  
Public Affairs Retiree Article

**Release No. 071**

## **Retirement eligible civilian employees encouraged to prepare**

**By Master Sgt. Ron Tull**

*AFPC Public Affairs*

**AIR FORCE PERSONNEL CENTER** - There are 22,735 Air Force civilian employees eligible for retirement, and by 2008 the number will increase to 49,816. Officials say retirement eligible employees need to start thinking about their retirement now.

Potential retirees are 'highly encouraged' to contact the Benefits Entitlements Service Team, or "BEST," on the web or by phone for a calculation of projected retirement pay. Information on benefits and planning - both key to making good retirement choices - is also available, says Mrs. Maria Molly, team chief.

"We want folks to start thinking about retirement the day they come on board," says Mrs. Molly. "It's never too early." She advises employees planning to retire to contact BEST at least one year before retiring to receive counseling. Applications should be filed 90 to 120 days prior to the effective date of retirement.

One-on-one counseling is also available over the phone, says Mrs. Molly. "We have employee information at our fingertips and a BEST counselor can cover issues from healthcare insurance to options for withdrawing from their Thrift Savings Plan account," she says.

During the process, BEST sends out three update letters to keep the potential retiree informed. The first letter acknowledges receipt of the application and the next notifies the employee of their eligibility to retire. The third letter is notification that the retirement application has been sent to the servicing finance office.

"The final stop is the office of personnel management, where the retirement is finalized and retirement payments are started," Mrs. Molly says.

Civilian appropriated-fund employees serviced by BEST can obtain additional information at [www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/dpc/best/retiring.htm](http://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/dpc/best/retiring.htm).

Benefits counselors may be reached toll-free 1 (800) 997-2378, or 527-2378 within the San Antonio area. Hearing impaired can call TDD 1 (800) 382-0893 or commercial (210) 527-2276.

Overseas employees will first dial a toll-free AT&T direct access number for the country they are in. Benefits counselors are available weekdays from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. Central Time.

Employees located at the Pentagon, Air Logistics Centers, Air Intelligence Agency, and USAFE bases should contact local civilian personnel offices for retirement counseling and processing information.

*(AFPC is located at Randolph AFB, Texas.)*