



What's New

From the Benefits and Entitlements Service Team (BEST)

18 Sep 02

Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) Open Season Dates Change. Via TSP Bulletin 02-12, dated 2 May 02, the Thrift Board announced that TSP open season dates would change to 15 Oct through 31 Dec, and 15 Apr through 30 Jun. As a result, the next TSP open season begins on 15 Oct 02 and runs through 31 Dec 02. The effective date of a change in contribution depends on the date the employee makes a contribution election. For example, elections made between 15 Oct and 30 Nov will be effective 1 Dec 02; elections made between 1 – 14 Dec will be effective 15 Dec 02; elections made between 15 – 28 Dec will be effective 29 Dec 02; and elections made between 29 – 31 Dec 02 will be effective on 12 Jan 03.

During this open season, CSRS employees may elect to contribute up to 8 percent of their basic pay, and FERS employees may contribute up to 13 percent of basic pay. The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) annual limit on elective deferrals for 2002 is \$11,000, and is increasing to \$12,000 for 2003. FERS employees whose salary is \$91,665 or more in 2002 should be cautious about the timing of an increase during this open season – a contribution election effective on 1 Dec 02 might put those employees over the annual deferral limit which could result in not receiving the full amount of agency matching contributions for the entire year.

11 Sep 02

Updated Information – Long Term Care Insurance Open Season.

- LTC Partners found an error on the full underwriting application, Part B, Question 4, regarding "cancer within the past 2 years" that would make an applicant automatically ineligible for coverage if they answered yes. The question should have specified "excluding basal cell or squamous cell cancer of the skin" after "cancer within 2 years." The corrected version is on the LTC Partners' website. This is particularly important for qualified relatives of current employees and annuitants who filled out the full underwriting form and were disapproved. The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) has posted information regarding the correction on their website at <http://www.opm.gov/insure/lc/faq/changes.htm>. OPM considers this a "good" error, in that MORE people may now qualify for insurance. Remember, current employees (civilian and military) and their spouses use the abbreviated underwriting form during open season.
- LTC Partners will hold Program Educational Meetings at selected base installations through Nov 02. The schedule of meetings is available at www.ltcfeds.com and is updated as more meetings are finalized. For the bases who will not have live Program Educational meetings, Webinar is available on the LTC Partners' website at <http://clients.bn24.com/jh/lc/feds/index.html>. This is the PowerPoint slide presentation used

during the meetings. Also available is the Program Educational Video in streaming video as well as zipped files to download for later viewing at http://www.opm.gov/insure/ltc/open_season/video/index.htm.

5 Sep 02

Thrift Savings Plan Rates of Return Posted 5 September 2002. The monthly G, F, C, S, and I Fund returns represent the actual total rates of return used to allocate monthly earnings for August 2002 to participant accounts, after deduction for administrative costs, trading costs, and accrued investment management fees. Percentages in () are negative returns. For more information, go to the TSP Home page at www.tsp.gov and click on Rates of Returns.

	G Fund	F Fund	C Fund	S Fund	I Fund
August 2002	0.40%	1.58%	0.67%	0.58%	(0.26%)
<u>Last 12 Months</u> (9/1/2001 - 8/31/2002)	5.22%	8.12%	(17.98%)	(13.11%)	(15.13%)