

**A Message from the Deputy Director, Civilian Human Resources Agency (CHRA) –
The CHRA ABC-C is ready to help!!! – New!!!**

The first quarter of every new Fiscal Year is always the busiest time of the year for our CHRA Benefits team. Benefits Open Season and end of calendar year retirements ensure that we have a lot going on. We look forward to connecting with you soon to talk about Benefits Open Season. Today I'd like to focus on Army Civilian retirements.

During an average year 60,000-62,000 employees retire from the Federal government. Of that number, the Army Benefits Center - Civilian (ABC-C) processes approximately 10,000-11,000 of these retirements. Retirement is both an exciting and stressful time for the retiree. CHRA is committed to ensuring that our support to you is timely, accurate and transparent.

The retirement process is lengthy and involves many steps that are broken out between three different agencies. The ABC-C part of the process begins when we receive your retirement packet either as a hard copy or electronically. Electronic packets are submitted via the GRB Retirement Application Process (GRB RAP). To ensure your packet is reviewed and processed in a timely manner, our intake specialists review them for completeness upon receipt to ensure the packet is 'healthy' per OPM standards. Once this review has taken place, you will receive an automatically generated email notifying you of the packet status.

If your packet is determined to be 'unhealthy', a specialist will reach out to you via email, phone or through the GRB RAP to notify you of the missing or incomplete documents. It is worth checking your email spam folder, as well as to login to GRB RAP during this period to ensure that you are aware of our efforts to communicate with you.

It is important to remember that we cannot formally process your retirement packet until 60 days before your selected date of retirement. Upon reaching 60 days from your retirement date, your packet will be reviewed again and assigned to a retirement counselor. Once you are assigned a retirement counselor, you will receive a second auto-generated email notifying you the packet has been assigned for processing. When your packet has been completed, your assigned specialist will reach out via email or phone to provide your final retirement counseling. At that time, they will review your final estimate and address any questions you may have. Once complete, your case is closed for the ABC-C and you will receive your final auto-generated email from us.

Once ABC-C has completed its piece of the retirement process, your packet is forwarded to DFAS, where your complete civilian pay history is processed and your final agency paycheck and lump sum annual leave payment is processed and sent. Once complete, DFAS merges your pay history with the ABC-C packet and forwards the merged packet to OPM.

Upon arrival at OPM, an intake specialist reviews and assigns your packet to a legal specialist. Once the review has taken place, a Civil Service Annuitant, or CSA, number is assigned to you. The CSA will arrive via postal mail to the address listed on your retirement application. Once the CSA has been mailed, you are placed into an interim pay status. The timeline for this process to be completed by OPM is determined by the workload volume at OPM. Once your packet is fully adjudicated, OPM will place you into full annuity pay status and you are considered 'officially' retired. OPM then becomes your benefits and finance center.

We acknowledge that the retirement process may seem complex and that there are many parts of the process that are beyond the control of the retiree or CHRA. However, there are a few things you can do to ensure your part of the process is as smooth and seamless as possible. We recommend you consider:

1. Attending a Healthy Retirement Packet briefing
2. Using the retirement checklists, the GRB RAP and Healthy Retirement
3. Packet Employee Guides that are all available online.
4. Review your eOPF regularly especially once you have established a retirement date.

We have increased the frequency of our Healthy Retirement Packet live events for FY 2023 to help educate our customers on the more common retirement packet errors we tend to see. Our benefits specialists continue to work diligently to ensure your packets are processed timely and accurately.

We highly recommend the use of the GRB Platform Resource Library at <https://platform.chra.army.mil> for answers to many of your questions. This resource has a vast array of external web links, videos, written articles, as well as downloadable and fillable form copies.

As we usher in the beginning of our busiest season, please do not hesitate to contact us in one of the many ways possible by visiting the "Contact Us" tab at <https://abc.chra.army.mil> should you have any questions or concerns.

As always CHRA and the ABC-C team look forward to serving you!