



Retirement , Part II

Last month, I started a series of articles concerning the retirement options for our members. This month, we will start looking at the Federal Employees Retirement System. FERS covers most employees hired after January 1, 1984. Exceptions are for those previously employed under certain conditions and CSRS employees who switched during an allowable period.

There are four categories of benefits in the Federal Employees Retirement System basic benefit plan: immediate, early, deferred and disability.

Eligibility under FERS is determined by your age and number of years of creditable service. In some cases, employee must have reached the Minimum Retirement Age to receive retirement benefits. Use the following chart to figure your MRA.

If you were born	Your MRA is
In 1948	55 and 2 months
In 1949	55 and 4 months
In 1950	55 and 6 months
In 1951	55 and 8 months
In 1952	55 and 10 months
In 1953-1964	56
In 1965	56 and 2 months
In 1966	56 and 4 months
In 1967	56 and 6 months
In 1968	56 and 8 months
In 1969	56 and 10 months
After 1970	57

Immediate Retirement—An immediate retirement benefit is one that starts within 30 days from the date you stop working. If you meet one of the following sets of age and service requirements, you are entitled to an immediate retirement benefit:

Age	Years of Service
62	5
60	20
MRA	30
MRA*	10

Early Retirement—The early retirement benefit is available in certain involuntary separation cases and in cases of voluntary separations during a major reorganization or reduction in force. (This is the category that the recently offered VERA retirements falls in.)

To be eligible, employees must meet the following requirements:

Age	Years of Service
50	20
Any Age	25

Deferred Retirement—Refers to delayed payment of benefit until criteria is met, as follows:

If you leave federal service before you meet the age and service requirements for an immediate retirement benefit, you may be eligible for deferred retirement benefits. To be eligible, you must have completed at least five years of creditable civilian service. You may receive benefits when you reach one of the following ages:

Age	Years of Service
62	5
MRA	30
MRA*	10

Disability Retirement—You must have become disabled while employed in a position subject to FERS, because of a disease or injury, for useful and efficient service in your current position. The disability must be expected to last at least one year. Your agency must certify that it is unable to accommodate your disabling medical condition in your present position and that it has considered you for any vacant position in the same agency at the same grade/pay level, within the same commuting area, for which you are qualified for reassignment.

Under FERS disability, a retiree will also be required to apply for Social Security disability. Their disability annuity for their first year of disability will be 60 percent of their high-3 year earnings, less 100 percent of any Social Security receipts. From the second year until they reach the age of 62, their disability annuity will be 40 percent of their high-3, less 60 percent of any Social Security receipts.

At age 62, a FERS disability retiree will have their annuity recalculated as if they had worked continuously up to that age and they will receive their “earned annuity,” which is based upon 1 percent of their high-3 for each year of service credit. There will be no offset for any Social Security receipts after age 62.

FERS disability annuity requirements are:

Age	Years of federal civilian service
Any age	18 months <input type="checkbox"/>

*If you retire at the MRA with at least 10 but fewer than 30 years of service, your benefit will be reduced by 5 percent a year for each year you are under 62, unless you have 20 years of service and your benefit starts when you reach age 60 or later.