

# Marine Corps Nonappropriated Fund Pre-Retirement Planning Guide



For Active Marine Corps  
Nonappropriated Fund  
Civilians

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## **CONGRATULATIONS!**

By accepting a regular status (regular full time or regular part time) position with Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps (MR & MF), Marine Corps Community Services (MCCS) or another Miscellaneous Marine Corps Nonappropriated Fund (NAF) activity, you have made the first important step toward ensuring a more financially sound retirement. The second step (and really most important step), is to be sure you join both the Group Retirement Plan and the Group 401(k) Plan as soon as you are eligible. There is no waiting period to enroll in the Retirement or 401(k) plans if you are a regular status employee. You know what “they” say: The sooner you start participating the better off you’ll be.

One very important thing to remember – none of the income replacement plans – Social Security, Group Retirement, or 401(k) – individually will provide you the financial stability at retirement that all three together will. A great analogy is the three legged stool – without one of the legs the stool could fall over. Think of each plan as a leg of your retirement stool – and together all three hold up the stool perfectly.

In addition to Retirement and 401(k), this guide will provide valuable information you will need to know about group medical, dental and life insurance plans at the time of retirement.

You may be much too young or enjoy your job too much to think about retiring anytime soon, but there are important things you need to know now – years before you even contemplate retirement. Don’t hesitate to find out exactly what you need to know now to avoid unpleasant surprises later.

This guide has been developed to provide a handy, easy to understand booklet to help you make decisions today that will help you at the time of your retirement. Please be aware, that while every attempt has been made to provide the most accurate and up to date information, if there is any question, confusion, or dispute- the official plan documents and/or policies will prevail.

The information in this guide is provided to augment the information included in the Retiree Handbook that is provided to all retirees at the time of retirement. The Retiree Handbook can be found on the MCCS website at: [http://www.usmc-mccs.org/display\\_files/2012%20Retiree%20Handbook.pdf](http://www.usmc-mccs.org/display_files/2012%20Retiree%20Handbook.pdf)

The Employee Benefits Handbook is another great resource for more information on retirement options. The handbook can be found at the Benefits website at: [http://www.usmc-mccs.org/display\\_files/2012%20Employee%20Benefits%20Handbook.pdf](http://www.usmc-mccs.org/display_files/2012%20Employee%20Benefits%20Handbook.pdf)

## **GROUP RETIREMENT PLAN**

The MC NAF Group Retirement Plan is known as a “defined benefit plan” and provides a specific annuity that is based on your credited contributory time\* in the plan and your high three earnings.

In order to receive a retirement benefit, you must satisfy one of the eligibility criteria as follows:

Benefit	Age Criteria	Years of Credited Service *	Benefit Reduction
Reduced Early Retirement	at least age 52, less than age 62	5 years or more	4% for each year not yet age 62
Regular Retirement	at least age 62	5 years or more	No reduction
Unreduced Early Ret	At least age 55 - 59	30 years or more	No reduction
Unreduced Early Ret	at least age 60 - 61	20 years or more	No reduction

*\*purchased military service credited time counts toward credited service, but doesn't count towards vesting requirement.*

The Group Retirement plan has a 5 year “vesting” (contributory participation) requirement for entitlement to a benefit (once you meet the age criteria).

If you joined the Retirement Plan prior to January 1, 2001, and if you are at least age 62 or older, you will need to supply a copy of your corresponding Social Security entitlement letter (up to age 65) to your HR office to send to Headquarters with your retirement application.

- This is a plan requirement to calculate the social security offset portion of your retirement annuity benefit.
- This is not a requirement if you enrolled on or after January 1, 2001.
- Retirement Plan enrollments after January 1, 2001 are subject to FERS- like formula only

The earlier you enroll in the MC NAF Group Retirement Plan, the earlier your credited service starts accruing

### **Additional Retirement Options**

#### **Survivor Benefit**

If you are married, you will be required to elect a surviving spouse\* benefit (unless your spouse\* provides written waiver of his/her entitlement). Your annuity will be reduced by 10% to actuarially fund your survivor's benefit.

- Your surviving spouse\* will receive 55% of your annuity in force at the time of your death.
- Should your spouse\* pre-decease you after your retirement, contact MRG and your benefit will be adjusted to eliminate the 10% reduction from your annuity.
- Your surviving spouse\* election is irrevocable – even if you divorce. If you divorce (to include dissolution of SSDP relationship) you MAY be eligible to name a new spouse\*, should your original spouse\* waive their future entitlement, through a legal court order. You cannot change your benefit to a non- surviving spouse\* benefit once benefits have commenced.

If you are not married, you can still elect a survivor annuity. You can elect anyone that you choose and your benefit will be actuarially reduced to fund this survivor election. Your survivor will receive 55% of your actuarially reduced annuity amount in force at the time of your death.

*\*Because Group Retirement Plan is an IRS qualified plan; the legal rule on definition of spouse does not recognize Same Sex Domestic Partners (SSDP); therefore SSDPs are not eligible for or entitled to spousal benefits.*

### Deferred Annuity

If for some reason you terminate before you attain an eligible retirement age (as shown in the box above) and you have met your 5 year vesting requirement – you can leave your money in your retirement account in a “deferred” annuity status. Then, when you become at least age 52 (or at any time after age 52), you can begin drawing an annuity.

### **Retirement Benefit Estimates**

A retirement calculator is available for MCCS employees via <http://www.usmc-mccs.org/pencalc/pencalc.aspx>, or through PeopleSoft (Main Menu>Self Service>Benefits>Benefits Information>MCCS NAF Pension Estimates)

You can also request an estimate of your retirement benefit at anytime from your local NAF HR office.

### **HOW YOUR RETIREMENT BENEFIT WILL BE PAID:**

Your monthly retirement annuity will be paid monthly on or about the first of every month following your date of termination of employment. Depending on your date of termination, your first retirement check may be paid the second month following your date of termination – but will be paid retroactive to your effective date. (Your initial annuity payment situation will depend on the date of your termination and how that falls into the payroll cycle – contact your local NAF Human Resources Office if you have questions on how your proposed termination date will impact the receipt of your first retirement check).

The most efficient and safest way to receive your retirement annuity is by direct deposit to your bank account. Direct deposit eliminates the risk of delayed or lost mail. Direct deposits are generally received no later than the 1st of every month you are entitled to a benefit. Effective May 2012, direct deposit is mandatory except where not available (i.e. overseas banks).

Receipt of your retirement annuity via check is strongly discouraged. Checks can be delayed in the postal system or even misdirected. A lost or misdirected check will result in a delay in receiving your payment if a stop payment and check re-issuance is required.

### **Taxes due on your retirement**

You may be responsible for taxes on a portion of your monthly retirement annuity. You can elect to have taxes withheld each month. Changes in your tax election from your retirement benefit can be made by contacting MRG for the correct form and instructions. Questions pertaining to your tax obligation should be directed to your tax advisor.

### **If you should die before you retire**

Your surviving spouse\* may be entitled to a “pre-retirement” surviving spouse\* benefit, which may pay a monthly retirement benefit after your death, provided your surviving spouse\* is your designated beneficiary. Contact your local Human Resources Office for more information.

### **At the time of death after retirement**

Should you or your surviving spouse\* die, the Employee Benefits Branch of Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps (MRG) must be notified immediately so appropriate changes can be made promptly to your retirement account. If you elected a survivor option, your survivor’s benefit will become effective the first of the month following the date of your death. If MRG is not notified promptly it can cause a retirement overpayment situation that must be repaid by your survivor(s).

If you elect a surviving spouse\* benefit at the time of retirement, and your spouse\* pre-deceases you, your benefit will revert to the amount of your entitlement before the surviving spouse\* reduction was imposed the first of the month following the date of your spouse's\* death. Failure to notify MRG promptly could result in an unnecessary continuation of this survivor reduction.

*\*Because Group Retirement Plan is an IRS qualified plan; the legal rule on definition of spouse does not recognize Same Sex Domestic Partners (SSDP); therefore SSDPs are not eligible for or entitled to spousal benefits.*

## **401(K) PLANS**

The Group 401(k) Plan is known as a “defined contribution plan”. In a defined contribution plan, your retirement benefit depends on your bi-weekly payroll contributions to the plan, your employer match to your account (based on your contribution percentage), and your investment income.

So the earlier you start contributing, and the more you contribute, the better off you will be. It is a good idea to invest as much as you can and always invest at least enough to take advantage of the full employer match.

A VERY important feature to remember is that if you are enrolled in both the Group Retirement AND Group 401(k) Plan – the employer match is increased by an additional 1%\*. So you could benefit from a total 5% employer match if you contribute 5% each pay period from your pay check and are a participant in the Group Retirement Plan.

Payroll Deferral Amount	Employer Match	1% *Bonus Match if also in the Retirement Plan	Total Employer Contribution
1%	1%	1%	2%
2%	2%	1%	3%
3%	3%	1%	4%
4%	3.5%	1%	4.5%
5%	4%	1%	5%

The Marine Corps NAF 401(k) Plan has a very generous vesting benefit of only one year. You always are vested in the contributions you contribute plus your investment earnings. Once you have participated in the 401(k) Plan for one year – you are also vested in the employer match that was deposited into your account. If for some reason you terminate before you participate in the Plan for one year, your employer match will be forfeited to the plan (but reinstated to your account if you return to work within 5 years).

Information on distribution options at the time of retirement can be found in the 401(k) Handbook available online at: <http://www.usmc-mccs.org/employ/benefits/401k/index.cfm?sid=emp&smid=3&ssmid=8>

Much more valuable information pertaining to the 401(k) Plan can also be found in the 401(k) Handbook or from your local NAF Human Resources Office.

Visit [www.401k.com](http://www.401k.com) for more information.

*\*Because Group 401(k) Plan is an IRS qualified plan; the legal rule on definition of spouse does not recognize Same Sex Domestic Partners (SSDP); therefore SSDPs are not eligible for or entitled to spousal benefits.*

## **RETIREMENT PORTABILITY**

Employees who moved from an Appropriated Fund (APF) position to a NAF position without a break in service of more than one year and elected to retain Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) or Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) coverage are subject to the following retirement eligibility provisions:

### **CSRS**

Benefit	Age Criteria	Years of Credited Service	Benefit Reduction
Regular Retirement	At least age 62	5 Years or more	No reduction
Unreduced Early Ret	At least age 55-59	30 Years or more	No reduction
Unreduced Early Ret	At least age 60-61	20 Years or more	No reduction

### **FERS**

Benefit	Age Criteria	Years of Credited Service	Benefit Reduction
Reduced Early Ret	Min Ret Age (MRA)	10 Years or more	5% for each year to age 62
Regular Retirement	At least age 62	5 Years or more	No reduction
Unreduced Early Ret*	MRA	30 Years or more	No reduction
Unreduced Early Ret*	At least age 60-61	Years or more	No reduction

*\*Eligible for FERS early retirement, then stops at age 62*

Contact your NAF personnel office for additional information and CSRS or FERS estimates.

### **Thrift Savings Plan**

CSRS and FERS-covered employees may find the TSP Summary on line at [www.tsp.gov](http://www.tsp.gov) or <https://www.tsp.gov/PDF/formspubs/tspb30.pdf>

## **MEDICAL/DENTAL CONTINUATION OF INSURANCE AT THE TIME OF RETIREMENT**

Continuation of your group health insurance into retirement is a very rich benefit- not offered by many employers outside of the Federal Government.

In order to continue insurance into retirement there are eligibility criteria that must be met – for all plans: medical, dental and life insurance.

- You must be enrolled at least 15 years in the Plan(s) that you wish to continue.
- You must be enrolled at the time of your retirement.
- Participation in other NAF Service plans applies to your participation requirement (i.e. if you previously worked for Navy MWR or NEXCOM and participated in the NAF health plans with them). Enrollment evidence will be required.
- Continuous participation in FEHBP (if previously an APF employee) is also recognized to satisfy the enrollment criteria provided break in service is not greater than 3 days.
- If you were involuntarily converted from APF to NAF your enrollment criteria is 5 years, provided break in service is not greater than 3 days.
- Only family members that are enrolled at the time of your retirement are eligible to continue.

If you qualify for continuation of your medical/dental insurance your employer will fund 70% of your premium and you will be responsible for 30% of your premium (subject to change).

You **cannot continue dental unless you are continuing medical coverage**. However, you can continue medical without dental. **Stand Alone Dental cannot be continued into retirement.**

### **Continued coverage at age 65**

If you are enrolled in a PPO (and are not yet age 65) when you retire, you will continue in the PPO (or HMO if applicable) plan after retirement.

If you are at least age 65 your coverage will change (from either PPO or HMO) to the Traditional Choice indemnity plan – Medicare will become your primary coverage and the NAF plan will be your secondary coverage. Enrollment in Medicare Part A and Part B is required. You are NOT required to enroll in the Medicare prescription plan (Part D) because the NAF plan has been determined to be “at least as good as” the Medicare plans.

If you (or your spouse) are at least age 65 and your spouse\* is not yet age 65, the spouse\* (or you, whichever is applicable) can remain in the PPO plan, while your (or their) coverage is in the Traditional Choice Plan. HMO participation cannot continue after age 65 when you are retired.

If you qualify for continued Group Medical and Dental Insurance and elect to continue this benefit into retirement, your premium will be deducted from your monthly annuity, provided your annuity is sufficient to cover the cost of the coverage. If your annuity is not sufficient to cover the cost of this benefit, you will be sent a monthly premium statement with payment instructions.

### **GROUP LIFE INSURANCE**

In order to continue Group Life Insurance into retirement there are eligibility criteria that must be met. These criteria apply to all Group Life plans (Standard, Optional (all layers), and Dependent Life (all layers)).

- You must be enrolled at least 15 years in the Plan(s) that you wish to continue
- Participation in FEGLI (if previously an APF employee) is also recognized to satisfy enrollment criteria
- You must be enrolled at the time of your retirement
- Only family members that are enrolled at the time of your retirement are eligible to continue Optional Dependent Life

If you qualify for continued Group Life Insurance and elect to continue this benefit into retirement, your premium will be deducted from your monthly annuity, provided your annuity is sufficient to cover the cost of the coverage. If your annuity is not sufficient to cover the cost of this benefit, you will be sent a monthly premium statement with payment instructions.

### **Group Standard Life Continuation Rate Structure**

Retirement Benefit*	Employee Share of Life Premium	Employer Share of Life Premium
Reduced Early Retirement	100%	0%
Regular Retirement	50%	50%
Unreduced Early Ret	50%	50%

*\*Effective January 1, 2012 the definition of eligible family member was extended to Same Sex Domestic Partners (SSDP) for medical, dental, life, and long term care plans.*

Optional Life Plans (all layers) and Optional Dependent Life Plans (all layers) are funded solely by the retiree.

Enrollment and continuation of Standard Life is a pre-requisite to continuation of any of the Optional and/or Optional Dependent Life plans.

The life insurances offered are “term life”. They do not accrue a cash value.

At the time of your death, or the death of a dependent covered by the Optional Dependent Life Insurance Plan(s), the Employee Benefits Branch at Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps (MRG) should be notified. All claims for retiree group life benefits will be administered by MRG.

This is only a summary of your Group Life Benefits. Please refer to the Group Life Handbook for more detailed information. The Group Life Handbook can be found at:

[http://www.usmc-mccs.org/employ/benefits/li/life\\_rates\\_handbook.cfm?](http://www.usmc-mccs.org/employ/benefits/li/life_rates_handbook.cfm?)

### **FLEXIBLE SPENDING ACCOUNT (FSA) HEALTH AND DEPENDENT CARE**

Participation in the FSA plans cease at the time of retirement. These plans do not continue into retirement.

### **LONG TERM CARE INSURANCE**

Your Long Term Care (LTC) insurance can be continued into retirement – at the same rate you paid as an active employee. The only difference is that you will be billed directly by the Insurance Company that underwrites the LTC policy.

This premium will not be billed bi-weekly the way you pay as an active employee. The premium will be due quarterly and will be paid directly to the insurance company.

### **ACRONYMS**

APF: Appropriated Funds

CSRS: Civil Service Retirement Systems

FEGLI: Federal Employees’ Group Life Insurance

FEHBP: Federal Employees’ Health Benefits Program

FERS: Federal Employees’ Retirement System

HMO: Health Maintenance Organization

LTC: Long Term Care

MCCS: Marine Corps Community Services

MWR: Morale, Welfare and Recreation

NAF: Nonappropriated Funds

NEXCOM: Navy Exchange Command

PPO: Preferred Provider Organization

SSDP: Same Sex Domestic Partner

**PRE-RETIREMENT CHECKLIST**

Benefit	Enrolled	Meet Criteria
Retirement		
401(k)		
Group Medical (and Dental) Insurance		
Group Life Insurance		
Long Term Care		

Other important questions to think about at the time of retirement (and before):

- Is your beneficiary information up to date for your Retirement, 401(k), Group Life Plans?
- Is your address on file at your local HR office correct?
- Are you eligible for Social Security and/or Medicare? Did you apply?

If you are at least age 62 and enrolled in the retirement plan prior to January 1, 2001, you will need to provide your Social Security entitlement letter to your HR office for your retirement application.

If you have any questions, please contact your local NAF HR office.

Stay familiar with your benefits by regularly visiting the MCCS Benefits webpage at [www.usmc-mccs.org/employ/benefits](http://www.usmc-mccs.org/employ/benefits).

This site has valuable information about your benefits and upcoming changes or additions. You can print Aetna forms (medical and dental claim forms, mail in pharmacy forms). There are also electronic copies of various Summary Plan Descriptions.



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