
The U.S. Railroad Retirement Board recognizes that all its services are financed by our customers: the nation's railroad workers and employers. They are entitled to expect high-quality service, responsive to their needs, provided efficiently at a reasonable cost. This has been recognized in the agency mission statement:

In carrying out its mission, the RRB will pay benefits to the right people, in the right amounts, in a timely manner, and safeguard our customers' trust funds. The RRB will treat every person who comes into contact with the agency with courtesy and concern, and respond to all inquiries promptly, accurately and clearly.

The *Customer Service Plan* is centered on the following principles of public service: standards; openness; accessibility; and accountability. In arriving at this plan, we have considered the findings of a customer satisfaction survey, the results of focus group research, and the responses received on point-of-service evaluation forms. This *Customer Service Plan* is published nationally and posted in each office of the RRB in order to communicate these standards to our customers and to reinforce them with our employees. There is a clear presumption that our service will progressively improve as our operations become more efficient. The plan will be reviewed and updated periodically as we gain more experience with it and as we compare our service with the best in the private sector.

Nondiscrimination on the basis of disability

Under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and Railroad Retirement Board regulations, no qualified person may be discriminated against on the basis of disability. The Board's programs and activities must be accessible to all qualified applicants and beneficiaries, including those who are vision or hearing-impaired. Disabled persons needing assistance (including auxiliary aids or program information in accessible formats) should contact the nearest Board office. Complaints of alleged discrimination by the Board on the basis of disability must be filed within 90 days in writing with the Director of Administration, Railroad Retirement Board, 844 North Rush Street, Chicago, Illinois 60611-2092. Questions about individual rights under this regulation may be directed to the Board's Director of Equal Opportunity at the above address.



Printed on recycled paper/with soy ink

U.S. Railroad Retirement Board
844 North Rush Street
Chicago, IL 60611-2092

Form IB-3
June 1998

U.S. Railroad Retirement Board

Customer Service Plan



Standards

- We will be courteous and treat you with respect every time you contact us.
- The information you provide us is protected under the provisions of the Privacy Act.
- When you inquire with us by letter, you will receive a reply within 15 days of the date we receive your inquiry. If for any reason we cannot reply within that time frame, we will acknowledge your letter and tell you how long it will be before we can answer your questions fully.
- If you filed for a railroad retirement employee or spouse annuity in advance, you will receive your first payment, or a decision, within 35 days of the beginning date of your annuity. If you have not filed in advance, you will receive your first payment, or a decision, within 65 days of the date you filed your application.
- If you filed for a railroad retirement survivor annuity or lump-sum benefit, you will receive your first payment, or a decision, within 65 days of the date you filed your application, or become entitled to benefits, if later. If you are already receiving a spouse annuity, you will receive your first payment, or a decision, within 35 days of the date we receive notice of the employee's death.
- If you filed an application for unemployment or sickness insurance benefits, you will receive a claim form, or a decision, within 15 days of the date you filed your application.

- If you filed a claim for unemployment or sickness insurance benefits, you will receive your payment, or a decision, within 15 days of the date we receive your claim form.

- If you filed for a railroad retirement disability annuity, you will receive a decision within 105 days of the date you filed your application. If you are entitled to disability benefits, you will receive your first payment within 25 days of the date of our decision, or earliest payment date, whichever is later.

- If you think we made the wrong decision about your benefits, you have the right to ask for review and to appeal. We will tell you about these rights each time we make an unfavorable decision about your benefits.

- Claims for some benefits may take longer to handle than others if they are more complex, or if we have to get information from other people or organizations. If this happens, we will give you an explanation and an estimate of the time required to make a decision.

Openness

- We will display in each office how well we are meeting the established standards.

- When you visit our offices, the staff you see will identify themselves by name.

- When you telephone us, we will identify ourselves by name.

- Our letters will be easy to understand, and, unless the letter is a computer notice, the person writing to you will give you his or her name.

Accessibility

- When you telephone us, you will reach us on the first try.

- When visiting us, you will be helped within 5 minutes of your scheduled appointment.

- You will not have to wait more than 30 minutes if you do not have an appointment.

- If you cannot come to our office, we may be able to visit you at home or at one of our regularly scheduled service locations.

Accountability

- If things go wrong, at the very least you are entitled to a good explanation and an apology.

- A Customer Assessment Survey form is available in every office for you to tell us how we did and how we can improve our service.

- If you are not satisfied with our service, you may contact the manager of the office with which you have been dealing, or the Regional Director who is responsible for that office. Their names and addresses are available in each office.

For more information on the RRB and its programs, visit the agency's web site at www.rrb.gov. A toll-free automated Help Line is also available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week at 1-800-808-0772. Railroad employees can use the Help Line to obtain information on unemployment-sickness benefits or statements of creditable service and compensation, and railroad retirement beneficiaries can use it to verify their current monthly benefit rate or secure a replacement Medicare card. Information on the locations of the RRB's field offices is also available on the Help Line.