

**OFFICE OF PERSONNEL
MANAGEMENT****Submission for OMB Review;
Comment Request for Reclearance of
a Revised Information Collection:
Scholarship for Service Program
Internet Webpage**

AGENCY: Office of Personnel
Management.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (Pub. L. 104-13, May 22, 1995), this notice announces that the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) submitted a request to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for reclearance of a revised information collection for the Scholarship For Service (SFS) Program Internet Webpage. Approval of the Webpage is necessary to facilitate the timely registration, selection and placement of program-enrolled students in Federal agencies.

The SFS Program was established by the National Science Foundation in accordance with the Federal Cyber Service Training and Education Initiative as described in the President's National Plan for Information Systems Protection, an outcome of Presidential Decision Directive 63. This program seeks to increase the number of qualified students entering the fields of information assurance and computer security in an effort to respond to the threat to the Federal Government's information technology infrastructure. The program provides capacity building grants to selected 4-year colleges and universities to develop or improve their capacity to train information assurance professionals. It also provides selected 4-year colleges and universities scholarship grants to attract students to the information assurance field. Participating students who receive scholarships from this program are required to serve a 10-week internship during their studies and complete a post-graduation employment commitment equivalent to the length of the scholarship or one year, whichever is longer.

We estimate 200 respondents annually. The application process takes approximately 60 minutes for a total annual burden of 200 hours.

For copies of this proposal, contact Mary Beth Smith-Toomey at (202) 606-8358, FAX (202) 418-3251 or e-mail to mbtoomey@opm.gov. Please include your mailing address with your request.

DATES: Comments on this proposal should be received within thirty (30)

calendar days from the date of this publication.

ADDRESSES: Send or deliver comments to:

U.S. Office of Personnel Management,
ATTN: Miguel Hernandez, 8610
Broadway, Suite 305, San Antonio,
TX 78217.

and

Allyson Eydt, OPM Desk Officer, Office
of Information and Regulatory Affairs,
Office of Management and Budget,
New Executive Office Building, Room
10235, Washington, DC 20503.

Office of Personnel Management.

Kay Coles James,

Director.

[FR Doc. 03-24080 Filed 9-23-03; 8:45 am]

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**OFFICE OF PERSONNEL
MANAGEMENT****Proposed Collection; Comment
Request for Review of a Revised
Information Collection: SF 3112**

AGENCY: Office of Personnel
Management.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (Pub. L. 104-13, May 22, 1995), this notice announces that the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) intends to submit to the Office of Management and Budget a request for review of a revised information collection. Standard Form 3112, CSRS/FERS Documentation in Support of Disability Retirement Application, collects information from applicants for disability retirement so that OPM can determine whether to approve a disability retirement. The applicant only completes Standard Forms 3112A and 3112C. Standard Forms 3112B, 3112D, and 3112E, are completed by the immediate supervisor and the applicant's employing agency.

Comments are particularly invited on: Whether this collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of functions of the Office of Personnel Management, and whether it will have practical utility; whether our estimate of the public burden of this collection of information is accurate, and based on valid assumptions and methodology; and ways in which we can minimize the burden of the collection of information on those who are to respond, through the use of appropriate technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

Approximately 12,100 applicants for disability retirement complete Standard

Forms 3112A and 3112C annually. This is a combined figure including 9,000 CSRS and 3,100 FERS applications. The SF 3112C requires approximately 60 minutes to complete. A burden of 12,100 hours is estimated for SF 3112C. SF 3112A is used each year by approximately 1,350 persons who are not Federal employees. This is a combined figure including 1,000 CSRS and 350 FERS applications. SF 3112A requires approximately 30 minutes to complete and a burden of 675 hours is estimated for SF 3112A. The total annual burden for SF 3112 is 12,775 hours.

For copies of this proposal, contact Mary Beth Smith-Toomey on (202) 606-8358, Fax (202) 418-3251 or via e-mail to mbtoomey@opm.gov. Please include a mailing address with your request.

DATES: Comments on this proposal should be received within 60 calendar days from the date of this publication.

ADDRESSES: Send or deliver comments to—Ronald W. Melton, Chief, Operation Support Group, Center for Retirement and Insurance Services, U.S. Office of Personnel Management, 1900 E Street, NW, Room 3349A, Washington, DC 20415-3540.

FOR INFORMATION REGARDING**ADMINISTRATIVE COORDINATION CONTACT:**

Cyrus S. Benson, Team Leader,
Publications Team, Support Group,
(202) 606-0623.

Office of Personnel Management.

Kay Coles James,

Director.

[FR Doc. 03-24081 Filed 9-23-03; 8:45 am]

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**OFFICE OF PERSONNEL
MANAGEMENT****Federal Employees' Retirement
System; Normal Cost Percentages**

AGENCY: Office of Personnel
Management.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) is providing notice of revised normal cost percentages for employees covered by the Federal Employees' Retirement System (FERS) Act of 1986.

DATES: The revised normal cost percentages are effective at the beginning of the first pay period commencing on or after October 1, 2004.

Agency appeals of the normal cost percentages must be filed no later than March 24, 2004.

ADDRESSES: Send or deliver agency appeals of the normal cost percentages

to the Board of Actuaries, care of Nancy H. Kichak, Deputy Associate Director, Center for Workforce Planning and Policy Analysis, Office of Personnel Management, Room 4307, 1900 E Street NW., Washington, DC 20415.

Send requests for actuarial assumptions and data to the Actuaries Group, Office of Personnel Management, Room 4307, 1900 E Street NW., Washington, DC 20415.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Patrick Jennings, (202) 606-0299.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The FERS Act of 1986, Pub. L. 99-335, created a new retirement system intended to cover most Federal employees hired after 1983. Most Federal employees hired before 1984 are under the older Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS). Section 8423 of title 5, United States Code, as added by the FERS Act of 1986, provides for the payment of the Government's share of the cost of the retirement system under FERS. Employees' contributions are established by law and constitute only a small fraction of the cost of funding the retirement system; employing agencies are required to pay the remaining costs. The amount of funding required, known as "normal cost," is the entry age normal cost of the provisions of FERS that relate to the Civil Service Retirement and Disability Fund (Fund). The normal cost must be computed by OPM in accordance with generally accepted actuarial practices and standards (using dynamic assumptions). Subpart D of part 841 of title 5, Code of Federal Regulations, regulates how normal costs are determined.

Recently, the Board of Actuaries of the Civil Service Retirement System approved a revised set of economic assumptions for use in the dynamic actuarial valuations of FERS. These assumptions were adopted after the Board reviewed statistical data prepared by the OPM actuaries and considered trends that may affect future experience under the System.

Based on its analysis, the Board concluded that it would be appropriate to assume a rate of investment return of 6.25 percent, a reduction of .50 percent from the current rate of 6.75 percent. The Board reduced the anticipated inflation rate from 3.75 percent to 3.25 percent, and reduced the projected rate of General Schedule salary increases from 4.25 percent to 4.00 percent. These salary increases are in addition to assumed in-grade increases that reflect past experience.

The new assumptions anticipate that over the long term the annual rate of investment return will exceed inflation

by 3 percent and General Schedule salary increases will exceed inflation by .75 percent a year, as compared to 3 percent and .50 percent, respectively, under the previous assumptions. In addition, due to a considerable decline in the rate of early retirements, the Board reduced its demographic assumption of the anticipated rate of early retirements.

The normal cost calculations depend on both the economic and demographic assumptions. The demographic assumptions are determined separately for each of a number of special groups, in cases where separate experience data is available. Based on the new economic assumptions and the change in the demographic assumption concerning the rate of early retirements, OPM has determined the normal cost percentage for each category of employees under § 841.403 of Title 5, Code of Federal Regulations. The Governmentwide normal cost percentages, including the employee contributions, are as follows:

| | Percent |
|--|---------|
| Members | 17.7 |
| Congressional employees | 17.9 |
| Law enforcement officers, members of the Supreme Court Police, firefighters, nuclear materials couriers and employees under section 302 of the Central Intelligence Agency Act of 1964 for Certain Employees | 25.1 |
| Air traffic controllers | 24.4 |
| Military reserve technicians | 14.7 |
| Employees under section 303 of the Central Intelligence Agency Act of 1964 for Certain Employees (when serving abroad) | 17.2 |
| All other employees | 12.0 |

Under §841.408 of title 5, Code of Federal Regulations, these normal cost percentages are effective at the beginning of the first pay period commencing on or after October 1, 2004.

The time limit and address for filing agency appeals under § 841.409 through 841.412 of title 5, Code of Federal Regulations, are stated in the **DATES** and **ADDRESSES** sections of this notice.

Office of Personnel Management.

Kay Coles James,

Director.

[FR Doc. 03-24048 Filed 9-23-03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6325-50-P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Surface Transportation Board

[STB Docket No. AB-290 (Sub-No. 222X)]

Norfolk Southern Railway Company—Abandonment Exemption—in Mercer County, WV, and Tazewell County, VA

Norfolk Southern Railway Company (NSR) has filed a notice of exemption under 49 CFR 1152 Subpart F—*Exempt Abandonments* to abandon a 1.9-mile line of railroad between milepost PO-0.0 at Bluestone, Mercer County, WV, and milepost PO-1.90 at Pocahontas, Tazewell County, VA.¹ The line traverses United States Postal Service Zip Codes 24740 and 24635.

NSR has certified that: (1) No local traffic has moved over the line for at least 2 years; (2) any overhead traffic can be rerouted over other lines; (3) no formal complaint filed by a user of rail service on the line (or by a state or local government entity acting on behalf of such user) regarding cessation of service over the line either is pending with the Surface Transportation Board (Board) or with any U.S. District Court or has been decided in favor of complainant within the 2-year period; and (4) the requirements at 49 CFR 1105.7 (environmental reports), 49 CFR 1105.8 (historic reports), 49 CFR 1105.11 (transmittal letter), 49 CFR 1105.12 (newspaper publication), and 49 CFR 1152.50(d)(1) (notice to governmental agencies) have been met.

As a condition to this exemption, any employee adversely affected by the abandonment shall be protected under *Oregon Short Line R. Co.—Abandonment—Goshen*, 360 I.C.C. 91 (1979). To address whether this condition adequately protects affected employees, a petition for partial revocation under U.S.C. 10502(d) must be filed. Provided no formal expression of intent to file an offer of financial assistance (OFA) has been received, this exemption will be effective on October 24, 2003, unless stayed pending reconsideration. Petitions to stay that do not involve environmental issues,²

¹ Authority to discontinue operations over this line was granted in *Norfolk and Western Railway Company—Discontinuance Exemption—In Mercer County, WV, and Tazewell County, VA*, Docket No. AB-290 (Sub-No. 107X) (ICC served May 10, 1990).

² The Board will grant a stay if an informed decision on environmental issues (whether raised by a party or by the Board's Section of Environmental Analysis (SEA) in its independent investigation) cannot be made before the exemption's effective date. See *Exemption of Out-of-Service Rail Lines*, 5 I.C.C.2d 377 (1989). Any request for a stay should be filed as soon as possible so that the Board may take appropriate action before the exemption's effective date.