SSA Celebrate 48th Anniversary!

Introducing SSA Family

FAS Section

AS & ISS Sections

HCF Section

ESS Section

MSS Section
DESERVING PRIOR SERVICE (PS) BENEFICIARIES RECEIVE COST-OF-LIVING ADJUSTMENT (COLA)
And can look forward to a 3% COLA increase in FY-2017 beginning October 1, 2016

Some 204 beneficiaries of Prior Service Trust Fund (PSTF) received a long-awaited cost of living adjustment in June 2016. The benefits were immediate increase of minimum benefit to $50 inclusive of retroactive adjustment to October 2015. Beneficiaries who were above $50 minimum benefit received 20% COLA adjustment retroactively to October 2015. Furthermore, a 3% annual COLA for 2016 applied and will again apply in fiscal year 2017, effective this October 2016. The outcome is nearly all beneficiaries received near $200 benefit in June 2016 and will continue thereafter with the new increased monthly benefit of no less than $50 a month.

The last COLA for Prior Service Beneficiaries happened in 1995, over two decades ago. Thus, PS beneficiaries were understandably overjoyed upon hearing of this news. As one beneficiary put it, “This is very good news and comes at a time of ever increasing price of goods and services and will go a long way to help us with our day to day expenses.” One struggling PS Beneficiary shared that she finally had ability to pay her water/sewage billing and set aside $10 a month to her MSA account.

Prior Service beneficiaries, many of whom have since passed away, have waited for a very long time for this COLA so it is very gratifying to see them get what they deserve. As Jerry Facey, advisor to PSTF, put it, “This is the most significant Prior Service achievement in many years and will impact the lives of close to 1,000 Micronesian families. While I regret that we were not able to accomplish this long overdue adjustment years ago, I find great joy in knowing we finally succeeded in a reasonable COLA.” Jerry Facey has been leading an annual delegation visit to Washington D.C. to address this very issue for the past several years. He was pleased to receive a letter from US Department of Interior, Office of Insular Affairs (OIA) in May 2016 that awarding of COLA and annual funding for PSTF was duly appropriated and funded for fiscal year 2016 to 2017.

Prior Year Service Trust Fund serves Micronesian citizens who worked as Marine Scouts, Department of the Navy workers, and Trust Territory employees from 1944-1968. Existing beneficiaries of PSTF total about one thousand and live in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI), Republic of Palau (ROP), Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), and the Marshall Islands (RMI), of which 204 are Palauan citizens.

PRESIDENTIAL STATE VISITS

Aimeliik State (4/5/16)

Peleliu State (4/30/16 overnite)

Angaur State (5/14/16 overnite)

Office of the President invites SSA Management & Staff to attend these state visits, as a backup just in case there will be questions concerning SSA/HCF from the public. Next state visits will go to Airai, Hatohobei, Sonsorol, Kayangel, Ngatpang and Koror.

Melekeok State (5/17/16)
SS Investment Fund

SSA Board of Trustees has been diligently investing excess funds from the operations of Social Security for future beneficiaries of Social Security Administration. Prior to year 2011, collections on SS contributions was sufficient to cover benefit payout. Hence, any excess cash was either used for SS internal operations and/or moved to investment market. Since enactment of RPPL 9-11 and RPPL 9-12, benefits significantly increased to the new level where benefits surpassed contributions on annual basis. There is no longer excess cash from SS operations to cover benefits on annual basis other than to withdraw cash from the nest "Investment". The challenges of the Trustees ahead is to diversify the Fund to mitigate loss and achieve some earnings. However, anticipated drawing of the fund may continue in near term until such time, the maximum remuneration is removed (Year 2020). The Fund Value reaches $88.8 million this June 2016 while Unfunded Liability is $142.4 million since last actuary report of 2014. Total of $3 million was drawn from the Fund in Sept 2015 to fund the benefits in FY2016. At SS, we do take careful management of our cash flow to ensure that all contributions are duly filed and paid while benefit payee are duly validated to ensure that individual eligibility is met. The Trustees have been careful in selecting investment managers including asset allocation to ensure that the Fund is safeguard and growing for future beneficiaries.

MSA Training with Private Clinics

There are several challenges HCF staffs encounters when processing MSA claims for reimbursement, such as delayed MSA deductions, accounts with insufficient funds, complaints from members for un-authorized MSA transactions and many more, that is why HCF offers training session with major private clinic providers on proper usage of MSA and its procedures, starting from filing out a simple MSA form to submitting electronic documents to support the reimbursement. On June 28th, HCF host the 2nd Training Session which was held at Penthouse conference room from 1:30-4:00pm. The next training session will be in mid-September 2016.

Members of NHI and MSA [June 2016]

The number of NHI uninsured has drop to 7% from 10% last year. A good sign that nearly all the people in Palau have medical insurance coverage. **Who are the 7% uninsured?** There is evidence that the uninsured are individuals over age 21, no longer dependent of parents, not in school, unemployed and have not reach 60 years of age to be eligible under government subsidy.

**How can I be insured?** Start some form of subsistent employment such as farming, fishing, tour guide, taxi operator or selling handicrafts and walk in to SS and enrol into a voluntary program. Cost you $38.03 a quarter or $12.67 a month. The best thing about this is that you will then be insured and if you have children below age 18, your child will automatically become insured as your dependent at no additional cost to you.

NHI provides coverage when you are admitted to Belau National Hospital for long period of time. It also provides coverage per each case up to $35,000 for off island referral to Guam, Manila, Taiwan and India.
The Republic of Palau Social Security Administration would like to remind all employers that payment for Social Security and Healthcare Fund Contributions for 3rd Quarter 2016 is due no later than October 31, 2016. Quarterly Tax Returns must be completed upon entrance for payments. Our Representatives at the front area are happy to assist you if you need assistance with completing your Quarterly Tax Report Forms.

Please come in on the beginning of October 2016 to file and pay your contributions to avoid long line on October 28, 2016 and October 31, 2016.

NOTICE TO EMPLOYERS WITH DELINQUENT ACCOUNTS

The Republic of Palau Social Security Administration is notifying total of 206 Employers with delinquent accounts that are covered under Agreements to keep current their agreed payments to avoid additional charges in interests, penalties and attorney’s fees.

For those 127 delinquent accounts that are not covered by an Agreement, you must come forward immediately so that some payment arrangement can be made. Be reminded that delinquent’s accounts will affect your eligibility to apply for a new Employer Identification Number or Business License and most importantly the Social Security Benefits.

The Administration is willing to work with you to resolve any outstanding balance without referring them to the Attorney for collection. Together we can work together to improve your business and compliance to the law.

NON FILER

The Administration would like to announce to the general public that there has been Non Filer Notices sent out to all Employer’s who have NOT filed their Quarterly Reports on a quarterly and/or annually basis.

In the event that an Employer is not current on his/her Filing’s; the employer’s eligibility to apply for a new Employer Identification Number and Social Security Number will be held until all Filing’s are up to date.

EMPLOYER IDENTIFICATION NUMBER (EIN) RENEWAL

The Administration would like to announce to the general public that 2017 EIN Renewal will take effect on December 1-31, 2016. The Social Security Administration will NOT be collecting renewal fee’s.

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Applying for USA Social Security Benefits:

If you are applying or inquiring for USA Social Security benefits, please contact US Embassy at 587-2920 or visit the Embassy to further assist you.

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Need Help? Need Answers?
Call us !!!