

United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

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In Reply To:

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EMAIL TRANSMISSION - 04/23/03

Information Bulletin No. MT-2003-041

To: All Montana/Dakotas Employees

From: Deputy State Director, Division of Support Services

Subject: Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) Open Season

The TSP open season began April 15, 2003, and ends June 30, 2003. During this open season, employees covered by FERS may elect to contribute to the TSP up to 13 percent of the basic pay they earn each pay period; employees covered by CSRS may elect to contribute up to 8 percent of the basic pay they earn each pay period.

This contribution limit will increase by one percentage point each year through 2005, after which participants' contributions will be restricted only by the Internal Revenue Code's annual limits. For 2003, the annual limit that you can contribute to the TSP is \$12,000. The TSP will not accept any contributions that exceed this limit (or any matching contributions related to them).

The flyer, "Think Big," contains basic information about this TSP open season and presents historical rates of return for the TSP investment funds. This flyer will be distributed to all employees.

How to make a contribution election. To make a contribution election, submit Form TSP-1 (Election Form) to the Branch of Human Resources, MT-933, before the end of the open season. The TSP-1 is available from MT-933, any field office, or the TSP Web site: www.tsp.gov.

Employee Express allows employees to change or to start a TSP account only during open season. Cancellation of a TSP contribution can be made at any time. For assistance, the Employee Express numbers are:

- From Work: 478-757-3080
- Outside Work: 800-827-6254 (24 hours, 7 days a week)
- Help Desk: 478-757-3030
- Help Desk via email: EEXHELP@OPM.GOV
- TDD: 478-757-3117 or 1-888-880-0412

If you lose or forget your PIN, you can call the OPM-Macon Help Desk at 478-757-3030 and choose the PIN option, or use the Web at www.employeeexpress.gov to make a PIN request on-line.

For security reasons, cellular phones are not recommended.

When elections become effective. If MT-933 receives your election by May 30, 2003, it will become effective June 1, 2003. If your election is received after June 13, 2003, it will become effective no later than the first full pay period after it is received.

How to make an investment election. You may invest in any of the five TSP investment funds. To change the investment of future contributions to your TSP account, you must request a **contribution allocation**. To change the investment of money already in your account, you must request an **interfund transfer**.

To request a contribution allocation or an interfund transfer, use www.tsp.gov, the ThriftLine (504-255-8777), or Form TSP-50 (Investment Allocation). You may request a contribution allocation or interfund transfer at any time. Contribution allocations are processed daily, and your contribution allocation request will generally be effective no later than 2 business days after it is received. Interfund transfers are processed monthly after accounts have been valued; your interfund transfer request must be received by the fifteenth of the month (or, if the fifteenth is not a business day, the next business day) for the interfund transfer to be effective as of the end of the month.

If you have stopped your contributions. If you stopped contributing during the last open season (October 15, 2002 through December 31, 2002), you may resume your contributions this open season. If, however, you stopped your contributions outside of an open season, you must wait until the second open season after you stopped before you can contribute again.

Where to get more information about the TSP. The booklet *Summary of the Thrift Savings Plan for Federal Employees* describes the TSP in detail and contains more information about contribution elections, contribution allocations, and interfund transfers. The latest version of the booklet is dated May 2001. If you do not have the latest version, contact MT-933 or go to the TSP Web site.

If you have additional questions about the TSP, contact Verlaine VanAtta or Connie Raynock, Human Resource Assistants, at 406-896-5233/5229.

Signed by: Diane M. Friez, Acting

Authenticated by: Donna K. Zentz, MT-933