

This fact sheet provides information to help you understand the provisions of the Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP), but is not a contract document. The basic statutory provisions of the SBP law are in [Chapter 73, Title 10, United States Code](#).

Pre-Retirement SBP Responsibilities

Each retiring member is responsible for:

- Attending a one-on-one pre-retirement briefing with the SBP counselor (required by law)
- Becoming familiar with the options and effects of the SBP
- Learning about the basic differences between SBP and commercial or civilian programs described as alternatives
- Including the spouse in all aspects of the decision process -- it's his or her financial future that's at stake!
- Completing a DD Form 2656, Data for Payment of Retired Personnel, at the military personnel flight which contains critical pay data:
 - Arrears of Pay beneficiary information
 - Retirement correspondence address
 - Check mailing address (EFT Address)
 - SBP election
 - Spouse concurrence (if required)
- Notifying the Defense Finance and Accounting Service promptly of changes that occur after retirement:
 - Change in bank or correspondence address
 - Change in marital status or family members that may affect SBP or pay

Notes:

The law requires DFAS to establish maximum SBP coverage if a valid DD Form 2656 is not received before the member's retirement date.

A member who does not comply with the above responsibilities may experience a delay in receipt of retired pay and/or unwanted premiums being deducted from retired pay.

Remember, retired pay stops when a member dies. Paying into the SBP is the only way to ensure regular monthly payments based on the member's military service continue to eligible survivors following the member's death.