

# News from DFAS: Helpful Tips and Tools for Survivors and SBP Annuitants

By DFAS Cleveland

DFAS Retired and Annuitant Pay is working hard to provide better communication and helpful tools to make managing your Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) pay easier. Below are some tools of special interest for survivors.

## New DFAS Survivor SBP Newsletter

The new DFAS Survivor SBP Newsletter is published twice a year with news and information especially for survivors and SBP annuitants. The newsletter is published online and as a downloadable, shareable PDF.

**Get the latest issue:** <https://www.dfas.mil/survivornews>

## Special Focus Webpages and Explainer Webpages

The DFAS website has special focus webpages with news about significant changes that may affect survivors and SBP annuitants and provide answers to frequently asked questions.

**SBP-DIC News:** We post updates about the SBP-DIC Offset Phased Elimination on this webpage. There are also FAQs and a downloadable Quick Reference Guide pdf (also attached here). <https://www.dfas.mil/sbpdicnews>

**SBP 2023 Elimination of the Optional Annuity for Dependent Children/Reversion to Surviving Spouses:** We post updates here about the changes that will happen in 2023 to the "Optional Child Annuity." There are also FAQs and a downloadable Quick Reference Guide pdf (also attached here). <https://www.dfas.mil/sbp2023childoptrev>

The website also has explainer webpages that explain a particular topic in detail and also include links to relevant forms and form tools. They include:

**SBP, DIC, and SSIA:** Explanation of the impact of receiving VA Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) on a surviving spouse's SBP. <https://www.dfas.mil/sbpdicssia>

**Start an SBP Annuity:** Information and forms needed to start Survivor Benefit Plan annuity payments. <https://www.dfas.mil/startsbp>

**How to Claim a Retiree's Final Pay (Arrears of Pay):** Information and forms needed to claim a deceased military retiree's final paycheck. <https://www.dfas.mil/retireeaop>

**School Certifications:** Information and the form for SBP child annuitants 18-22 years of age who must certify annually their full-time attendance in school. <https://www.dfas.mil/schoolcerts>

## **New Annuitant Customer Information Guide**

Our new DFAS SBP Annuitant Customer Information Guide outlines the tools we developed to simplify finding basic information about your pay or submitting a request for a change to your account.

**The Customer Information Guide is available to download** in a PDF from the Retired Military & Annuitants homepage: <https://www.dfas.mil/rapay>

The new guide explains how to use many of our time-saving tools, including Form Wizards, Online Upload Tools, Status Notifications, and our website.

## **Form Wizards**

DFAS has several Form Wizards available for survivors and annuitants and we are working on more. The Form Wizards “take the form out of the form” by walking you through the information needed to help ensure that all necessary fields are completed properly.

There are Form Wizards for survivors and annuitants for the following three forms:

The **DD2788 School Certification form** for SBP child annuitants age 18 and over is available on the School Cert webpage: <https://www.dfas.mil/schoolcerts>

The **DD2656-7 to start an SBP annuity** is available on the Start an SBP Annuity webpage: <https://www.dfas.mil/startsbp>

The **SF-1174 to claim the final pay for a deceased retiree** is available on the Claim Arrears of Pay webpage: <https://www.dfas.mil/retireeaop>

The Form Wizards also have a helpful link to submit the form through an askDFAS online upload tool. Plus, some offer the option of signing electronically.

## **askDFAS Online Forms and Upload Tools**

Send DFAS important information or a request via one of our askDFAS online forms:

- Annuitants can get **1099-Rs** sent to their mailing address on record or to a one-time, temporary mailing address by submitting the request online on askDFAS.
- Use our convenient online form to **report the death** of a military retiree.

Some forms or requests can be submitted online via the DFAS.mil website using the askDFAS online upload tools. The new askDFAS submission tools were established to improve the way requests are submitted and eliminate the time sending requests through mail or fax.

**Find out more on our newly improved askDFAS info page** (click on Retirees/Annuitants): <https://www.dfas.mil/dfas/AskDFAS>

## **Email Status Notifications**

Email Status Notifications are underway! Status notifications are a three-step process that will update you when DFAS receives select forms or documents for processing by mail or fax (or in some specific cases, through AskDFAS). You will receive most status notifications via SmartDoc email, which require a valid email address in myPay. To receive these status notifications, please ensure your email address is available and updated in myPay.

### **myPay**

<https://mypay.dfas.mil>

The fastest and most secure way to manage your SBP pay account is through myPay. myPay is available using the internet from your computer or your mobile device browser.

myPay provides convenient access to a range of information about your payments, and lets you easily update your contact information or your tax withholding, submit your annual certification, or download your tax documents. SBP annuitants can log in to myPay, and print a 1099-R from the comfort of their home.

Also, when you have an email address in myPay, you can receive important email messages from DFAS about your pay account and information from your loved one's Branch of Service.

To get started with myPay, see our "**Get Started with myPay**" step-by-step downloadable PDF. <https://www.dfas.mil/managesbp>

### **The Retired & Annuitant Pay Website**

Check out all of the information on the DFAS Retired & Annuitant Pay website: <https://www.dfas.mil/rapay>