



MEMORANDUM

To: PERS Liaison Officers

From: Holly Zimmerman
Management Analyst

Date: November 19, 2001

Subject: Fall 2001 Newsletter Article regarding Unmarried
Beneficiary Designation Form

We are in the process of mailing our Fall 2001 Newsletters to you for distribution to your employees. Included in the newsletter is an article relating to the Beneficiary Designation for Unmarried Members of PERS. If you will recall, we mailed a supply of Beneficiary Designation forms to you in early October and since then you have distributed them to your employees. Based on the types/volume of calls we are receiving regarding the new form, we thought it would be helpful to provide you with some additional information should your employees have further questions once they receive their newsletters.

Following are some facts relating to the importance of completing the form and returning it to PERS. Of special note, is that all employees, **married or unmarried**, are advised to reply due to the changes taking place on January 1, 2002 concerning survivor benefits for those who have returned the form:

- If the member is unmarried and lists a minor child (or a child between the age of 18 and 23 who is a full time student) as a survivor beneficiary, that child will receive not only the child survivor benefits, but also survivor benefits that would have been payable to a spouse if the employee had been married. Currently (and without the member completing the form), the child would receive only the child's portion of the survivor benefits.

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- If the member is unmarried and lists a child over the age of 18 who is not a full time student, that child will receive the benefits that would have been payable to a spouse. This is also true for any other adult listed whether it be a parent, brother, sister, cousin, etc. Without the form, no benefits are payable.
- Under PERS statutes, if the member is married their spouse is the PERS beneficiary. However, they need to be sure to list someone other than the spouse in the event the member and the spouse both die simultaneously or the spouse predeceases the member.
- Only one person can be named as the survivor beneficiary. If a member has more than one child and wishes to list a child as survivor beneficiary, any split of benefits will have to be done within the family. PERS will pay only one person.
- An individual must be named as a survivor beneficiary. A Trust cannot be named.

Please contact us should you have any questions.