

Department of State

§ 19.7-6

§ 19.7-3 Agreement with former spouse.

(a) A spousal agreement between a participant or former participant and a former spouse may waive, reduce or increase the following benefits for a former spouse;

- (1) A pension under § 19.9;
- (2) A regular survivor annuity under § 19.11-2;
- (3) A supplemental survivor annuity under § 19.10-6;
- (4) A lump sum payment for regular or recall service under § 19.13.

A spousal agreement shall also be used by a participant or former participant who has a former spouse on February 15, 1981, to elect a regular survivor annuity for such former spouse in accordance with § 19.11-2(e). An agreement to establish or increase any benefit for a former spouse entered into while the principal is married to someone else, must be signed and agreed to by both the spouse and the former spouse. An agreement affecting pension benefits may be filed at any time and will govern payments made after its acceptance by PER/ER/RET. An agreement affecting a regular survivor annuity must be filed before the end of the 12-month period after the divorce involving that former spouse or at the time of retirement, whichever occurs first, except as authorized in § 19.11-2(b) for persons retired on February 15, 1981, or in § 19.11-2(e) with respect to persons who were former spouses on February 15, 1981. This filing requirement stated in the Act makes it impossible to adjust, other than by court order, a regular survivor annuity for a former spouse when the divorce occurs after a retirement which occurs on or after February 15, 1981. The survivor annuity for the former spouse in such case is fixed by any spousal agreement entered into prior to the divorce, by § 19.11-2 or by court order. An agreement affecting supplemental survivor benefits or lump-sum payments must be filed before the supplemental annuity of the principal begins or lump-sum payment is made.

(b) A spousal agreement between a participant or former participant and a former spouse may be filed with PER/ER/RET at any time in accordance

with § 19.10-5 to provide an additional survivor annuity for the former spouse.

§ 19.7-4 Form of agreement.

(a) A spousal agreement is any legal agreement between the parties accepted by PER/ER/RET as meeting the requirements of this section. If in accordance with the regulations, PER/ER/RET will accept as a valid spousal agreement a property settlement agreed to by the parties and approved by a court regardless of the date of the agreement.

(b) A spousal agreement must either be authenticated by a court or notarized.

§ 19.7-5 Limitations.

(a) A spousal agreement may not provide for any payment from the Fund in excess of the amount otherwise authorized to be paid, or at a time not authorized by these regulations, or to a person other than a spouse or former spouse.

(b) A spousal agreement must be filed with the Department, Attention PER/ER/RET, and accepted by that office as in conformance with the Act and these regulations prior to the times specified in §§ 19.7-2 and 19.7-3. That office will provide advice to the parties on the validity of any proposed agreement and on proper format.

(c) A spousal agreement may apply only to payments from the Fund for periods after receipt of a valid agreement by the Department.

(d) Paragraphs (b), (c) and (d) of §§ 19.6-9 and 19.6-10 apply to spousal agreements and payments made pursuant to spousal agreements to the same extent that they apply to court orders and court ordered payments.

§ 19.7-6 Duration and precedence of spousal agreements.

(a) A spousal agreement may be revised or voided by agreement of the parties (by filing a new agreement under this section) at any time prior to the last day for filing an agreement determined in accordance with § 19.7-2 or § 19.7-3, except spousal agreements for additional survivor annuities are irrevocable. After the last day for filing a particular agreement, such agreement is irrevocable.

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(b) A valid spousal agreement entered into subsequent to the issuance of a court order affecting the same parties will override the court order, and shall govern payments from the Fund.

(c) A spousal agreement may not override a previous spousal agreement involving the same principal but a different spouse or former spouse without agreement of such spouse or former spouse.

§ 19.8 Obligations of members.

Participants and former participants are obligated by the Act and these regulations to provide the following benefits to others and must accept the necessary reductions in their own retirement benefits to meet these obligations:

(a) A pension to a former spouse pursuant to § 19.9;

(b) A court ordered apportionment of annuity to a previous spouse or child under § 19.6-1 (a)(6) (the benefit to a child referred to here is paid during the annuitant's lifetime as distinguished from the automatic survivorship annuity to a child described in § 19.11-7);

(c) A regular survivor annuity to a former spouse who has not remarried prior to age 60, and to a spouse to whom married when annuity commences, pursuant to §§ 19.11-2 and 19.11-3;

(d) An additional survivor annuity for a spouse or former spouse under § 19.10-5 when elected by the participant or ordered by a court;

(e) Lump-sum payments to a former spouse pursuant to § 19.13;

(f) Benefits ordered by a court under § 19.6 or specified in a spousal agreement under § 19.7.

§ 19.9 Pension benefits for former spouses.

§ 19.9-1 Entitlement.

(a) Unless otherwise expressly provided by a spousal agreement under § 19.7 or a court order under § 19.6, a person who, after February 15, 1981, becomes a former spouse of a participant (or former participant who separated from the Service after February 15, 1981) and who has not remarried prior to becoming 60 years of age, becomes entitled to a monthly pension benefit

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effective on a date determined under § 19.9-2 in an amount determined under § 19.9-3.

(b) A former spouse shall not be qualified for a pension under this subsection if, before the commencement of that pension, the former spouse remarries before becoming 60 years of age.

(c) A pension benefit under this section is treated the same as a survivor annuity for purposes of § 19.11-5(b): a former spouse who elects to receive a pension under this section must waive simultaneous receipt of any survivor annuity.

[46 FR 12958, Feb. 19, 1981. Redesignated and amended at 46 FR 18970, Mar. 27, 1981]

§ 19.9-2 Commencement and termination.

(a) The pension of a former spouse under this subsection commences on the latter of the day the principal becomes entitled to a Foreign Service annuity or on the first day of the month in which the divorce becomes final. (Suspension or reduction of a Foreign Service annuity because or reemployment does not affect the commencement of a pension to a former spouse.) In the case of any former spouse of a disability annuitant, the pension of such former spouse shall commence on the latter of:

(1) The date the principal would qualify for an annuity (other than a disability annuity) on the basis of his/her creditable service;

(2) The date the disability annuity begins; or

(3) The first of the month in which the divorce becomes final.

(b) The pension of a former spouse and the right thereto terminate on:

(1) The last day of the month before the former spouse dies or remarries before 60 years of age; or

(2) The date the annuity of the former participant terminates unless the termination results from recall, reappointment or reinstatement in the Foreign Service or reemployment in Government service.

§ 19.9-3 Computation and payment of pension to former spouse.

(a) A pension to a former spouse is paid monthly on the same date that annuity is paid to the principal.