

Title: Benefits Counselor

Reports to: Assistant Benefits Manager

Characteristics of the Class: Under supervision, provides counseling to Fund members regarding all aspects of their pension benefits. Special projects and duties as assigned by Benefits Manager.

FLSA Cat: Non-exempt

Essential duties:

- Provides information to members by phone and in person on the rules and regulations governing the Fund regarding annuities, disability benefits, and refunds.
- Counsels active and retired members in person regarding their future and current benefit payments.
- Advises prospective retirees on various aspects that may affect their annuity benefits, including annuitant health care coverage, taxability of benefits and possible distribution penalties, social security rules and possible offset of social security benefits.
- Prepares calculations and drafts a letter to be mailed in response to annuity and refund estimate requests received by phone, mail and email.
- Interacts with City and Board of Education records departments to gather work histories and verify employment status for both participants and non-participants.
- Reviews work history and past refunds; calculates the cost to establish pension credit for former service, refund repayments, military service, union service, CHA service, PBC service, CTA service.
- Reviews the applications for retirement annuity and survivor's annuity for completeness.
- Calculates actual benefit amounts for retirement annuity (including reciprocal fund annuities), "No Spouse" refund, errors in pension deduction, taxability of benefit amounts when member applies for retirement annuity; calculates surviving spouse annuity, child annuity, reversionary annuity or refund to heirs upon member's death,
- Consults with reciprocal funds regarding other fund's service and proportional share of annuity benefit; computes annuity amount after making any adjustment for overlapping of service credit and combined annuities that exceed the maximum.
- Completes verification of deposits forms from mortgage lenders and verification of assets forms for Housing, Social Security, and Unemployment Compensation.
- Assists member with completing fund forms and applications including, membership records, retirement applications, survivor's annuity applications, refund and refund in lieu applications.
- Participates as occasional guest speaker for Pre-retirement Seminars hosted by City of Chicago and Board of Education Human Resources Departments.

Special Projects:

Make adjustments to annuity and disability benefits due to new information such as law changes and retroactive salary increases.

Training & Experience:

Bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university. This position requires comprehensive knowledge of the laws governing the Fund and other reciprocal funds. In house training covering a period of about one year is required before the Benefits Counselor I can work solo and advance to the title of Benefits Counselor II.

Knowledge, Abilities & Skill

Good communication skills, both verbal and written, are mandatory. Knowledge of good customer service techniques. Ability to ascertain the needs of the clients and explain/teach new information to a wide range of personalities. Must have good math and analytical skills. Strong attention to detail. Highly organized and the ability to multi-task. Must be flexible, able to work under pressure, and meet deadlines. Proficient in Microsoft Word, Excel. Ability to work as a team. Being bilingual is a plus.

Starting salary: \$50,000 - \$55,000

Individuals interested in applying for this position should email a cover letter and resume to resume@meabf.org, subject line BENEFITS COUNSELOR.

This position will be open until February 10, 2021.