



California Public Employees' Retirement System  
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**TO: PUBLIC AGENCIES, STATE COLLEGES & UNIVERSITIES,  
COUNTY SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS, INDIVIDUAL  
SCHOOL DISTRICTS**

**SUBJECT: SPECIAL BENEFICIARY DESIGNATION (STD-241S) FOR  
ACTIVE MEMBERS WHO ARE ELIGIBLE FOR SERVICE  
RETIREMENT**

This is to inform you that a *married* member who is eligible for service retirement (age 50 with at least 5 years of service credit) may now name someone other than their spouse to receive a portion of the lump sum Basic Death Benefit.

In the past, upon the death of an active member who was eligible for retirement, a surviving spouse was provided a choice of a monthly allowance or the lump sum Basic Death Benefit regardless of any designation that may have been on file with CalPERS. Now, if a member files a "Special Beneficiary Designation" naming a non-spouse beneficiary it will be honored. A surviving spouse will still receive the choice of a monthly allowance or the lump sum Basic Death Benefit; however, the benefit will be based only on the spouse's community property interest. The designated beneficiary would then receive the portion of the lump sum Basic Death Benefit that is not subject to community property.

The only instance the beneficiary designation would not be honored is if a member's death is determined to be industrial. Special death benefits are then payable to the member's surviving spouse as required by law even if the member filed a designation with CalPERS naming someone else as their beneficiary.

To comply with this new law, CalPERS has developed the "Special Beneficiary Designation form (STD-241S)". **This form should only be completed by married members who are eligible for service retirement and wish to designate someone other than their spouse as beneficiary for a portion of the lump sum Basic Death Benefit that would otherwise be automatically paid to their surviving spouse. (The spouse's signature is required on the STD-241S.) If the member would like their spouse to receive the entire benefit, no form is necessary.** To order a supply of the Special CalPERS Beneficiary Designation form (STD-241S) call 1-916-658-1493.

Members who *are not* eligible for service retirement should continue to complete the Beneficiary Designation (CalPERS) STD-241, if they wish to designate a beneficiary

other than the statutory beneficiary(ies) provided by the retirement law. However, they should keep in mind that in the future when they become eligible for retirement, they will need to file a Special Beneficiary Designation form, STD-241S, if they wish to name someone other than their spouse as beneficiary.

If you have any questions regarding the Special Beneficiary Designation form STD-241S or when it should be completed, please contact (800) 352-2238.

Chris Nishioka, Chief  
Benefit Services Division