

MISSISSIPPI DIVISION OF MEDICAID

Eligibility Policy and Procedures Manual

200.07.07 RAILROAD RETIREMENT BENEFITS

There are three basic categories of payments made by the Railroad Retirement Board (RRB):

- Life and Survivor annuities;
- Title II benefits certified by RRB; and
- Unemployment, sickness and strike benefits.

200.07.07A LIFE AND SURVIVOR ANNUITIES

Life annuities for retirement and disability are paid under the Railroad Retirement (RR) Act to the railroad employee and his/her spouse. Children of a living annuitant are not entitled to benefits. Any increase in a beneficiary's check because of a dependent child is unearned income to the RR beneficiary and is not the child's income.

Survivor annuities are payable to widows, widowers, children and dependent parents of railroad employees. A small number of widows received two annuities, a regular widow's check and a check payable to them as designated survivors of retired railroad employees who elected to receive reduced benefits during their lifetimes.

RR annuity payments are similar to Title II benefits in that a check for one month is paid the next month and cost of living adjustments (COLA) for RR annuities are effective the same month as Title II COLAs. However, since RRB benefits are computed on separate amounts, the COLA increase on the total may not be as high as for a Title II benefit. The Railroad Retirement COLA must be verified.

200.07.07B SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFITS CERTIFIED BY RRB

SSA may authorize the payment of Title II benefits for RR employees to RRB instead of directly to Treasury. Although RRB in these situations has responsibility for certifying Title II benefit to Treasury, they remain Title II benefits. Individuals entitled to this type of benefit receive two award notices. The first notice, from SSA, informs the beneficiary that RRB has responsibility for making Title II payments. The final notice, from RRB, specifies the amount of the first check. RR annuity payments and Title II benefits certified by RRB may be paid in a single check. In these cases, RRB may issue an interim notice before the final notice which specifies the amount of the first check.