



DELTA DISABLED PILOTS AND SURVIVORS ASSOCIATION

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www.ddpsa.org

October 22, 2018

INCORRECT INFORMATION FROM THE EMPLOYEE SERVICE CENTER

Delta outsources certain administrative duties to the Employee Service Center (ESC). When you call 1-800-MY-DELTA, you speak with members of the ESC.

Unfortunately, there is a history of incorrect information that has been conveyed by ESC representatives who confuse the benefits from the non-pilot **Delta Family Care Disability and Survivor Plan** with the **Delta Pilots Disability and Survivorship Plan**. The problem may be a result of both plans being referred to as the "D&S Plan." The survivor benefits from the Delta **Family Care** (non-pilot) D&S Plan are distinctly different from the survivor benefits from the Delta **Pilots** D&S Plan in terms of amount, longevity and offsets (reductions). The monthly income paid to eligible surviving spouses from the Delta **Pilots** D&S Plan generally is paid for the surviving spouse's lifetime and is not normally subject to offsets (reductions).¹

Recently, a surviving spouse of a retired Delta pilot was misinformed that any benefits she receives from the PBGC would reduce her D&S Plan monthly income survivor benefit. Following DDPSA's recommendation, she contacted the ESC and requested clarification. The ESC representative told her that the reduction for PBGC benefits paid to the surviving spouse was a "normal procedure", but the ESC would research the matter. Eventually the ESC mailed her the Handbook for Insurance and Survivor Benefits of the **non-pilot** D&S Plan and referenced pages that detailed an offset for PBGC benefits. That non-pilot Handbook is not applicable to her benefits as a survivor eligible for benefits under the Delta **Pilots** D&S Plan.

DDPSA was successful in working through ALPA and Delta to ensure that her benefits will be administered properly under the provisions of the Delta **Pilots** D&S Plan and will not be reduced by any benefits she receives from the PBGC. The good news is that Delta now has provided DDPSA with a direct point of contact within Delta to resolve similar problems that arise in the future.

DDPSA is concerned that there may be cases where a surviving spouse's PBGC benefit is incorrectly being applied to the D&S Plan monthly income survivor benefit. For clarification, the potential for such errors probably is limited to a relatively small group of survivors.

¹ Surviving spouses of pilots who died **after September 1, 2001 and before retiring** are entitled to receive a Qualified Pre-Retirement Spousal Benefit (QPRSB) from the retirement plan or PBGC which reduces the D&S Plan survivor benefit.

In most cases, survivors of Delta pilots are not entitled to a benefit from the PBGC because the vast majority of pilots elected a lump sum distribution and a single life annuity on the remaining portion of the retirement benefit. Payment from the PBGC to survivors generally occurs only when a pilot elected a joint life and survivorship annuity from the Delta Pilots Retirement Plan (now administered from the PGBC) or when the pilot died before retiring.

If **all** of the following is applicable, please notify DDPSA so that we can assist you in attempting to correct any errors.

1. You are the surviving spouse of a Delta pilot who died **after retiring**.
2. You receive monthly income from the Delta Pilots D&S Plan.
3. You receive a joint life annuity benefit from the PBGC.
4. Delta has either reduced your D&S Plan monthly survivor benefit by the amount of your PBGC benefit or you have been informed that Delta intends to apply such a reduction.

DDPSA continues to monitor issues that impact participants and beneficiaries of the Delta Pilots D&S Plan. Thank you for your continuing support.