



# United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
Arizona State Office  
222 North Central Avenue  
Phoenix, Arizona 85004  
www.az.blm.gov



KK 6/11/05  
5/11/05  
TAKE PRIDE IN AMERICA  
In Reply Refer To: HHC 5/10/05  
1781/1120 (953)  
L Jackson 5/12/05  
Rosario 5/12/05

MAY 13 2005

The Honorable John McCain  
United States Senator  
Attention: Sarah J. Hitchcock  
5353 North 16<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 105  
Phoenix, Arizona 85016

Dear Senator McCain:

This is in response to your letter dated April 5, 2005, on behalf of your constituent, Ex. 6 Ex. 6 has expressed difficulty in obtaining survivor benefits under her husband, Ex. 6

Ex. 6 filed for retirement benefits from the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Phoenix Field Office on July 15, 2004. Unfortunately, on October 9, 2004, Ex. 6 passed away while his retirement package was enroute to the Office of Personnel Management (OPM), Boyers, Pennsylvania.

Since the death of Ex. 6 a BLM Field Office representative has assisted Ex. 6 with the completion of the appropriate survivor benefit documents. As a result, Ex. 6 received her Federal Employee Group Life Insurance and Thrift Savings Plan benefits. However, she has yet to receive her survivor benefits through OPM. Please note it is OPM who has authority and processing responsibility for these matters.

On April 12, 2005, an Arizona State Office BLM Human Resources (HR) representative contacted OPM in an effort to further assist Ex. 6 BLM was able to determine that Ex. 6 case was pending within the Federal Employee's Retirement System (FERS) Branch 1 Department in Washington, DC. The supervisor of the OPM Department, Charlene Thomas, was notified as to Ex. 6 situation.

On April 13, 2005, a BLM representative called the FERS Branch 1 Pending Department in Washington, DC and was informed that the OPM supervisor was out of the office. On April 15, 2005, Ms. Thomas responded, via e-mail, stating that Ex. 6 case file would be assigned on Monday, April 18, 2005.

In another conversation with the OPM Specialist, it was recommended that your letter be faxed to the FERS Branch who is responsible for processing these actions.

We sincerely hope this letter and the actions taken to date, by the BLM, will assist in expediting this matter further for **Ex. 6**

If you have any questions concerning this matter, please feel free to contact our Human Resources Officer, Mark Whitesell, at (602) 417-9270.

Sincerely,

**Elaine Y. Zielinski**  
**State Director**  
Elaine Y. Zielinski  
State Director

Enclosure

cc: Your Washington Office

bcc: WO-615 401 LS, AZ-210, AZ-912



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*Handwritten notes:*  
K 6/10/05  
H 5/11/05  
HC 5/10/05  
mm 5-11-05  
Jackson 5/12/05  
Hoxee 5/22/05  
TAKE PRIDE IN AMERICA

In Reply Refer To:  
1781/1120 (953)

MAY 13 2005

Ms. Charlene Thomas  
Retirement Operations Center  
FERS Branch 1 Pending  
1900 East Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20415-3532

Dear Ms. Thomas:

This letter is in response to a Congressional inquiry dated April 5, 2005, from Senator John McCain's Office. On April 12, 2005, the Arizona Bureau of Land Management Human Resources (HR) Office received the inquiry on behalf of constituent, **Ex. 6**, **Ex. 6** is experiencing a problem with obtaining survivor benefits.

**Ex. 6** filed for retirement benefits from the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Phoenix Field Office, on July 15, 2004. Unfortunately, on October 9, 2004, **Ex. 6** passed away while his retirement package was enroute to the Office of Personnel Management (OPM), located in Boyers, Pennsylvania.

Since the death of **Ex. 6** a BLM Field Office representative has assisted **Ex. 6** with the completion of the appropriate survivor benefit documents. As a result, **Ex. 6** received her Federal Employee Group Life Insurance and Thrift Savings Plan benefits. However, she has yet to receive her survivor benefits through OPM. Please note it is OPM who has authority and processing responsibility for these matters.

In an effort to further assist **Ex. 6** an Arizona BLM representative called OPM on April 12, 2005. The representative was informed that **Ex. 6** case was pending within your Department. On April 13, 2005, another call was made to OPM by the HR representative in an attempt to follow up on this case. BLM was advised to forward the letter for OPM response and action.

We look forward to working with you to resolve this matter on behalf of **Ex. 6**. If you have any questions, please contact **Ex. 6**, at (602) 417-**Ex. 6**.

Sincerely,

Elaine Y. Zielinski  
State Director

**Ex. 6**:x277:hc:5/05/05:Congressional letter to OPM, Attn. Charlene Thomas