

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

FOREIGN SERVICE RETIREMENT AND DISABILITY SYSTEM

PART I. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROGRAM

1. *Objectives*

A major purpose of the Foreign Service retirement and disability system, similar to the purpose of all retirement systems, is to provide an income continuation plan for Foreign Service personnel and their survivors upon retirement, disability, or death. This system has some distinctive features designed to meet the needs of those who serve at posts throughout the world, many in unhealthful, dangerous, or hardship areas.

Also, provisions of this retirement system are closely aligned with features of the Foreign Service personnel system to facilitate the selection-out or retirement of the least able and the enhancement of advancement opportunities for the most able.

Selection-out separates from the Foreign Service not only the marginal officer but also the generally competent officer who has slowed down or who no longer can keep pace with the majority of his colleagues. He is selected-out to make room for the advancement and development of more junior officers with greater potential for growth. The selection-out provisions are complemented by the voluntary and mandatory retirement provisions. All three functioning together are necessary for the attainment of the management objective of enabling the most able officers of promise and potential to move upward in the Service.

2. *Operation*

The retirement system is wholly a direct Federal operation and is administered by headquarters of the Department of State.

3. *History*

The Rogers Act of 1924, which established the modern Foreign Service, also established the Foreign Service retirement and disability system. This system was designed to meet the special needs of the Foreign Service personnel system.

Originally, the only persons covered by the Foreign Service retirement and disability system were Foreign Service officers and non-career chiefs of mission with 20 or more years of service as a chief of mission. The Foreign Service Act Amendments of 1960 made all Foreign Service staff personnel with 10 or more years of continuous service in the Department of State's Foreign Service participants in this retirement system. This extension of coverage recognized that staff personnel who make a career of the Service are subject in a large measure to the same conditions of service as Foreign Service officers and should be subject to the same retirement benefits and restrictions, especially those relating to the earlier voluntary and mandatory retirement ages.