

*FYI from today's Washington Post.*

Perry

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/federal-eye/wp/2013/07/01/tsp-reviewing-spousal-rights-in-light-of-doma-ruling/?hpid=z10>

## **TSP reviewing spousal rights in light of DOMA ruling**

By Eric Yoder, Updated: July 1, 2013

The 401(k)-style program for federal employees says it is reviewing its policies on the rights of spouses in light of the U.S. Supreme Court's decision in the Defense of Marriage Act case.

The Thrift Savings Plan is one of numerous government benefit programs potentially affected by the decision invalidating the law that defined marriage for federal purposes as being only between a man and a woman.

Among benefits under review are some directly affecting federal employees, including health insurance coverage and retirement survivor benefit rights. In a memo to agencies, the Office of Personnel Management said it is "committed to implementing the Court's ruling promptly" and that it "will be issuing additional information covering a broader range of issues in the coming days."

The TSP, which operates under a law separate from standard civil service policies, is conducting a similar review, spokeswoman Kim Weaver said in an e-mail.

"We are reviewing our regulations and processes to determine what needs to be changed in response to the Supreme Court's ruling," she said. "We will comply as quickly as we can, but we do not have a timeframe for how fast that will be."

A TSP account holder already can designate as a beneficiary, on his or her death, "anyone the participant wants to name," she said.

However, if no beneficiary is named, the account balance would go to persons in the order of a standard order of preference, the first of whom is a spouse. In addition, spouse beneficiaries can keep an account open on the participant's

death; others must withdraw the money or transfer it into another retirement account.

“In addition to the ability of spouses to maintain beneficiary accounts, there are other instances in our regs where spouses have rights, so we will have to review all of those to make appropriate changes. Our regs currently use the state of domicile test,” she said.

© The Washington Post Company