

SUGGESTED THINGS TO DO WHEN A RETIRED IBMer DIES ([Click here for a printable version of this list](#))

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Disclaimer: This article contains suggested things to do in prep for an IBM Retiree spouse or family member. The Rochester IBM Alumni Club LLC, Roger Spee (author of this webpage) and any member of the Rochester IBM Alumni Club board are not liable for any suggestions acted upon that's a result of reading this webpage.

This list of suggestions was created by a fellow IBM retiree for their spouse or surviving family member in case IBM Retiree passes away. Everyone's situation is unique so please treat this article as a list suggestions for you to create your own list for your specific situation. Again, please understand the information in this article may or may not work for every situation.

What follows is an email response from an active IBMer who works as a contact to our Rochester IBM Alumni Club:

Question:

Is there a "one stop" place I can go to when reporting a death of an IBM Retiree?

Answer:

What IBM requests is that a family member or friend notify the IBM Benefits Center- Provided by Fidelity of the death of the retiree (Dial 1-866-937-0720, take option 2 ... **NOTE:** The IBM Benefits Center hours are 8:30AM – 8:00PM Eastern time Mon thru Fri). Once you have reported the death, it triggers a "chain of events at Fidelity.

- They send out a condolence letter and notify the person that called that they will reach out to any beneficiaries of any benefits.
- They request a copy of the death certificate – which is necessary to process some benefits.
- They stop the retirees pension and restart it for the joint annuitant (typically spouse or child), if the former employee elected to have a joint annuitant.
- They pass the information on to the team that handles retiree medical, to get that sorted. Generally, if the spouse was on the medical benefits, he/she can stay on those benefits after the death of the retiree.
- They pass the notice of the death on to MetLife for life insurance purposes (available to those who retired before 2005 I believe).
- If the retiree still has funds in the 401(k), the beneficiary may have some decisions to make on what to do with that account.

The Survivor Services Unit at the IBM Benefits Center walks the surviving family member(s) through the process to assess what benefits remain available to be paid out and works to ensure they go to the appropriate people.

Additional resources for questions: Contact AskHR at

https://www.ibm.com/it-infrastructure/us-en/resources/campaignmail/mail/ibmhr/index.html?mhsrc=ibmsearch_a&mhq=askhr

What follows is a list of things you as a spouse and/or family member should be aware of when a death of a IBM retiree occurs:

1. Select a funeral home - Most funeral homes will give you assistance with contacting the Social Security office as well as the Veterans Affairs Office, and they also may arrange for death certificates (see next bullet regarding death certificates). If not, you may have to go to the county Vital Records office.

2. Death Certificates - You will need to provide death certificates to be able to transfer ownership of accounts or access survivor benefits. Usually, death certificates are obtained through a funeral home. You will need to make sure you order enough original death certificates as some organizations will not accept copies. You also may want to find out how long it will take to receive the certificates. Without the certificates "in hand" you may end up not being able to do some of the items below.
3. Safe Deposit Box(es) - Identify physical location and box number. Identify where box key(es) is/are located. Identify who has authorized access to the Safe Deposit Box(es). Summarize what is in the Safe Deposit Box, such as "All important master documents are in the Safe Deposit Box".
4. Social Security Number - Document the Social Security number of the Retired IBMer and where the Social Security card is located.
5. IBM Serial Number, employment and retirement dates - Document the Retired IBMer's Serial Number (nnnnnn), when the Retired IBMer started employment and when retirement started.
6. Online Accounts - List of online accounts with userids and passwords to access those accounts.
NOTE: It is important that the surviving spouse keep the deceased persons "cell-phone" and email accounts active until all online account transfers have been made. The reason for this is that some accounts now use "access security codes or text messages or 2 factor authentication codes" on the deceased person's cell phone or e-mail in the event of account access errors or as a default access protection.

Once you have done the items above you are now ready to start the process of reporting the Retired IBMer's death, transferring ownership of accounts, determining survivor benefits, etc...

NOTE: Re-read the response above that I received from the active IBMer who is our club contact. Your pension and the joint and survivor will be coordinated regardless if your pension is with Fidelity or Prudential.

To report the death of a Retired IBMer the primary contact is the IBM Benefits Center provided by Fidelity. To contact the IBM Benefits Center call 1-866-937-0720, take option 2, then say 'reporting the death of an IBM Retiree.' This will get you a live person on the line. You will need the Retired IBMer's user name or Social Security number. Once connected to the IBM Benefits Center a representative will discuss the following items:

- IBM Benefits Center should indicate they will send you packet of information in the mail and assign you a person to walk you through the information. Make sure you write down any confirmation or tracking numbers they give you. If they do not contact you within couple of days after receiving the packet of information call the IBM Benefits Center back, give them the tracking number and ask them for their help.
- IBM Pension payments:
 - Surviving spouse pension payments will depend on the options selected when retiring from (leaving) IBM. If a Joint and Survivor Annuity beneficiary option was selected the IBM Benefits Center will indicate what amount you will receive in payments.
- IBM 401K plan - Call IBM Benefits Center to transfer the IBMer's 401K plan ownership to you the surviving spouse. The actual 401K plan is managed by Fidelity.
- IBM retiree life insurance - Call IBM Benefits Center concerning the IBMer's retiree life insurance policy via the IBM Group Life Insurance plan. The value is likely to be \$5000. This is a retirement benefit and should be documented in the "About Your Benefits: Post Employment" booklet.
- IBM retiree Health Care Insurance benefits - Call IBM Benefits Center concerning any health care insurance (medical, dental, etc.) benefits for the IBMer's dependents.
 - If the Retired IBMer is pre-Medicare the monthly premiums are probably being deducted from the IBMer's monthly pension payment. If the IBMer had a Future Health Care account (FHA) the monthly insurance premium may have been subsidized out of that account.
 - If the Retired IBMer is on Medicare the health insurance is now MAY BE managed by United

Healthcare. Suggest contacting the IBM Benefits Center at 1-866-937-0720 to have help determining if there is any IBM subsidy that your spouse is eligible for (e.g. HRA accounts, etc...).

- Life insurance - If there is any additional life insurance coverage, contact the life insurance company. You will need to locate the policy document. Hopefully the policy document is in the Safe Deposit Box or some where you can find it.
- Social Security - Contact Social Security. Rochester Social Security Office, Rochester. 206 Broadway Ave S, Ste 600, Rochester, MN, 55904 phone (877) 405-3631. They will help you determine what changes need to be made such as stopping the monthly Social Security benefit payment for the IBMer and perhaps starting monthly Survivor benefit payments for the spouse.
- IBM stock - If you own IBM Stock, contact Computershare 1-888-IBM-6700, the company managing IBM Stock, to transfer ownership as necessary. You will need to know the stock holder account number.
- IBM Long Term Care policy - If you have Long Term Care coverage via IBM, Contact John Hancock 1-800-255-8991 to determine if any changes need to be made. If your Long Term Care is non-IBM you will need to contact that Long Term Care insurance company. You will need to locate the policy document. Hopefully the policy document is in the Safe Deposit Box or some where you can find it.
- Investments and bank accounts - Contact any banks and investment companies to transfer ownership of accounts as necessary. Know where the account numbers and other details are documented.
- Online accounts - Online accounts that deal with financial accounts or medical information should be left active until you are confident that they are no longer needed for estate purposes. If appropriate get them transferred to you. If not and these accounts are no longer needed you should request to have these accounts canceled.
 - For online accounts that are for personal purposes such as email, Facebook, etc... it is recommended that you cancel these accounts when no longer needed.
- Rochester IBM Alumni Club - If the retired IBMer is a Rochester IBM Alumni Club member please notify the Alumni Club either by email rchret@aol.com or call 1-651-377-8893 and leave a message. Let the club know if the Surviving Spouse will be assuming the membership and if there are any changes to the member contact information.

Information compiled for this webpage was done by Roger Spee on behalf of the Rochester IBM Alumni Club