



RRB News

U.S. Railroad Retirement Board

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RRB Gets High Marks on Unemployment/Sickness Benefits

The U.S. Railroad Retirement Board (RRB) earned a score of 81 in a recent American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI) survey of individuals who applied for and received unemployment or sickness benefits from the agency. This is an increase of 6 points from the previous survey of this customer group in 2002, and almost 15 points higher than the most recent satisfaction score for the Federal government as a whole.

The areas evaluated by the survey included claims activity, telephone service and face-to-face contact with an agency representative. Claims activity received a score of 85, a slight increase over the prior survey, with respondents indicating that claim forms are easy to read and fill out.

Interactions with an agency employee on the phone scored 88, a key measure since 83 percent of customers contact the RRB by telephone. Face-to-face contact, utilized by about a third of customers, scored even higher at 92.

Since the previous survey was conducted, the RRB implemented an automated telephone system in which callers to a toll-free number follow a series of prompts to obtain information or services. As a result, it was a first-time addition to the current survey. The agency received a score of 82 in this area, with respondents indicating that the agency could probably improve navigation of the prompts.

The agency has also expanded the number of services available on its website, www.rrb.gov. The survey indicated customers were satisfied with these services, but also suggested that the RRB take some steps to increase their use. For example, about 90 percent of the respondents were aware of the ability to file benefit claims online, but three-fourths of them still used paper claim forms.

Overall, applicants for unemployment benefits were slightly more satisfied than those for sickness benefits. Both groups were least satisfied with the timeliness of receiving benefits, although it still scored relatively high at 83 and 73 for unemployment and sickness benefits, respectively.

Customers also had a high level of confidence in the RRB doing a good job, with a score of 87, an increase from 83 in 2002. Similarly, the number of respondents who had complained to the agency in the last 12 months dropped from 11 percent to 9 percent.

(More)

Produced through a partnership of the University of Michigan Business School, the CFI Group, and the American Society for Quality, the ACSI regularly measures national customer satisfaction with corporate and government goods and services. Working with the Department of the Interior's National Business Center Federal Consulting Group, government agencies participating in the survey use the ACSI to gauge their level of service and benchmark their performance for comparison with similar organizations in the private sector. The ACSI also helps agencies focus on those processes, based on customer feedback, which will have the biggest impact on an agency's ability to deliver the highest quality products and services.

This marks the sixth time the RRB has participated in the survey. In 2009, the RRB earned a score of 88 in an ACSI survey of recently retired railroad workers who were receiving a monthly annuity. Other recent surveys included a score of 85 in a 2006 survey of individuals who were recently awarded disability benefits, and a score of 90 in a 2005 ACSI survey that focused on the agency's survivor benefit process. The RRB has consistently received higher scores than the composite Federal number.

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