

Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation

Open Government Plan 3.0



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Executive Summary

When a company fails and its pension ends, when a lifetime of dreams seems to be crashing, PBGC is there as a safety net to catch a person, a family, a community.

We at the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation protect over 40 million workers and retirees in private defined benefit pension plans. We do that by encouraging companies to keep their plans, and by paying benefits when they cannot.

To enhance retirement security, we pursue three overarching goals:

- preserve plans and protect pensioners,
- pay pension benefits on time and accurately, and
- maintain high standards of stewardship and accountability

We administer two insurance programs. Our single-employer program protects about 32 million workers and retirees in about 23,000 pension plans. Our multiemployer program protects about 10 million workers and retirees in about 1,400 pension plans.

In 2013, in order to preserve plans and protect pensioners we:

- Worked with media, Congressional staff, retiree groups, unions, and pension advocacy groups to help thousands to understand the lifetime consequences of accepting pensions as lump sum payments instead of lifetime income annuities.
- Helped to protect 161,000 people by encouraging companies to keep their plans when they emerged from bankruptcy.
- Negotiated \$15 million in financial assurance to protect 5,000 people in plans at risk from corporate transactions.
- Negotiated \$145 million in financial assurance to protect 9,000 people whose companies downsized.
- Continued to help protect 130,000 people in American Airlines' plans, as well as tens of thousands more in other plans in ongoing bankruptcies.

To pay timely and accurate benefits we:

- Assumed responsibility for 57,000 more people in 111 newly failed single-employer plans.
- Started paying benefits to the 14,000 retirees in those plans, on time and without missing a single payment.
- Paid \$5.5 billion to 900,000 retirees in more than 4,600 failed plans (an additional 620,000 workers will receive benefits when they retire).

The foundation of our work is encouraging the continuation and maintenance of voluntary private pension plans. From that foundation, we work in these ways:

- We protect pensioners before companies are bankrupt.
- We respond to major shutdowns and layoffs.
- We protect pensioners in bankruptcy.
- We provide the safety net by paying benefits.
- We ensure people receive the law's full protection.

How Open is PBGC Today?

PBGC prides itself on being an open and responsive agency. Most of PBGC's high-value data sets are out in the public domain already, and PBGC frequently asks its customers and stakeholders for feedback on performance and input to how PBGC can do better.

Below are some of the comments PBGC has received via its online satisfaction surveys:

- ✓ "I would like to comment on the people I spoke with recently as to resending me a form I misplaced. They spoke clearly, did not make it complicated, and were very easy to reach with minimal waiting time (at least this time). Wish all companies were like that!!!"
- ✓ "I appreciate your honesty and efforts to provide us with vital information."
- ✓ "Keep being as helpful and responsive as you are now!"
- ✓ "Continue working on MyPBA website. This is a great first step to becoming more responsive and informative."

PBGC is always asking its customers to respond to and comment upon our PBGC.gov website, our online applications, and our customer service to retirees and practitioners. In the many exercises PBGC undertakes to gain customer and stakeholder feedback, comments are generally complimentary as well as highly useful to our ongoing efforts to make PBGC more transparent, participative, and collaborative. We know that our customers are interested in knowing about PBGC's negotiated agreements and we are currently working towards posting all settlement agreements for standard terminations and [terminations under ERISA Section 4062\(e\)](#). These attributes are the hallmarks of open government, as well as aspects of customer service, professional outreach, and effective stakeholder partnerships that PBGC has long practiced.

PBGC's Open Government Plan serves as a public roadmap detailing our progress in integrating this administration's open government principles of transparency, participation, and collaboration into PBGC's core mission of protecting retirement security, and how we will continue to support this goal in the future. This Plan reflects input from senior policy, legal, and technology leadership in PBGC. PBGC also reached out to its customers and visitors for input, which will be described in the Plan.

This Plan provides highlights of achievements from PBGC's previous Open Government Plan and includes links to additional relevant information on the PBGC website.

Plan Components

Progress of PBGC Open Government Plan 1.0 Flagship Initiative

In its Open Government Plan 1.0 published in 2010, PBGC indicated that its flagship initiative would be bring the wealth of financial and plan data in the printed Pension Insurance Data Books into the 21st century. The practitioner community eagerly awaits and makes great use of PBGC's Pension Insurance Data Book. The Data Book provides researchers, journalists, and other stakeholders easily accessible, detailed statistics for PBGC's two separate programs covering single-employer and multiemployer plans.

For each of PBGC's insurance programs, the book includes the financial condition of the program, numbers of people and plans protected by the program, the number of people receiving or eligible to receive benefits from PBGC and the benefits to be paid to them, as well as claims against the program, and other vital statistics.

The Data Book was available on PBGC's Open Government website at <http://www.pbgc.gov/open>, but only as a PDF. The goal of the flagship initiative was to bring that very valuable data sets online, and provide it in a machine-readable format. We achieved that goal in 2010 and the data has been available and updated annually ever since. It has been downloaded over 700 times.

As its Open Government flagship initiative, the Pension Insurance Data Book provides customers, stakeholders and other interested parties open and full insight into PBGC's finances and operations, as well as penetrating analyses of the many factors within and outside of PBGC's control, that impact these meaningful statistics. With transparent, accurate, and complete information at hand, customers, pension professionals, and policymakers have the opportunity to understand and thoughtfully participate in voicing opinions and collaborating in the formulation of policies and practices.

New and Expanded Initiatives

Open Data

On May 9, 2013, OMB issued Open Data Policy Memo (M-13-13); requires all agencies to manage information as an asset

(<http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/omb/memoranda/2013/m-13-13.pdf>) and an Executive Order highlighting implementation milestones (<http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2013/05/09/executive-order-making-open-and-machine-readable-new-default-government->)

PBGC already publishes high-value datasets on its Open Government web page (public domain) (<http://www.pbgc.gov/open/>)

In early 2014, in response to OMB's Open Data Policy Memo (M-13-13), PBGC's Quality Management Department researched, identified and evaluated potential data sets for submission. QMD researched easily accessible composite data lists with potential to identify new individual data sets. Data sets included information collected in accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act, Privacy Act Systems of Record and PBGC's Corporate Performance Systems. QMD staff conducted interviews with PGBC

Department Directors and staff liaisons across the corporation. Potential data set discussions were conducted with representatives from multiple Departments.

Key criteria for data set evaluation included potential public interest, availability, expected corporate acceptance and suitability to JSON format. Three data categories were developed:

- New Data Readily Available is data with potential public interest, thought to be non-controversial, available today, and highly suitable for conversion to JSON format
- New Data for Future Consideration is data with potential public interest requiring further development, that may be considered controversial or inappropriate to JSON format
- Other Data is data suggested by Department Directors or staff liaisons that while available could have less public interest potential, could be considered confidential or would require extensive JSON formatting

In March of 2014, the PBGC Open Data Policy (ODP) Workgroup met and recommended five data sets for BPIT consideration.

ODP workgroup seeks BPIT concurrence to release two new sets as soon as possible and three sets later this year.

Five data sets for BPIT consideration and approval are attached below.

Open Government Data Set Review	
Data Set	Recommendations and Comments
1 4062(e) Report	Provides assurance to plan participants guaranteeing pension benefits when a company ceases operations at a facility
2 MEP- terminations, mergers, insolvencies by FY	Provides a glimpse into widely reported severe financial difficulties impacting MEP
3 Benefit Payments by state and Congressional district	Payments to participants based on district residence
4 Interest Rate Tables for Lump Sums, 4044, Premium Segment, Late Premiums, Withdrawal Liability	The Interest Rate Tables posted to the PBGC internet site experience a surge of activity nearly every month, on the 15th (or so) day of the month. The surge is generally more than 10 fold.
5 Summary of Changes (from CBJ)	Chart provides a high level perspective on corporation's priorities and expenditures.

As a part of the transparency initiatives, PBGC published high-value datasets at <http://www.pbgc.gov/open> and at Data.gov for public access. In addition, PBGC continues to work towards compliance with OMB's Open Data Policy (M-13-13). PBGC's Chief Information Officer (CIO) has

partnered with the Quality Management Department (QMD) to co-sponsor this initiative. PBGC is evaluating OMB's requirements and is developing an Open Data Policy Implementation Plan, which will document the process of identifying and inventorying data assets, PBGC's Open Data Outreach process, and the process for open data publication.

PBGC will continue to identify, vet, and add additional data to data listing and send a summary to OMB of milestones and achievements. On-going quarterly meetings with BPIT to review and identify new datasets that could be published and identify updates to existing datasets.

Expanded Outreach

PBGC Open Data Outreach

PBGC took seriously the Open Data Memo's call to reach out to our customers to engage on the important issue of openness and transparency in government. To achieve this goal, on February 27, 2014, PBGC sent the below email to the 10,340 subscribers to its Open Government email subscription list:

You're receiving this email because you're subscribed to receive PBGC's Open Government updates. To unsubscribe, click the unsubscribe link below.

At PBGC.gov, we're interested in giving you the information you need. Currently, our [Open Government page](#) hosts popular data sets like a list of pension plans PBGC's trustee, as well as ones that it currently insures. We'd like to add even more information for you to use.

We're hoping you'll help us identify additional information we can provide. To help us do a better job of serving you:

What PBGC data should PBGC make more readily available?

Which PBGC online service or data would you like to be easier to use?

Which PBGC service would you like to use on your mobile device?

Please direct your feedback Opengov@pbgc.gov. We may not be able to respond to suggestions individually, but we will read and consider all of your suggestions.

Thank you for your interest in PBGC.

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PBGC received few legitimate responses; most were requests for help with individual pension situations. QMD has collected the requests. PBGC plans to send this email annually in March, and will work with QMD to review and evaluate open data set suggestions.

PBGC Customer Outreach

PBGC Begins HTML Bulletin to All Recognized Customers

PBGC has many different kinds of customers, and communicates with them in various and disparate ways. With the assistance of CPAD, BAPD has historically produced two semi-regular newsletters, the [Newsletter for Current Retirees](#), and the [Newsletter for Future Retirees](#). The Current Retirees Newsletter is published once a year in the Fall, and the Future Retirees Newsletter was published twice a year through Fall/Winter 2011. It is scheduled to resume production, but only once a year. These newsletters largely duplicate one another but are tailored somewhat to the different groups of participants.

PBGC is always looking for additional ways to reach out to its customers and to assist in its mission to provide excellent customer service, and it seemed a loss to reduce the regular newsletter mailings. PBGC chose to begin using email management tools to send newsletters to our customers highlighting recent web site improvements, popular blog entries, and other important information they need to know.

The November 2013 mailing proved that more frequent communication with customers will be welcomed. With the advent of increased online communications, and CPAD's desire to communicate more directly and efficiently with PBGC customers, CPAD is planning a quarterly HTML newsletter to the following customers for whom we have email addresses: retirees in pay status, retirees not in pay status, deferred vested participants, beneficiaries, newsletter subscribers, and any other groups we believe would benefit from more frequent outreach.

Event: In Fall 2013, CPAD combined the email lists from PBGC.gov visitors who requested to receive the newsletter and MyPBA users who indicated that they would like to receive the newsletter. The email was sent to over 37,000 recipients and has had a very significant positive impact on PBGC's Customer Satisfaction Scores. Communicating via email with our customers is an obvious win-win for PBGC.

Effect of New Outreach Initiative on Customer Satisfaction Scores

Users receive one of two ACSI Satisfaction Surveys when they come to PBGC.gov: the Customer Satisfaction survey, or the PBGC.gov survey. Results are broken out for each below.

Customer Satisfaction Survey

Our Customer Satisfaction score in the six days since the newsletter went out (261 recipients) is **85**. To get a group of a similar size we need to go back twenty-six days, and their score is **73**.

Total respondents from 10/25 – 10/29:261

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- 225 respondents driven by GovDelivery– average score 86
- 36 regular respondents – average score 77

Sample Comments (Score is in parentheses)

What type of assistance do you need from PBGC?

- staying informed; relevant information for retirees receiving pension payments from PBGC (74)
- The newsletter should tell us what's new and make it so we can toggle back and forth (67)

As an agency – what could PBGC do to better meet your needs?

- Since 2008 my dealings are limited to reading the newsletter. The efficiency and skill of PBGC was a pleasant surprise compared to all other government agencies. (85)
- Continue the information flow. (85)
- Continue keeping us informed (100)

Please specify your primary interest in PBGC

- Keeping in touch with PBGC and the pension benefit I am receiving. (93)
- PBGC has taken over my future pension so I want to stay up to date. (97)

PBGC.gov Satisfaction Survey

Our PBGC.gov score in the six days since the newsletter went out (105 recipients) is **80**. To get a group of a similar size we need to go back fifteen days, and their score is **77**.

Total respondents from 10/25 – 10/29: 105

- 87 respondents driven by GovDelivery– average score 83
- 18 regular respondents – average score 63

Sample Comments (Score is in parentheses)

How could PBGC.gov better meet your needs?

- Continue the timely dissemination of pension information and assurance of continual pension payments to retirees. (85)

Please specify your reason for visiting PBGC.gov today

- I received the fall newsletter, which was primitive/basic flyer without much information. (41)
- I received an email regarding the current newsletter and found something that I was looking for regarding verification of income for mortgage purposes. It is unfortunate that I had not investigated earlier (100)

Ongoing Initiatives

Privacy

PBGC has taken positive steps to assure the protection of all Personally Identifiable Information (PII) under our control. We revise various directives and procedures to assure that our safeguards are up-to-date. PBGC through training ensures our employees and contractors are totally informed as to their responsibility to protect PII in their possession.

Whistleblower Protection

PBGC notifies employees of their rights under the Whistleblower Protection Act (WPA) during the course of No Fear Act training. In response to the White House's Open Government National Action Plan, PBGC is reviewing and considering enhancing its WPA training. The agency is also considering participation in the Office of Special Counsel's Whistleblower Protection Act Certification Program (to the extent practicable).

Participation in Transparency Initiatives

Regulatory Initiatives

PBGC's Regulatory Affairs Group, within the Office of the General Counsel, is committed to transparency in rulemaking. All documents published in the Federal Register, including proposed and final rules and notices, and all public comments on those documents, are posted on PBGC's website, <http://www.pbgc.gov/res/laws-and-regulations/federal-register-documents.html>, and on www.regulations.gov, the government-wide regulatory website. PBGC also posts links to all information collection requests Under OMB Review, <http://www.pbgc.gov/res/laws-and-regulations/information-collections-under-omb-review.html>. PBGC's regulatory review plan, regulatory review progress reports, and links to regulatory relief measures are also posted, <http://www.pbgc.gov/res/laws-and-regulations/reducing-regulatory-burden.html>.

IT Dashboard:

Since the Obama Administration launched the IT Dashboard website on June 1, 2009 to increase transparency into IT spending across the Federal government, PBGC has complied with the annual OMB requirement of reporting the agency's IT portfolio costs. PBGC's IT Portfolio is reviewed and assessed by the agency's IT governance boards, such as the IT Portfolio Review Board (ITPRB) chaired by the Chief Information Officer (CIO), to ensure that all the IT Programs are in alignment with corporate strategic goals, IT strategic goals and enterprise target architecture. The public-facing IT Dashboard contains PBGC's reported FY2015 IT Portfolio (Exhibit 53), which has 17 IT programs (Part 1 - IT Investments for Mission Delivery and Management Support Area and Part 2 - IT Investments for Infrastructure, IT Security, Office Automation, and Telecommunications) and three CIO programs (Part 3 - IT Investments for EA, Capital Planning, and CIO Functions). The IT Dashboard also includes the business cases for the seven Major Programs requiring an Exhibit 300:

- PBGC – Benefit Calculation and Valuation,
- PBGC – Consolidated Financial Systems,

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- PBGC – Integrated Present Value of Future Benefits,
- PBGC – IT Infrastructure,
- PBGC – Participant Services (Benefit Administration),
- PBGC – Premium Accounting (PA), and
- PBGC – Risk Management Early Warning / Legal Matter Management.

[IT Dashboard site for PBGC data](#)

USAspending.gov

PBGC's contract data is maintained and uploaded onto www.usaspending.gov by the Procurement Department. For the FY2015 IT Budget Submission to OMB, the seven Major Programs reported their contract data on the Major Investment Business Case (Exhibit 300A) to comply with OMB's requirement for IT acquisition/contract strategy. This contract data is validated against the information that is currently on USAspending.gov.

PBGC.gov

PBGC published its modernized Information Technology Solutions Life Cycle Management Framework (ITSLCM v1.2) on pbgc.gov at <http://www.pbgc.gov/itslcm/index.html>. The intent is to promote the sharing of PBGC's IT Program/Investment life cycle management practices with other Federal agencies and to provide insight to private sector companies seeking PBGC IT contract awards.

PBGC Open Government Website

PBGC's Open Government webpage includes important PBGC data sets and information about how the American public can provide input that will make the work and performance of PBGC even better and more engaging. The information on this page complements the many other Federal agency data sets located at <http://www.data.gov/>.

PBGC hosts the following Open Government Documents on [PBGC.gov/open](http://pbgc.gov/open)

- [PBGC Annual Reports](#)
- [Reducing Regulatory Burden](#)
- [Federal Spending Data Quality Plan](#) [PDF]
- [Open Government Plan](#) [PDF]
- [Board of Directors Meeting Minutes](#)
- [PBGC in Plain English](#)

PBGC Data Sets

The data sets listed on PBGC.gov can be used to increase agency accountability, improve public knowledge of the agency and its operations, create economic opportunity, and further the agency's mission.

These data sets present information in a machine accessible, downloadable format.

[Multiemployer Pension Plans](#) (Excel file, 587 KB)

This spreadsheet lists the active multiemployer pensions plans insured by PBGC. Plans are identified by name, employer identification number (EIN) and plan number (PN). This data set will be updated annually, after the close of the fiscal year. (updated February 05, 2014)

[Single-Employer Pension Plans](#) (Excel file, 1.86 MB)

This spreadsheet lists the active single-employer pensions plans insured by PBGC. Plans are identified by name, employer identification number (EIN) and plan number (PN). (updated October 28, 2013)

[Financial Assistance Payments to Multiemployer Plans](#) (Excel file, 24.9 KB)

This spreadsheet contains a list of multiemployer plans receiving financial assistance payments from the PBGC from the period Fiscal Year 2005 through the most recent quarterly data available. This data set will be updated quarterly. (updated April 18, 2014)

[Single-Employer Plans Trusteed by PBGC](#) (Excel file, 404 KB)

This spreadsheet contains a list of all single-employer defined benefit pension plans trusteed by the PBGC since its creation in 1974. This data set will be updated quarterly. (updated July 10, 2013)

[PBGC Financial Summary Data](#) (Excel file, 45 KB)

This spreadsheet contains key financial data highlighted from PBGC's financial statements for the periods ending September 30, 1992 through the end of the last fiscal year. This data set will be updated annually. PBGC's financial statements are also available in the [annual reports](#). (updated March 10, 2014)

[Pension Insurance Data Tables](#)

Find out about retirement trends in PBGC's data tables. The tables include statistics on the people and pensions that PBGC protects, including how many Americans are in PBGC-insured pension plans, how many get PBGC benefits, and where they live. This data set will be updated periodically. (updated February 27, 2013)

Records Management

The Workplace Solutions Department (WSD) at the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation (PBGC) oversees the agency's management of both paper and electronic records. Policies and procedures are currently being updated to manage records from creation to destruction or permanent archiving. The effective management of PBGC official records results in improvements in searching and retrieving information.

With the increase of electronic records, PBGC is making a sincere effort to address the emphasis placed on the management of government records by President Obama in his Presidential Memorandum from November 28, 2011. Microsoft SharePoint is currently being implemented at PBGC and it is anticipated that this will improve the management of PBGC electronic records and information.

PBGC's Chief Information Officer (CIO) has recently designated a Chief Cloud Architect to develop a PBGC-wide cloud strategy which will include an evaluation of PBGC's IT Portfolio for potential cloud usage. The Records Management Program Team will collaborate with the Office of Information Technology and the business areas to ensure recordkeeping requirements are included in any future cloud initiatives.

The National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) approved PBGC's functional media neutral records schedule in 2009. The PBGC record schedule is available on the [National Archives website](#). PBGC provides Records Management training to all employees and contractors and specialized role based training to PBGC Records Coordinators.

Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Requests

The PBGC has undertaken numerous initiatives to ensure that the presumption of openness is being applied and that FOIA requests are responded to in a timely manner. In its 2013 Annual FOIA Report, the PBGC reported a backlog of only 8 requests, which have all been closed. To maintain a high level of efficiency, the Disclosure Division has implemented the following:

- **A FOIA Liaison Program:** The purpose of the program is to further reduce processing times by partnering with program offices to build awareness of the FOIA requirements, particularly as they relate to the search responsibilities.
- **FOIAonline:** In October of Fiscal Year 2013, the PBGC executed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Environmental Protection Agency and joined the consortium of other agencies for the use of FOIAonline. FOIAonline has enhanced efficiency and consistency in the way PBGC processes and responds to FOIA requests. The public will benefit from submitting FOIA requests to fewer government websites, tracking the status of requests, and searching and reviewing public requests and agency responses.
- **Re-alignment of organizational resources with programmatic needs:** The Disclosure Division is streamlining the Intake Process for how requests are received and entered into the division's processing queue, to include implementing multi-track processing and enhanced triaging of incoming requests.

To view the agency's Chief FOIA Officer's Report, DOJ Quarterly Reports and to keep up to date on the Disclosure Division's progress, please visit our website at:

<http://www.pbgc.gov/about/pg/footer/foia.html>.

Congressional Requests

The Office of Policy and External Affairs (OPEA) oversees and directs outreach to PBGC external stakeholders, including interaction with Congress, Executive Branch agencies and industry and labor groups, on ERISA and PBGC issues, and coordinates policy throughout the agency. OPEA is currently finalizing a directive to outline the process and procedures for responding to Congressional and other sensitive correspondence, update the roles and responsibilities of departments and offices that contribute to this effort, and set a "gold" customer service standard for responses, with communications required to be clear, simple, responsive to the stakeholder and in plain language.

It is PBGC's policy to respond to congressional and other sensitive correspondence within fifteen (15) business days of receipt at PBGC.

Sensitive Correspondence may be received by PBGC through various avenues: letter, email, telephone call, fax, or social media. Once such correspondence is identified as sensitive, it should be forwarded to the Congressional Administrator within two hours.

A tracking system (the current system or any successor system) will be used to control all Sensitive Correspondence.

Collaboration

PBGC continues to collaborate with its customers and stakeholders using traditional and new media tools. Since the publication of the PBGC's Open Government Plan 1.0, PBGC has hired a social media specialist to direct and promote PBGC's social media outreach activities.

Currently, PBGC hosts a blog, [Retirement Matters](#), and over 15,000 website visitors have signed up for the automatic email updates. PBGC also works actively on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), and [LinkedIn](#) to connect with our customers. The PBGC Human Resources division also posts PBGC's job announcements on Twitter and LinkedIn.

Flagship Initiative

PBGC is considering following the example set by other Federal agencies in using online platforms for collaborative rulemaking.

PBGC is currently exploring the feasibility of this initiative.

Conclusion

PBGC recognizes that transparency, participation, and collaboration are essential goals of this administration. We appreciate that the thoughtful and timely implementation of programs with these goals will help improve PBGC's performance and speed problem resolution. PBGC recognizes the importance of the presumption of openness in its core mission to protect retirement security. PBGC's Open Government program is committed to supporting this goal.

Appendices

Appendix A: [Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation organization chart](#)