

Union Secures Post Retirement Death Benefit for OA Retirees

In 2008, the New York City Employee Retirement System (NYCERS) changed the Employee Ordinary Death Benefit to include a Post Retirement Death Benefit for retirees. BUT THAT RULING ONLY APPLIED TO TA. **In other words, OA retirees were excluded.**

After the untimely and tragic death of former OA Transportation Chairman, Edwin Serrano, Local 106 President, Vincent Modafferi promised that he would do everything he could to see that "the inequity in the Post Retirement Death Benefit for OA retirees will be changed to that of the NYCERS system."

Finally, after over a year of pushing this issue and with the help of Local 100 President John Samuelsen, pension consultant Norman Rosenfeld, and the OA Pension Board Trustees, in June of this year the OA Pension System adopted the NYCERS rules for the Post Retirement Death Benefit for OA retirees.

Thanks to that advocacy, OA retirees and their heirs are now eligible for the Post-Retirement Death Benefit. This includes everyone in the Tier IV system (employment beginning on or after July 27, 1976). The benefit is being applied RETROACTIVELY to the beneficiaries of OA retirees who retired under Tier IV.

Here's how the Death Benefit works:

- ✓ Should the retiree pass away during his/her first year of retirement, his/her beneficiary will receive 50 percent of the value of the Active Member's Ordinary Death Benefit (three times the final year's salary for workers 60 and under. The ordinary death benefit for active workers is decreased on a sliding scale from ages 61 through 70).
- ✓ If the retiree dies in the second year of retirement, the beneficiary would receive 25 percent of value of the active death benefit.
- ✓ In the third year of retirement and thereafter, the benefit would be 10 percent of the value for beneficiaries.

For more Information contact TWU Local 106 at 718 601-7100

Survivor Pension Available For MaBSTOA Families

By SARAH DORSEY | Posted: Monday, August 20, 2012 4:15 pm

The families of Manhattan and Bronx bus employees are now eligible for supplemental benefits when their loved ones pass away after retiring.

The change came after a two-year campaign by Transport Workers Union Locals 100 and 106, which represent workers and supervisors. The Board of Directors for the Metropolitan Transportation Authority agreed to the benefit four years after the New York City Employees' Retirement System granted the same boon to workers in Brooklyn bus depots.

Can Get 1.5 Times Salary

The change applies retroactively to all Tier 4 members who were hired after July 1976. The payments are lower than what active members receive, but are in line with the post-death benefits almost all other Tier 4 NYCERS members get, according to Norman Rosenfeld, a pension consultant with Local 100.

The families of active members who die before age 60 currently receive three times the final year's salary; the benefits diminish by 5 percent each year until a worker would have reached age 70 and remain steady thereafter.

Under the new plan, if a former employee dies in her first year of retirement, the beneficiary gets 50 percent of what a current member would receive. If she dies during the second year, the amount falls to 25 percent, and thereafter, becomes 10 percent.

TWU Leader: About Time

"We're thrilled we were finally able to settle this inequity for our [Manhattan and Bronx Transit Operating Authority (MaBSTOA)] retirees and their families," said Local 100 President John Samuelsen. "The benefit, at all levels, is a significant amount of money to help families cope with the loss of their loved ones."

President Vincent Modafferi of Local 106 said he joined with Local 100 to push for the issue after one of his officers—former Transportation Chairman Edwin Serrano—retired in May 2011 and was killed in a motorcycle crash the next month.

"He collected one pension check and that was going to be the end of it," Mr. Modafferi said. "He took the maximum benefit," an option under which if the recipient dies, no further benefits are sent to a family member.

The union leader, who already attended MaBSTOA pension board meetings, recalled that New York City Transit employees got the post-retirement benefits and brought the issue up at the next meeting. He then filed a grievance on it and joined representatives from Local 100 in pushing for