

Report from the Field: Meet Brandon Roomsburg



Brandon Roomsburg is a Regional Retirement Counselor for the Fairbanks area. Brandon's family came to Alaska in 1979 when his father was transferred to Sitka with the Coast Guard. He was born in Sitka and his family soon after moved to Juneau, where they still live today. Brandon graduated from Juneau-Douglas High School in

2000 and began working for the Alaska Marine Highway System in 2005. He worked for the Alaska Marine Highway System for seven years before joining the Division of Retirement and Benefits.

Brandon has been with the Division since 2012, when he was hired as a Retirement Processing Technician. He was

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Retirees in Touch: Al Milspaugh



Al Milspaugh first came to Alaska while serving in the Air Force; he relocated from the Pentagon to Elmendorf Air Force Base in 1980. Although Al retired from his military career in 1985, he stayed in Alaska and began working for the State. Al retired from the State in 2007 and remained in Anchorage, where he lives today.

Al began his career with the State as a PC Technician for the Alaska State Troopers and later worked as a Case Manager for the Attorney General's Office. He was working as an Educational Adviser for Alaska Student Loans when he retired from the State in 2007. Al says that his work with the State exposed him to a variety of experiences that have expanded his knowledge and added to his previous experiences in the Air Force and knowledge learned from his parents.

Al has continued to expand his horizons during retirement through his volunteer pursuits. He has served as Vice President of the University Area Community Council, as a Delegate of the Federation of Community Councils, as the Commissioner of the Anchorage Animal Control Advisory Board, and as an Ombudsman with State of Alaska Assisted Living Homes. Al

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promoted to a position in the Member Services Contact Center, and was later promoted to a Retirement Processing Specialist position before he became a Regional Counselor. Due to travel restrictions placed by Governor Walker for State of Alaska employees in light of State budget shortfalls, Brandon is currently unable to travel to the Fairbanks region for in-person counseling, but he and the other retirement counselors are using other methods to provide counseling services to members.

Brandon enjoys being a retirement counselor largely because of the members he gets to work with. “I really do enjoy helping people. I find it very rewarding assisting members with their retirement and guiding them through the process. I even have a few members I’ve helped who call me every couple of months just to say hi, to tell me about their adventures, and to wish each other happy holidays,” he said. He also finds it rewarding to be able to “assist members in making very important and irrevocable elections that will last the rest of their lifetime,” he said.

As a counselor, Brandon values being a good listener and being thorough when reviewing and counseling members. “I listen very carefully to members’ questions in order to understand what they’re saying and in some cases what they’re not saying. Counselors are here to provide education and help guide members through to retirement, and members may not know all the options they have available to them,” he explained.

Brandon would like members to know that “it’s never too early to begin planning for retirement. The sooner you take an active role in your retirement accounts and planning for your future, the more likely you are to achieve your goals.” He encourages members to take advantage of the seminars that the Division and Empower Retirement host.

In his free time, Brandon enjoys hunting, fishing, camping, cooking, gardening, and playing with his black lab, Peanut, out at the beach or duck hunting on the Mendenhall wetlands. He even has a 25-ton captain’s license. 🦅

Where Are You?

Review Our List of Members Who May Be Eligible for Benefits

The Division of Retirement and Benefits would like to locate people who no longer have a correct address in our system. Please review the list of names on our website at Alaska.gov/drb/headlines/2016/10/27/where-are-you. If you have a current address or any other information for anyone listed,

please call the Member Services Contact Center toll-free at (800) 821-2251 or (907) 465-4460 in Juneau. **Please note:** People may have the same name as you or they may have a new last name due to marriage, divorce, or name change. Any information you can provide is appreciated. 🦅

2017 Retiree Benefit Mailing Dates

Retiree benefits will be mailed on the following dates in 2017:

- January 25
- February 24
- March 23
- April 25
- May 25
- June 22
- July 25
- August 24
- September 25
- October 25
- November 22
- December 21

The mailing date is also the date that funds are available from your financial institution. If you would like to have your benefit directly deposited, complete the Electronic Direct Deposit Authorization for Retirees form and return it to the Alaska Division of Retirement and Benefits. You can find the form at Alaska.gov/drb/checkDates.



Retirees in Touch: Al Milspaugh

says that all of the experience and knowledge he has gained over the years through work and volunteer pursuits have allowed him to accomplish tasks with confidence and authority. “It has also allowed me to better bond with my grandkids by sharing my knowledge with them,” he said.

Although he is busy staying involved in the community, what Al enjoys most about retirement is having no set time schedule and the freedom to choose what he wants to do and when he wants to do it. One of those things he spends his time doing is traveling. “My wife of 47 years and I have traveled to 45 states, 15 countries, visited numerous famous and non-famous sites, met thousands of people from all over the world, and passed on many stories, mostly during our RV trips. Each year we RV someplace in the lower 48 and then head off to a different country for a week,” he explained.

Al says that he has been able to have a comfortable retirement because he saved the maximum allowed by the State of Alaska retirement plans. Additionally, he explained, “I never lived beyond my financial means, I paid my bills in full monthly, and I saved to purchase costly items with cash.”



Al holds a python during a trip to the Panama Canal.

His advice to members preparing for retirement is this: “Be open with your financial status to your partner, start your retirement program during your youth by working with a reputable financial adviser, get an education to enhance your financial standing, and live within your means, remembering each day brings you closer to retirement.”



Prepaid Cash Card Scam Alert

The Division of Retirement and Benefits has received information from several survivors eligible to receive death benefits from the Public Employees’ (PERS) or Teachers’ (TRS) Retirement Systems of a scam aimed at obtaining identity information about the deceased spouse and thousands of dollars in the form of pre-paid cash cards.

The scam works like this:

The scammer contacts the survivor and asserts that the survivor or deceased spouse owes money on an insurance policy and the State of Alaska will either withhold part or all of the death benefits until the amount is paid. The survivor is then instructed to provide the deceased’s Social Security number and to mail prepaid cash cards along with the receipt for the cash cards and his/her signature on the back to a specified address.

Two important facts:

- State of Alaska retirement system death benefits will NEVER be withheld for debt payment.
- The Division will NEVER contact you by phone and demand cash cards for any attachments.

What to do if you are contacted:

If you receive a phone call from someone claiming to be from the Division, but you suspect they are not, then:

1. Record the caller’s name, call back number, and caller ID if available.
2. Call (800) 821-2251 and confirm the caller is a Division employee.
3. If the caller is not a Division employee, contact your local police department and report the scam.

TRSnewsbreak

for TRS Tiers I and II members

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State Office Building
333 Willoughby Avenue
6th Floor
P.O. Box 110203
Juneau, AK 99811-0203

Lena Gilbertson
Editor

**Member Services
Contact Center**

8:30 a.m. – 4 p.m.
Monday – Thursday

8:30 a.m. – 3 p.m.
Friday

(907) 465-4460
(800) 821-2251
TDD: (907) 465-2805
Fax: (907) 465-3086

doa.drb.mscc@alaska.gov

Alaska.gov/drb

The Alaska Department of Administration complies with Title II of the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The TRS Newsbreak is available in alternative communication formats upon request. DRB ADA Coordinator: (800) 821-2251; in Juneau: (907) 465-4460, or contact the TDD for the hearing impaired at (907) 465-2805.

Note: The Division of Retirement and Benefits is unable to unsubscribe members from our mailing list at this time. The Division has a fiduciary duty to provide both its active and retired members with information regarding their health and retirement benefits, including—but not limited to—benefit education, plan enrollment, and any changes in the plans. While we acknowledge that it can be frustrating to receive a high volume of communication from the Division, it is necessary to keep our members up to date on current information and educational opportunities concerning their health and retirement benefits. We apologize for any inconvenience this may cause you.

State of Alaska Division of Retirement and Benefits
P.O. Box 110203
Juneau, AK 99811-0203

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We Want to Share Your Retirement Story

We want to share your retirement story with your fellow members. Are you volunteering, traveling, involved in the community or just enjoying life? Let us know where you are living now, what you are involved in, where you were employed, and how your State of Alaska retirement has allowed you to enjoy new adventures in retirement. Submit your stories on our website at Alaska.gov/drb/retirement/retireesInTouch.html, email your stories to doa.drb@alaska.gov, or mail your stories and photos to the address on this newsletter, Attention: Newsbreak Editor. 🐦



Stay up to date on upcoming seminars, events, and tips for your retirement.

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