

Railroad Retirement Board

§ 226.50

(b) If tier I of a spouse annuity is reduced for the spouse's employee annuity, as provided for in § 226.30(g) of this part, the reduction is restored in tier II. The restored amount is payable on the effective date of the spouse or the employee tier I benefit, whichever is later. The previous tier II rate is increased by the restored amount, which is determined as follows:

(1) *Initial restored amount.* The restored amount is the amount by which the spouse tier I was reduced by reason of receipt of an employee annuity on the date the restored amount is first payable. The restored amount is only payable if either the employee or spouse had railroad service prior to 1975.

(2) *Recomputation of restored amount.* The restored amount is recomputed if the spouse becomes entitled to a government pension, a social security benefit, or a different type of social security benefit after the date the initial restored amount is effective. The recomputed amount is the amount by which the spouse tier I is reduced by reason of receipt of an employee annuity on the effective date of the entitlement to a government pension or social security benefit.

(3) *Cost-of-living increase in restored amount.* If an initial or recomputed restored amount is effective before the effective date of the cost-of-living increase shown in paragraph (e) of this section, the restored amount is multiplied by the percentage increase that applies. The result is added to the restored amount on the effective date of the increase for each year that the increase is payable.

(c) If the employee's tier II has been reduced pursuant to section 3(g)(2) of the Railroad Retirement Act (takeback provision) the spouse tier II is reduced by one half of the "takeback" in the employee tier II.

(d) If the railroad retirement family maximum applies, as shown in §§ 226.50–226.52 of this part, the spouse tier II rate, as determined in paragraphs (a) through (c) of this section, is reduced by the smaller of—

- (1) The total railroad retirement maximum reduction amount; or
- (2) The previous spouse tier II rate.

(e) The tier II rate, from paragraphs (a) through (d) of this section, is increased by the same percentage as the employee tier II increase described in § 226.11(e) of this part.

(f) If the spouse is entitled to a reduced age annuity (see § 216.51 of this chapter), the tier II rate, as determined in paragraphs (a) through (e) of this section is reduced in the same manner as the tier I as provided for in § 226.30(e) of this part.

Example: An employee's tier II rate is \$329.63 effective October 17, 1981. The spouse rate is \$148.33 (45 percent × \$329.63) effective October 17, 1981. This is increased to \$151.89 effective June 1, 1982, by a cost-of-living increase of 2.4 percent. The spouse is 35 months under age 65, the present retirement age, when the annuity begins. The \$151.89 rate is multiplied by 35/144 to produce an age reduction of \$36.92. This is subtracted from \$151.89 to produce a final rate of \$114.97.

§ 226.33 Spouse regular annuity rate.

The final tier I and tier II rates, from §§ 226.30 and 226.32, are added together to obtain the total spouse regular annuity rate.

§ 226.34 Divorced spouse regular annuity rate.

The regular annuity rate of a divorced spouse is equal to his or her tier I amount. The divorced spouse is not entitled to a tier II benefit.

§ 226.35 Deductions from regular annuity rate.

The regular annuity rate of the spouse and divorced spouse annuity may be reduced by premiums required for supplemental medicare coverage, income tax withholding (spouse annuity only), recovery of debts due the Federal government, and garnishment pursuant to part 350 of this chapter.

Subpart D—Railroad Retirement Family Maximum

§ 226.50 General.

There is a monthly ceiling on total family benefits which limits the amount of certain portions of the employee and spouse annuity. This railroad retirement family maximum amount varies according to the employee's earnings in the ten-year period

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that ends with the year in which his or her annuity begins. If the employee and spouse annuity amounts described in § 226.52 of this part are higher than the maximum from § 226.51 of this part, first the spouse tier II, then the supplemental annuity and, finally, the employee tier II are reduced until the total annuity amount is equal to the maximum or until the spouse tier II and the employee supplemental annuity and tier II have been reduced to zero, whichever comes first. The reduction for the railroad retirement family maximum is first computed from the date the employee's annuity begins. It is recomputed if the employee's tier II rate is reduced for entitlement to a vested dual benefit. It is also recomputed if a workers' compensation or other disability benefit begins or ends, or the employee's tier I benefit or supplemental annuity begins after the beginning date of the regular employee annuity. Finally, it is recomputed if a spouse who was entitled to an annuity divorces the employee or the spouse annuity entitlement ends.

§ 226.51 Maximum monthly amount.

The railroad retirement family maximum is equal to an employee's "final average monthly compensation" (FAMC) up to $\frac{1}{2}$ of $\frac{1}{12}$ of the annual maximum tier I earnings as shown in part 224 of this chapter in the year the annuity begins plus 80 percent of so much of his or her FAMC as exceeds $\frac{1}{2}$ of $\frac{1}{12}$ of the tier I maximum in the year the annuity begins. For this purpose, the FAMC is determined by dividing the individual's total earnings up to the tier II earnings limit as shown in part 211 of this chapter for the two highest-earnings years out of the last 10 calendar years, including the year of retirement, by 24. The railroad retirement maximum cannot be more than the FAMC and cannot be less than \$1,200.

Example: An employee's annuity begins on December 2, 1982. He has yearly earnings that exceed the tier II annual maximum of \$24,300 in 1982 and \$22,200 in 1981. The FAMC is the sum of the tier II maximum for 1981 and 1982 divided by 24 ($\$24,300 + \$22,200 \div 24$) or \$1,937.50. The maximum which may be credited to a month for tier I in 1982 is \$2,700. The family maximum is \$1,350 ($\frac{1}{2}$ of $\frac{1}{12}$ of the annual tier I maximum) plus \$470 (80% of the

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difference between \$1,937.50 and \$1,350) or \$1,820.

§ 226.52 Total annuity subject to maximum.

The total annuity amount which is compared to the maximum monthly amount to determine if a reduction for the railroad retirement family maximum applies is determined by adding together the amounts in paragraphs (a) and (b) of this section. A hypothetical spouse annuity amount is included from the beginning date of the employee annuity if the spouse is not entitled to an annuity at the time the maximum calculation is made.

(a) *Employee annuity amounts.* The following amounts are added together—

(1) The employee tier I amount, effective on the date the employee's tier I benefit begins or, if later, on the date a reduction for other disability benefits begins or ends, as shown in § 226.71 of this part. This amount is before any reduction for age or social security benefits but after including any delayed retirement credits, after any reduction for other disability benefits, and after rounding; and

(2) The employee tier II rate before reduction for the railroad retirement family maximum, effective on the employee's annuity beginning date and, if later, on the date the tier II is first reduced for a vested dual benefit, as shown in § 226.11 of this part; and

(3) The initial supplemental annuity rate effective on the date the supplemental annuity begins, before any reduction for a private pension, as shown in part 227 of this chapter.

(b) *Spouse annuity amounts.* The following amounts are added together—

(1) The spouse tier I amount, which is or would be effective on the date the employee's annuity or tier I benefit begins, as shown in § 226.30. This amount is before any reduction for other disability benefits, age, or social security benefits, but after any reduction for a government pension or employee annuity; and

(2) The spouse tier II rate which is or would be effective on the employee's annuity beginning date, the date the employee's tier I benefit begins, or the