



April 19, 2004

OKLAHOMA BULLETIN NO. OK360-4-15

SUBJECT: PER – Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) Open Season, April 15, 2004 to June 30, 2004

Purpose: To provide employees with TSP Open Season Information.

Expiration Date: September 30, 2004

Open Season for TSP is April 15 to June 30, 2004. TSP is an important benefit designed to help you save for your future. The TSP offers a choice of five investment funds and you can invest in any or all of the five TSP funds.

During the open season, you may begin contributing to the TSP or change the amount of your TSP contributions. During this open season, employees covered by FERS may elect to contribute to the TSP up to 14 percent of the basic pay they earn each pay period; employees covered by CSRS may elect to contribute up to 9 percent of the basic pay they earn each pay period.

How to make a contribution election. To make a contribution election, submit Form TSP-1 (Election Form) to Human Resources, or you may make TSP changes through Employee Express at <http://www.EMPLOYEEEXPRESS.GOV> or on the NFC Personal Page at <https://www.nfc.usda.gov/>. To access employee express and/or Employee Personal page you will need your social security number and PIN. You can obtain Form TSP-1 from the TSP Web site www.tsp.gov/forms/index.html.

When elections become effective. If your election is received before June 12, 2004, it will become effective pay period 12. Your earnings and leave statement, dated July 8, 2004, will reflect this election. If your election is received after June 12, 2004, it will become effective the first full pay period after it is received.

How to make an investment election. You may invest in any of the five TSP investment funds. To change the investment of future contributions to your TSP account, you must request a **contribution allocation**. To change the investment of money already in your account, you must request an **interfund transfer**.

There are three ways to make a contribution allocation or an interfund transfer:

1. Use the TSP Web site (www.tsp.gov);
2. Call the ThriftLine (504) 255-8777; or
3. Request and Complete Form TSP-50 (Investment Allocation). NOTE: Form TSP-50 is not available in electronic format; you must request this form from Human Resources.

You may request a contribution allocation or interfund transfer at any time. **Contribution allocations** and **interfund transfers** are processed daily, and your contribution allocation request will generally be effective no later than two business days after it is received.

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Where to get more information about the TSP. The booklet *Summary of the Thrift Savings Plan for Federal Employees* describes the TSP in detail and contains more information about contribution elections, contribution allocations, and interfund transfers. The latest version of this booklet is dated May 2001. If you do not have the latest version, you may download the booklet from the TSP Web site.

The attached flyer, "TSP Open Season, Think BIG, April 15-June 30, 2004" contains basic information about this TSP open season and presents historical rates of return for the TSP investment funds.

If you have additional questions about the TSP, contact Linda Garabedian at (405) 742-1210 or Debbie Ruark at (405) 742-1212.

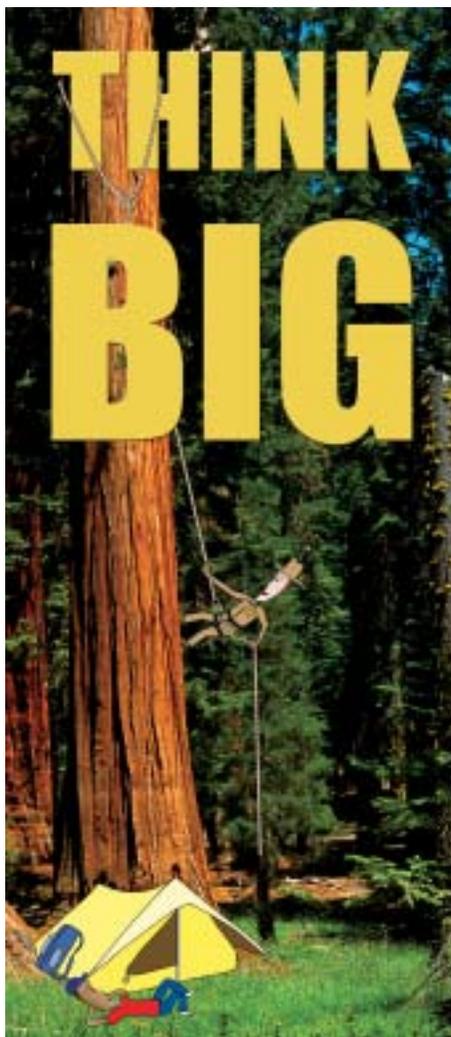
/s/

M. DARREL DOMINICK
State Conservationist

Attachment

TSP Open Season

April 15 – June 30, 2004



FERS and CSRS Employees

The Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) open season is your chance to start or change the amount of your contributions to your TSP account. Ask your personnel office for the TSP Election Form (TSP-1) or download a copy from the Forms & Publications section of the TSP Web site, www.tsp.gov. Your contributions will be made automatically from your pay each pay period.

Note: Some agencies process these elections electronically instead of using paper forms. Check with your personnel office for guidance.

If you are covered by FERS, you can elect to contribute up to 14% of your basic pay each pay period, up to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) annual limit (\$13,000 for 2004).

As soon as you are eligible for agency contributions, your agency will automatically contribute an amount equal to 1% of your basic pay each pay period, whether you contribute or not. In addition, if you contribute your own money, your agency will match your contributions:

- dollar-for-dollar on the first 3% you contribute each pay period, and
- 50 cents on the dollar for the next 2% you contribute.

If you were hired before June 1, 2003, you are already eligible for agency contributions.

If you were hired:	Agency contributions will begin:
June 1, 2003 – November 30, 2003	First full pay period in June 2004
December 1, 2003 – May 31, 2004	First full pay period in December 2004
June 1, 2004 – November 30, 2004	First full pay period in June 2005

If you are covered by CSRS, you can elect to contribute up to 9% of your basic pay each pay period, up to the IRS annual limit (\$13,000 for 2004). You do not receive any agency contributions.

If you are age 50 or older, and you are contributing the maximum amount of regular TSP contributions for which you are eligible, you may also elect to make additional “catch-up” contributions up to \$3,000 for 2004. You can make this election at any time. Check with your personnel office for guidance.

You can choose among five investment funds:

- **Government Securities Investment (G) Fund** — invested in short-term, risk-free U.S. Treasury securities that are specially issued to the TSP
- **Fixed Income Index Investment (F) Fund** — invested in a bond index fund that tracks the Lehman Brothers U.S. Aggregate (LBA) bond index
- **Common Stock Index Investment (C) Fund** — invested in a stock index fund that tracks the Standard & Poor’s (S&P) 500 stock index (which comprises large companies)
- **Small Capitalization Stock Index Investment (S) Fund** — invested in a stock index fund that tracks the Wilshire 4500 stock index (which comprises small and medium companies)
- **International Stock Index Investment (I) Fund** — invested in a stock index fund that tracks the Morgan Stanley Capital International EAFE (Europe, Australasia, Far East) stock index (which comprises stocks in 21 countries)

If you are a new participant, your contributions are automatically invested in the G Fund. Once your account has been established, make an investment allocation to put your contributions in the funds of your choice.

You may choose or change your investments in the following ways:

- **Contribution allocation** — specifies the way in which all new money coming into your account (payroll contributions, loan payments, transfers and rollovers from other retirement plans) is invested in the funds. It does not affect the investment of your current balance.
- **Interfund transfer** — redistributes the money already in your account. It does not affect the investment of future contributions.

Open season is a good time to review your investment choices and rebalance your account to match your retirement savings goals. You can rebalance by making interfund transfers, contribution allocations, or a combination of the two.

You may make your contribution allocation or interfund transfer at any time using:

- the **TSP Web site** (www.tsp.gov)
- the **ThriftLine** (504-255-8777)
- **Form TSP-50, Investment Allocation**

The Web site and the ThriftLine are the most efficient ways to make your investment allocation. You will need your Social Security number and your TSP Personal Identification Number (PIN) to make your request. If you are a new participant, you will receive a PIN in the mail after your account is established. If you lose or forget your PIN, you will have to request a new one.

The annual rates of return (net earnings after expenses) for the G, F, C, S, and I Funds are shown below.

Year	G Fund	F Fund	C Fund
1994	7.2%	-3.0%	1.3%
1995	7.0%	18.3%	37.4%
1996	6.8%	3.7%	22.8%
1997	6.8%	9.6%	33.2%
1998	5.7%	8.7%	28.4%
1999	6.0%	-0.8%	21.0%
2000	6.4%	11.7%	-9.1%
2001	5.4%	8.6%	-11.9%
2002	5.0%	10.3%	-22.0%
2003	4.1%	4.1%	28.5%
1994 – 2003 compound annual rates of return	6.0%	6.9%	11.0%

Year	S Fund*	I Fund*
1994	-2.7%	7.8%
1995	33.5%	11.3%
1996	17.2%	6.1%
1997	25.7%	1.5%
1998	8.6%	20.1%
1999	35.5%	26.7%
2000	-15.8%	-14.2%
2001	-9.0%	-21.9%
2002	-18.1%	-16.0%
2003	42.9%	37.9%
1994 – 2003 compound annual rates of return	9.7%	4.3%

* The S and I Funds were implemented in May 2001. The S Fund tracks the Wilshire 4500 stock index. The I Fund tracks the Morgan Stanley Capital International EAFE (Europe, Australasia, Far East) stock index. The returns shown reflect the actual performance of the S and I Funds from May 2001 forward, and the returns of the Wilshire 4500 and EAFE indexes (without deduction of any administrative expenses, trading costs, or investment management fees), respectively, for the first four months of 2001 and for prior years.

There is no guarantee that future rates of return will replicate historical rates. There is risk of investment loss in the F, C, S, and I Funds.

You can get the most recent share prices and rates of return by visiting the TSP Web site at www.tsp.gov or by calling the ThriftLine at (504) 255-8777.

More information about the TSP is available from your personnel office. Ask for the *Summary of the Thrift Savings Plan*. Be sure to review the information in the Plan Summary before you make any decisions about your TSP account. Additional information (as well as the most recent forms and publications) is available from the TSP Web site.

Restrictions on withdrawing your money apply while you are employed. Read the Plan Summary for details.

Address changed? If so, contact your agency immediately to correct your TSP account records.