

The **Federal Ballpark Estimate**, a savings goal worksheet, is now available on the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) web site at: <http://www.opm.gov/benefits/ballpark/menu.asp> The Federal Ballpark Estimate allows users to automatically calculate estimates of future Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) or Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) retirement benefits and Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) account balances. It will also let you know how well you are doing in meeting your savings goal.

Pre-1987 Service Computation Dates (SCD) for FERS Employees: While FERS began on January 1, 1987, it is possible for a FERS employee to have an SCD prior to that date. For example, employees with prior CSRS service who elected FERS and employees who paid military deposits can have SCD's earlier than 1987. In the current version of the Federal Ballpark Estimate, a person who enters an SCD prior to 1/1/1987 will receive the following message, "FERS began on January 1, 1987. Please recheck your SCD and/or coverage type." This is only a warning; you can proceed by clicking on the "Submit" button a second time.

15% TSP Contribution Limit: The current version of the Federal Ballpark Estimate limits the maximum TSP contributions to 15% of salary. The law allows contributions up to the maximum tax deferral amount (\$15,500 in 2007). OPM set the 15% limit to simplify the data entry for users. Most employees set their TSP contributions as a percent of salary. Employees making more than \$110,000 who contribute the maximum tax deferral amount can convert it to a percent of salary that is lower than the 15% maximum in the calculator. The Federal Ballpark Estimate will be updated to allow the flexibility to enter a percentage of salary or a dollar amount up to the maximum in the near future. When the update is complete, it will also allow employees who are eligible to make "catch-up" TSP contributions to include them in the estimate.

If you have any questions, you may contact Cathy Clifton, 865-576-0680.