



FEDERAL BENEFITS EXPERTS

**LANSING AREA
MICHIGAN**

CHAPTER 0289



**2nd Quarter
Newsletter 2025**

Chapter Officers

- President** William Fude
- 1st Vice President** Diane Fielder
- 2nd Vice President** Mary Cook
- Secretary** Frances Johnston
- Treasurer** Joe DeSira
- Nomination Chair** Vacant
- Audit Chair** Kathy Zerkle

Committee Coordinators

- Membership** Bruce Miles
- Sunshine** Kathy Zerkle
- NARFE-PAC** Joe DeSira
- Newsletter** Frances Johnston
- Legislative Chair** Frances Johnston

To contact our chapter officers, go to the Chapter Web page

<https://www.narfe.org/chapter0289/> use Contact Us to send a direct message.



NARFE WEBSITES

Important Web Addresses

Chapter Web Page address is: <https://www.narfe.org/chapter0289/>

Federation Webpage address is: <https://www.narfe.org/mi/>

National: <https://www.narfe.org/>

[NARFE National Headquarters | Facebook](#)

Federation NARFE Facebook page. <https://www.facebook.com/NARFEMI>

FEDHub: [Home - FEDHub \(narfe.org\)](#)

Lansing Chapter 289 meetings are normally held at 1pm at the Tri-County Office on Aging, 5303 South Cedar St. in Lansing. Enter through Door number 1 on north side.

Upcoming Programs

We have some interesting programs coming up in the next months. Be sure to put on your calendar so you will remember what is coming. **The newsletter only comes out quarterly.**

April 3rd program will be Keith Moss, superintendent of the Wastewater Treatment Facility for the City of Lansing will be discussing what happens to waste water and sewage.

May 1st program will be Dr Zainab Fayyaz, MD from the College of Human Medicine at MSU. She will be speaking about her research using light to assist and enhance medical treatment. A very interesting and pertinent topic for an aging population.

Plan for our Chapter July Picnic. Date has been moved from July 3 to **July 10** at Riverside Park Pavilion on Bridge Street, DeWitt, MI from Noon to 3 PM.

If any member has a specific topic that they think might interest the group or has a friend that speaks on a particular topic- let Mary Cook know. She is open to any and all suggestions for guest speakers and work together to bring information to our group. You can email her directly through the Chapter website "About Us" Page at <https://www.narfe.org/chapter0289/about-us/> .

From the Editor: As a retired Federal Employee, I have been thinking about all the current active Federal Employees as to what they are and will be going through in the next months. I wondered how I could help them or provide support to them through this period of unrest, uncertainty and stress. My initial thoughts ended up as a letter which I sent to all our chapter presidents to assist them and their members to send to their legislators to get them to support Federal Employees. Now I have developed thoughts on what I did in preparation for Reduction in Force which happened to me several times during my 38-year career. I realized as I developed the list it would also apply to anyone contemplating retirement.

PREPARED FOR A REDUCTION IN FORCE OR RETIREMENT

As Federal Employees prepare for a possible Reduction in Force (RIF) or make the decision to retire it is important to be prepared just in case you are the one that loses during a RIF action. Employees should consider a few actions in preparation for a RIF regarding records they may not have access to after the RIF and many of these actions would also apply to an employee considering retirement.

1. Make sure you download a copy of your electronic official personnel file (EOPF). Once you leave your job you will not have access to do this without going through extra effort.
2. Keep at least three years of your pay stubs. These serve as essential proof of earnings which will impact pension calculations for your high-three average (this could be changing to high-five in the future).
3. Keep a copy of your training record. This is important if you want another federal job in the future or you can use it as part of your future resume.
4. If you have a Thrift Savings Plan, then make sure you update your contact information to make sure you have access to your account after you leave the government. Many times, employees have two-factor authentication which could cause you problems if employees do not have a personal email rather than a government email address on their TSP record.
5. If you have enough time to possibly retire during the RIF process you may want to get an estimate of your retirement income to assist you in making this decision. You may want to use different retirement dates for estimates. Those thinking of retiring should also get estimates so you will know approximately what you will get after retirement to live on as the bills come to avoid spending from your savings.
6. If you are a veteran, then make sure you have your veteran's preference indicated on your Standard Form 50. Along with this make sure you have a copy of your military deposit receipts which I believe should be part of your EOPF you downloaded. This could require multiple steps, including obtaining earning records from the Defense Finance and Accounting Services (DFAS) if you don't complete this while still working for the government.
7. Employees tend to keep a number of important documents on their office computers. Review all your emails and work files to identify essential documents that you might need after leaving the federal service. Make sure you DO NOT INCLUDE any documents that are classified or have sensitive information because they should NOT be retained. You may even need to clean these types of documents from your office computer since you do not know who will be using your computer after you. You will want to work with your supervisor to determine if anything should remain on your office computer.

These are my initial thoughts and others may have more but I believe these will provide a good starting point. The chapter will try to keep everyone updated on government actions going on between newsletters via posts on the [Chapter 0289 Website](#) page or the [Michigan Federation Website](#).

Did you attend a recent rally in support of federal employees, or a community event? You can email your photos and feedback to [Chapter newsletter editor](#).

Retiree Concerns

We realize that active employees are not the only ones with concern related to actions that the administration is taking. Our retirees also have concerns like the one addressed here *By Curtis Price, Everett Chapter 0193, current Chapter President and Legislative Chair, and Washington Federation Secretary.*

At my chapter meeting today, one of our members, who is severely disabled and depends on her CSRS pension and SSA disability to survive, came up and asked if her benefits are going to stop coming because of DOGE. Can NARFE provide some general guidance on what to say to our membership? I find this possibility really unlikely, but members, especially the most vulnerable ones, are terrified.

Here is their response:

I can certainly understand this member's concerns. What's happening is unprecedented, especially when trying to understand the legalities of the actions and the speed at which they are occurring.

For now, federal annuities are safe. The funds are disbursed from a permanent trust account managed by the Treasury Department. The White House Administration or DOGE cannot take away federal pension funds. There are ways a person could lose their federal pension, however. Typically, it's due to criminal activity. For more information about this, please visit OPM's Leaving the Government Q&A page.

<https://www.opm.gov/retirement-center/retirement-faqs/leaving-the-government>

I've also attached a copy of NARFE's Issue Brief (<https://www.narfe.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/Issue-Brief-Threats-to-Federal-Employees-and-Retirees-2025-1-1.pdf>) on the current threats to federal annuitants and active feds that may be helpful to you and your members.

Feel free to contact us again should you have any further questions.

Best, Ellie Dorsey, NARFE, Federal Benefits Institute

The links to the documents Ms. Dorsey quoted are built into the statement for our members to click on or type into a browser to view.

Chapter President Message:

DOGE DAZE. The Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) is responsible for the massive payroll-slashing effort that has recently wreaked havoc across the Federal government. DOGE was created by an Executive Order in January unlike legitimate federal Departments that are created and funded by Congress. So, is it really a Department?

It has been revealed that some DOGE staff are paid at the GS-15 Step10 level. Who funds them? Why are they stealing our personal information from Social Security and IRS databases? It's starting to sound like maybe waste, probably fraud, and definitely abuse. DOGE's mission is to seek out the elusive "waste, fraud, and abuse" that supposedly is rampant in the federal government. The Administration recently fired 18 Inspectors General (IGs) who already did this. The IGs objectively examined whether Congressional intent and funding was legally, efficiently, and effectively delivered to citizens and mandated any needed remedial action.

DOGE's approach appears to be short-sighted and based on pre-conceived political beliefs, many of which are unfounded or at least questionable. Without further analysis DOGE then takes its chainsaw to the agencies and fires everyone in sight. Their end game is funding tax cuts for millionaires and benefit cuts for the rest of us. Congress has not objected much but many of us are questioning the long-term harm DOGE's actions will cause to citizens of the USA and to those we help in the world. Are any politicians willing to put DOGE back on a leash? I don't advocate for DOGE to be euthanized but neutering them seems appropriate.

MICHIGAN FEDERATION ANNUAL CONFERENCE

The **2025 Michigan Federation NARFE conference** will be held at the Doherty Hotel 604 N McEwan St, Clare, MI 48617 from May 20-22, 2025. Elections for Federation Officers will be held during the conference. The Doherty Hotel has agreed to provide a guest room block, titled National Active and Retired Federal

Employees at a corporate rate discount. Reservations must be made through **the sales department so call directly 1-877-236-4378 to that department instead of the front desk.**

The conference is for ALL NARFE Michigan members in good standing. Elections for Federation Officers will be held during the conference. The election of new Federation officers is held on the afternoon of Wednesday, May 21st, the only full day of the conference. Any Chapter or National only Michigan NARFE member in good standing may hold elected or chair positions. Federation Officer positions are Federation President, 1st Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary, four Area Vice Presidents, Chaplain and Sergeant-at-Arms that will be elected by all federation members (both National Only and Chapters) in good standing attending the conference.

Other Chair and Coordinator positions open/available for volunteers are Membership Chair, Legislative Chair (National and State), NARFE/PAC Coordinator, FEEA Coordinator, Alzheimer's Coordinator, Public Relations Chair, and Newsletter Editor.

No proxy paper ballots are acceptable. Only members in attendance on Wednesday, May 21, 2025, after lunch, will be permitted to cast a vote or to submit a nomination.

The Conference letter on the Michigan Federation Website has the registration form if you want to attend. The chapter is financially supporting three attendees for the full conference. Members can come after lunch on Wednesday, May 21 just to vote without any cost nor do they need to submit a registration form but bring something with ID showing you are a NARFE member.

SUPPORT BY NARFE THROUGH WEBINARS

Federal Benefits Expert

Do not forget that as a member you have access to the **Federal Benefits Expert Program Manager**. Members can easily initiate contact with the Federal Benefits Institute from the NARFE website by emailing fedbenefits@narfe.org, or by phone 1 (800) 456-8410 or fax (703) 838-7785.

Watch Recent NARFE [Webinars on Demand](#) About Tax Planning, Advocacy Priorities, Federal Employee Legal Rights, Civil Service Protections and the Deferred Resignation Email

The Trump Administration has introduced substantial changes affecting the federal workforce, leaving many public servants frightened, facing the prospect of job loss, and/or facing significant changes to the nature of their work. NARFE is ready to help walk you through the implications of this watershed moment.

- “Know Your Rights and Obligations Following Trump Executive Orders”.
- “Stay or Go: Considering the ‘Deferred Resignation’ Offer, Retirement Options, and Potential Options”.
- “Advocacy Priorities Amid Emerging Threats and Historic Success”.

Also new in 2025 on NARFE's Webinars on Demand, check out: “Tax Planning for Retired Feds”

UPDATE YOUR RECORD

The NARFE Membership and Financial System has just been updated. Please help us to keep the records updated. You can send the Chapter Secretary a letter to the return address on this newsletter or reply to the email you received with the newsletter attached. Another way is to visit the chapter website in [FAQs under Membership](#) and a tutorial is link to assist you in making the changes yourself.