



*O'Connell* affirms the basic pension principle that eligibility criteria are evaluated only at the time of application. But more broadly, *O'Connell* affirms that agencies cannot expand the grounds to discontinue pensions. By enforcing the difference between eligibility criteria and events that discontinue benefits, the Court appropriately prevented an expansion of the latter - and prevented employers from terminating beneficiaries in order to stop their benefits. While *O'Connell* does not recognize any new protections for beneficiaries, it shows the Court will vigilantly prevent benefit-discontinuing events from expanding.

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Dated: May 31, 2022

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