

YOUR BENEFITS | YOUR FUTURE

What You Need to Know About Your CalPERS  
School Benefits



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**Certificated  
School Employees**

Some certificated school employees are CalPERS members. These are CalPERS members who became certificated employees, and subject to CalSTRS coverage, but they were eligible to retain CalPERS membership. Currently, those eligible to retain CalPERS coverage include: former classified school employees, former State Department of Education employees, former employees of the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges, and all CalPERS members with at least five years of service credit. This irrevocable election must have been made within 60 days of appointment. For more information, contact your personnel office.

**INTRODUCTION**

Retirement can be one of the best stages of your life. It can also be complicated and at times stressful if you are not educated about your benefits and have not done the proper planning. Understanding the fundamentals of your CalPERS retirement benefits is a good first step toward a happy and fruitful retirement.

This publication describes retirement benefits and the retirement benefit formula for school members. To be eligible for the CalPERS school member benefit retirement formula, you must be employed in a classified position within the jurisdiction of a school employer, except: 1) those who are local police; 2) those who are covered under the State Teachers' Retirement System (CalSTRS); 3) those who work directly for the Los Angeles or San Diego County Superintendent of Schools; 4) those employed under the jurisdiction of a Joint Powers Authority contract; 5) eligible certificated employees who elect to retain CalPERS membership (see sidebar).

Featured throughout this publication are photos of school employees from the Folsom Cordova Unified School District and San Juan Unified School District. Like them, you should understand the full spectrum of retirement and death benefits you and your beneficiary(ies) are entitled to receive from CalPERS. The purpose of this publication is to help you educate yourself about these benefits. It will provide you information on contributions, health benefits, and other programs you should consider before and after retirement.

You may obtain a copy of any publication or form referenced in this publication by calling CalPERS at **888 CalPERS** (or **888-225-7377**) or by visiting our website at [www.calpers.ca.gov](http://www.calpers.ca.gov).

## YOUR RETIREMENT BENEFITS

There are two types of retirement benefits:

- Service retirement or “normal” retirement
- Disability retirement

### Service Retirement or “Normal” Retirement

To be eligible for service retirement, you must be at least age 50 and have a minimum of five years of CalPERS-credited service. If you became a member on or after January 1, 2013, you must be at least 52. There are some exceptions to the five-year requirement. If you are employed on a part-time basis, and have worked at least five years, contact CalPERS to find out if an exception will apply to you. There is no mandatory retirement age for school members.

If you are considering applying for a service retirement, review the CalPERS publications *Planning Your Service Retirement* and *A Guide to Completing Your CalPERS Service Retirement Election Application*.

### Disability Retirement

This type of retirement applies to you if you become disabled and can no longer perform the duties of your job. Disability retirement has no minimum age requirement and your disability does not have to be job related. However, you must have a minimum of five years of CalPERS service credit. If you are employed on a part-time basis, and you have worked at least five years, contact CalPERS to find out if an exception will apply to you.

**You may apply for a disability retirement if:**

- You are working for a CalPERS-covered employer; or
- You are within four months of separation from a CalPERS-covered employer; or
- You separated at any time from your CalPERS-covered employer because of a disability and you have remained disabled since then; or
- You are on military or approved leave.

Once CalPERS receives a complete application package from you or someone else on your behalf (such as your employer), we will review your file to see if the information is current and complete. After verification for completeness, CalPERS can normally make a determination within four to six months.

If you are considering applying for disability retirement, review the CalPERS publication *A Guide to Completing Your CalPERS Disability Retirement Election Application*.

### **School Safety Members**

If you become disabled due to a job-related injury or illness and can no longer perform the duties of your job, you have the option to apply for an industrial disability retirement.

### **Emergency Retirement**

CalPERS will expedite retirement processing if you are terminally ill or facing imminent death. Contact CalPERS or your employer immediately if there is a need for emergency retirement.

### **Pay Rate**

Pay rate is your base pay, paid on a full-time basis during normal working hours.

### **Special Compensation**

In accordance with Board regulations, certain items of special compensation can be included in your final compensation.

Contact your employer or CalPERS if you are unsure which types of special compensation can be included.

### **Health Benefit Vesting**

Consult your personnel office or call CalPERS to determine if additional service credit applies to health benefit vesting requirements.

## **How Your Retirement Is Funded**

Three sources fund a defined benefit retirement plan like CalPERS. First, employees generally make contributions into the System. The percentage of your contribution is fixed by statute and is generally intended to be an amount that will cover half of the normal cost of the benefit earned per year. Normal cost will vary by benefit type, as higher benefit formulas have higher normal costs. The second funding source is earnings from the investment of System assets in stocks, bonds, real estate, and other investment vehicles. The amount contributed from this source fluctuates from year to year. The balance of the funding is provided by employer contributions. Employer contributions decline when investment returns rise and increase when investment returns decline.

In a defined benefit retirement plan, you will receive a lifetime benefit determined by a set formula. For school members, CalPERS uses your years of service, age at retirement, and highest one-year or three-year compensation while employed. This contrasts with a defined contribution plan (such as 403(b) or 457 plan), in which the benefits are determined not by a formula, but solely by the amount of contributions in an account, plus earnings.

## **How Your Retirement Benefit Is Calculated**

Now that you understand the basic building blocks of a defined benefit retirement plan, it's time to learn how to calculate your retirement benefit. Three factors are multiplied together to calculate your service retirement:

- Service credit
- Benefit factor
- Final compensation

### **Service Credit**

You earn service credit for each year or partial year you work for a CalPERS-covered employer. Part-time members earn service credit in proportion to the number of hours worked. Service credit accumulates on a fiscal year basis, July 1 through June 30. You may view your current service credit at any time by logging in to myCalPERS at [my.calpers.ca.gov](http://my.calpers.ca.gov) or by referring to your CalPERS Annual Member Statement to verify your service credit as of each June 30.

In some cases, you may be eligible for other types of service credit that can help you maximize your retirement benefits.

Other types of service include:

- Unused sick leave at retirement
- Redeposit of contributions you previously withdrew from CalPERS
- Service with a CalPERS-covered employer prior to your date of membership
- Service with a public agency prior to the date of that agency's agreement with CalPERS
- Certain types of leaves of absence, public service employment, Peace Corps, AmeriCorps\*VISTA, AmeriCorps, military service

For more information about service credit, obtain the CalPERS publication *A Guide to Your CalPERS Service Credit Purchase Options*.

### Benefit Factor

Your benefit factor is the percentage of pay to which you are entitled for each year of service. It is determined by your age at retirement and the retirement formula based on your membership date with each employer. This guide explains the following school retirement formulas:

2<sup>percent</sup><sub>@55</sub>    2<sup>percent</sup><sub>@62</sub> \*

Refer to your CalPERS Annual Member Statement to verify your retirement formula(s).

### Understanding Your Retirement Formula

Starting on page 20, you'll find two charts for each of the school retirement formulas. The first chart shows how the benefit factor increases for each quarter year of age. The second chart shows the percentage of final compensation you will receive.

If you became a member prior to January 1, 2013, but you permanently separate from employment and return to membership after a break in service of more than six months, you are subject to the retirement formula in place on January 1, 2013 for any service credit earned after that date. This does not apply if you return to the same employer.

**Note:** All State departments are considered the same state employer. All school county offices and districts are considered the same school employer.

### Final Compensation

Your final compensation is the highest average pay rate and special compensation during any consecutive one-year or three-year period. Which compensation period we use depends on your retirement formula(s). If you are not sure, ask your personnel office. We use your full-time pay rate, not your earnings. If you

\* Membership date on or after January 1, 2013.



work part time, we will use your full-time equivalent pay rate to determine your final compensation. myCalPERS automatically finds and uses the highest compensation period during your employment with CalPERS.

If your membership date is on or after January 1, 2013, there is a cap on the compensation used to calculate your benefit. If your service is coordinated with Social Security, the compensation cap used to calculate your benefit is equal to the 2013 Social Security wage base, adjusted by the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers: City Average. For 2014, the cap was \$115,064. If your service credit is not coordinated with Social Security, the compensation cap used to calculate your benefit is equal to 120 percent of the 2013 Social Security wage base, adjusted by the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers: City Average, which was \$138,077 in 2014. The compensation limit is calculated based on the limit in effect for each calendar year included in the final compensation period.

If your CalPERS service was coordinated with Social Security, you did not contribute on the first \$133.33 of your monthly earnings. So, when computing your retirement allowance, you must reduce your final compensation by \$133.33. For service earned after January 1, 2001, final compensation will not be reduced by \$133.33.

For some school employees, monthly pay may have been reported to us on a 10- or 11-month basis instead of 12 months. If this is the case, your final compensation will be based on a 12-month average. For example, 10-month employees would calculate their final compensation as:

- $\$2,400 \times 10 = \$24,000$
- $\$24,000 / 12 = \$2,000$  final compensation

## Estimating Your Retirement Benefits

### More Than One Year From Retirement

You have two options for generating retirement estimates when you are more than one year from your expected retirement date.

The first option is to use the CalPERS Retirement Estimate Calculator on our website at [www.calpers.ca.gov](http://www.calpers.ca.gov). This online calculator allows you to generate multiple estimates, customizing them to include projections based on:

- Career plans
- Expected promotions or pay increases
- Special compensation
- Possible changes to your time base
- Any expected formula changes
- Alternative retirement dates
- Additional service credit





You can print but not save estimates produced using this calculator.

The second option is to log in to my|CalPERS at [my.calpers.ca.gov](http://my.calpers.ca.gov), which requires a username and password, to obtain an estimate that incorporates data your employer already reported to CalPERS. You can generate a variety of scenarios and save them in my|CalPERS for future reference.

### **Within One Year of Retirement**

If you are within one year of your expected retirement date, you may request a CalPERS-generated retirement estimate by completing a *Retirement Allowance Estimate Request* form and mailing it to the address on the form. You can find this form in the Forms & Publications Center at [www.calpers.ca.gov](http://www.calpers.ca.gov).

A CalPERS-generated retirement estimate uses your most current CalPERS account information, but does not include projections of salary increases, special compensation, or other job-related changes. It allows you to make informed retirement decisions and verify that our records properly reflect or match yours.

When you eventually submit your retirement election application, you must specify a retirement option and designate a beneficiary. The CalPERS-generated estimate may display options that are not available with the online Retirement Estimate Calculator.

You are limited to **two** CalPERS-generated estimate requests in a 12-month period and must be within one year of retirement.

### **Your Retirement Payment Options**

At retirement, you can choose to receive the highest benefit payable, which is referred to as the “Unmodified Allowance.” The Unmodified Allowance provides a monthly benefit to you that ends upon your death.

You also have the choice of requesting a reduction in the Unmodified Allowance to provide a lump sum or lifetime monthly benefit for a beneficiary upon your death. For more information about the retirement payment options available, review the CalPERS publication *Planning Your Service Retirement*.

## **Survivor Continuance**

Survivor Continuance will apply only if you have an eligible family member as of the date of your death.

## **Impact of Social Security**

If your service is not coordinated with Social Security, Survivor Continuance will be one half of your Unmodified Allowance. If your service is coordinated with Social Security, it will be one-quarter of your Unmodified Allowance. If you have some time covered and some not covered, or if you have a combination of service under CalPERS with the state or a public agency, special consideration must be given to figure the amount of your Survivor Continuance benefit.

## **Survivor Continuance**

In making a decision about whether to reduce your Unmodified Allowance to provide for a beneficiary, you will want to consider Survivor Continuance. This is a contracted employer-paid benefit. This benefit consists of a monthly allowance that automatically continues to an eligible survivor following your death after retirement regardless of the retirement option you select.

### **Who Is Eligible?**

- Your spouse, if you were married for at least one year before your retirement and remained married until the date of your death, will receive the Survivor Continuance benefit for life. (For disability retirement, you need only to have been married at retirement and remained married until the date of your death.)
- Your domestic partner, if you were legally registered at least one year prior to your retirement and continuously until your death, will receive the Survivor Continuance benefit for life. (For disability retirement, you need only to have been registered as domestic partners at retirement and remained registered until the date of your death.)
- If you do not have an eligible spouse or registered domestic partner, your natural or adopted unmarried children under age 18 will receive this monthly benefit until marriage or age 18. An unmarried child who was disabled prior to age 18 and whose disability has continued without interruption will receive this benefit until the disability ends or until marriage.
- Qualifying financially dependent parents, if none of the above.

## PRE-RETIREMENT DEATH BENEFITS

As a CalPERS member, you are eligible for various pre-retirement death benefits depending on your membership category, employer, retirement eligibility status, and other factors. The benefits range from a simple return of your contributions plus interest to a monthly allowance equal to half of what you would have received at retirement paid to a spouse or domestic partner. To be eligible for any type of monthly pre-retirement death benefit, your spouse or domestic partner must have been either married to you or legally registered before the occurrence of the injury or the onset of the illness that resulted in your death, or for at least one year prior to your death.

Each member's death benefits can vary significantly depending on circumstances and data. Questions relating to specific situations should be addressed to CalPERS staff for a more accurate description of individual benefits.

Upon a member's pre-retirement death, the employer and surviving family member are encouraged to immediately contact CalPERS for assistance.

For your convenience, we have divided the pre-retirement section into two parts:

- Not Eligible to Retire
- Eligible to Retire

### Not Eligible to Retire

You must be at least age 50\* and have a minimum of five years of CalPERS-credited service or have worked part time for at least five years to be eligible to retire. If you pass away before you are eligible, your beneficiary(ies) is entitled to the following benefits:

#### Basic Death Benefit

Your beneficiary will receive a lump sum payment of:

- A refund of your contributions, plus interest; and
- Up to six months' pay (one month's salary for each year of current service, to a maximum of six months).

Your beneficiary will be determined as follows:

- Named beneficiary, or if none;
- Spouse or registered domestic partner, or if none;
- Your children, or if none;
- Parents, or if none;
- Brothers and sisters, or if none;
- Estate if probated, or if not;
- Trust, or if none;
- Next of kin, as provided by law.

..... and .....

\* Or at least age 52 if you became a member on or after January 1, 2013.

### Pre-Retirement Death Benefits Designations

If you name a beneficiary other than your spouse or registered domestic partner, your spouse or registered domestic partner will still receive their community property share. The remainder will be paid to your designated beneficiary. To designate a beneficiary, use the CalPERS **Beneficiary Designation** form available from your personnel office or on our website at [www.calpers.ca.gov](http://www.calpers.ca.gov). (This designation will be valid only if your death is not job related. Different rules apply to job-related death benefit eligibility.)

### Special Death Benefit

If your death is the direct result of a violent act while you were performing your official duties, your surviving spouse, registered domestic partner, or unmarried children or eligible unmarried stepchildren under age 22 may receive a monthly allowance equal to one-half of your final compensation. If there are eligible surviving unmarried children in addition to your spouse or registered domestic partner, the allowance may be increased to a maximum of 75 percent of your final compensation. The Special Death Benefit is payable to your surviving spouse or registered domestic partner until death, or to your unmarried children until age 22.

### Inactive CalPERS Members

Beneficiaries of members who were separated from employment more than 120 days for non-health related reasons are only eligible for the Limited Death Benefit, which consists of a return of contributions and interest from the member's account.

### 1959 Survivor Benefit

Applicable only for those not covered under Social Security while employed with a CalPERS-covered agency. The 1959 Survivor Death Benefit cannot be paid if the Special Death Benefit is elected (see side bar).

### Eligible to Retire

If you pass away at age 50\* or over with a minimum of five years of CalPERS-credited service or have worked part time for at least five years, your beneficiary(ies) is eligible for the following monthly benefits:

### 1957 Survivor Benefit

This benefit provides a monthly allowance equal to one-half of what your highest "service retirement" allowance would have been had you retired on the date of your death. Those eligible to receive this allowance are:

- Your spouse or registered domestic partner, or if none;
- Your unmarried natural or adopted children under age 18.

..... Or .....

### Basic Death Benefit

The Basic Death Benefit will be paid if:

- No one is eligible for the monthly allowance described above.
- The person who is eligible for the monthly allowance above chooses instead to receive the Basic Death Benefit.
- A person other than a spouse or registered domestic partner is designated as a beneficiary to receive all or a portion of your lump sum death benefit.\*\*

### Benefit Payments

Your beneficiary will receive a lump sum payment of:

- A refund of your contributions plus interest; and
- Up to six months' pay (one month's salary rate for each year of current service to a maximum of six months).

If no one is eligible for the 1957 Survivor Benefit or the Special Death Benefit (if applicable), your beneficiary for the Basic Death Benefit will be determined as follows:

- Named beneficiary, or if none;
- Spouse or registered domestic partner, or if none;
- Children, or if none;
- Parents, or if none;
- Brothers and sisters, or if none;
- Estate if probated, or if not;
- Trust, or if none;
- Next of kin, as provided by law.

\* Or at least age 52 if you became a member on or after January 1, 2013.

\*\* No part of the Basic Death Benefit is payable if the Special Death Benefit is paid.

..... and .....

### **1959 Survivor Benefit**

Applicable only for those not covered under Social Security while employed with a CalPERS-covered agency. The 1959 Survivor Death Benefit cannot be paid if the Special Death Benefit is elected. (See below for more information.)

### **1959 Survivor Benefit Program**

The 1959 Survivor Benefit is available to school members not covered by federal Social Security with their employer. Covered members are required to pay at least a \$2 monthly fee that is deducted from your salary specifically to fund the 1959 Survivor Benefit Program.

The Program provides a monthly allowance to eligible survivors of those covered by this benefit program and who died before retirement. The 1959 Survivor Benefit is paid in addition to any other pre-retirement death benefit paid by CalPERS, with the possible exception of the Special Death Benefit. If the 1959 Survivor Benefit is greater than the Special Death Benefit, then the difference is paid as the 1959 Survivor Benefit.

### **Eligible Survivors**

#### *Spouse*

A surviving spouse is a husband or wife who was legally married to you at least one year before your death, or before the occurrence of the injury or onset of the illness that resulted in your death. A surviving spouse is entitled to the 1959 Survivor Benefit as long as they have care of an eligible unmarried child **or** are at least age 60. A surviving spouse can remarry and continue to receive the allowance.

#### *Domestic Partner*

To be eligible, a surviving domestic partner must have been in a legally registered domestic partnership with the member at least one year before their death or before the occurrence of the injury or onset of the illness that resulted in their death. A surviving registered domestic partner is entitled to the 1959 Survivor Benefit as long as they have care of an eligible unmarried child **or** are at least age 60. A surviving registered domestic partner can register as a domestic partner to someone else and continue to receive the allowance.

#### *Children*

An unmarried child or stepchild (if the child was living with the member in a parent-child relationship) is eligible for benefits while under age 22. An unmarried child who is incapacitated because of a disability that began before attaining age 22 may be entitled to the benefit until the disability ends. If an unmarried child is in the care of a guardian or is living alone, the unmarried child's portion of the benefit is paid to the guardian or to the unmarried child directly, rather than to the surviving spouse.



### *Parents*

A parent who is at least age 60 may be eligible if there is no surviving spouse, registered domestic partner, or eligible unmarried children, and the parent was dependent on the member for at least half of their support at the time of the member's death.

### **1959 Survivor Monthly Allowance Levels**

Eligible survivors may receive one of the following monthly allowances:

- A spouse or registered domestic partner who has care of two or more eligible unmarried children; or three eligible unmarried children only (split among them) **\$1,800\***
- A spouse or registered domestic partner who has care of one eligible unmarried child; or two eligible unmarried children only (split among them) **\$1,500\***
- One eligible unmarried child only; or a spouse or registered domestic partner at age 60 or older **\$750\***
- Dependent parents who are at least age 60 may be eligible if there are no other eligible survivors. **\$750 each\***



\* Amounts can differ if all children are not in the spouse's or domestic partner's care.

## HEALTH INSURANCE, COVERED UNDER PEMHCA

If you are nearing retirement, read this section to gain an understanding of how retirement will affect your health benefits. Any questions can be directed to your health benefits officer or personnel office.

Once you are retired, contact CalPERS if you have any questions about your health benefits or if you need to make changes to your plan or dependents.

You can obtain health benefits publications, required forms, and other information about your CalPERS health benefits through our website at [www.calpers.ca.gov](http://www.calpers.ca.gov) or by calling CalPERS at **888 CalPERS** (or **888-225-7377**).

- *Health Program Guide* describes CalPERS Basic health plan eligibility, enrollment, and choices. It provides an overview of CalPERS health plan types and tells you how and when you can make changes to your plan (including what forms and documentation you will need). It also describes how life changes or changes in your employment status can affect your benefits and eligibility.
- *Health Benefit Summary* provides valuable information to help you make an informed choice about your health plan and compare benefits, covered services, and co-payment information for all CalPERS health plans.
- *CalPERS Medicare Enrollment Guide* provides information about how Medicare works with your CalPERS health benefits.

### Your Separation Date and Your Retirement Date

As retirement approaches, two dates are particularly important: your separation date (last day of employment) and your retirement date. If you are not sure when these dates occur, talk to your employer. The following are your health plan enrollment options when you retire:

- If your separation date and your retirement date are within 30 days of each other and you are enrolled in a CalPERS health plan at the time of retirement, your coverage will continue into retirement without a break. If you do not want your health benefits to continue into retirement, you have the option to cancel your coverage by:
  - Submitting a *Health Benefits Plan Enrollment* form to your employer (if you are still employed)
  - Declining health coverage in Section 7 of the CalPERS Retirement Election Application
  - Writing or calling CalPERS to request to cancel health coverage (if you are retired)

## PEMHCA

Public Employees' Medical and Hospital Care Act

### Your Retirement Date

If the effective date of your retirement is more than 120 days after separation from employment, you are not eligible to be enrolled in a CalPERS health plan at retirement or at any future date.

### Medicare Health Plans

If you are retired and enrolled in a CalPERS health plan when you become eligible for Social Security Medicare benefits, state law prohibits your continued enrollment in a Basic plan. You can continue your CalPERS health care by enrolling in Medicare, providing your Medicare information to CalPERS, and then transferring to a CalPERS Medicare health plan.

- If your separation date and your retirement date are between 31 and 120 days of each other, and you are enrolled in a CalPERS health plan at separation, your coverage will not automatically continue. You may re-enroll by either writing to CalPERS Health Account Services within 60 days of your retirement date and requesting re-enrollment, or waiting for the next Open Enrollment period.
- You can pay monthly premiums directly to your health plan when you are not on a regular pay status. You can avoid having your coverage suspended between your last day of work and your retirement date by paying the full monthly premium. Contact the health benefits officer where you worked and complete a *Direct Payment Authorization* form within 30 days of your last day on pay status.
- If you are **not** enrolled in a health plan at retirement and your retirement date is within 120 days of separation, you may enroll within 60 days of retirement or during a future Open Enrollment period. Contact your health benefits officer if you are an active employee or CalPERS Health Account Services if you are retired.
- If your retirement effective date is more than 120 days after separation from employment, you are not eligible for coverage at retirement or at any future date.

There are some exceptions to this rule. Contact CalPERS at **888 CalPERS** (or **888-225-7377**) if you have questions about your eligibility.

- If you are retiring within 90 days of your own or your spouse's 65th birthday, contact the Social Security Administration at (800) 772-1213 or TTY (800) 325-0778 about signing up for Medicare. In addition to signing up for Medicare, you will have to change from a Basic health plan to a Medicare plan that combines your Medicare benefits with your CalPERS-sponsored health benefits. CalPERS Medicare health plan members have prescription drug coverage that is as good as or better than Medicare Part D prescription coverage and must not enroll in an external Medicare Part D plan. If you do enroll in a non-CalPERS Medicare Part D plan, you will lose your CalPERS health coverage.
- If you were covered as a dependent through another health plan when you retired, you may be eligible to enroll in a CalPERS health plan. Contact CalPERS for more information.

If you have questions about your CalPERS health benefits and you are an active member, contact your personnel office or health benefits officer. If you are a retiree, contact CalPERS at **888 CalPERS** (or **888-225-7377**).



## Medicare

If you (and your dependents) are enrolled in a CalPERS Basic health plan when you retire and become Medicare eligible, you must enroll in Medicare Parts A and B. You must provide your Medicare information to CalPERS and then transfer to a CalPERS Medicare health plan to continue CalPERS coverage.

If you do not qualify for premium-free Medicare Part A (Hospital) based on your Social Security/Medicare work record or the record of your current, former, or deceased spouse, you may remain in a CalPERS Basic health plan. If you later qualify for Medicare Part A at no cost, you must enroll in Medicare Part B and in a CalPERS Medicare health plan.

The Social Security Administration (SSA) bases Medicare Part B (Medical) on your annual income. If your income exceeds established thresholds, the SSA adjusts the standard Medicare Part B premium by an income-related monthly adjustment amount. Payment of this amount is mandatory to protect your eligibility to remain enrolled in a CalPERS Medicare health plan.

CalPERS participates in a Medicare Part D prescription drug plan. If you are a Medicare-eligible subscriber or dependent, you are automatically enrolled into an Employer Group Waiver Plan (EGWP). If you choose to opt out of coverage, you will be financially responsible for all of your prescription drug costs. In addition, if you enroll in a non-CalPERS Medicare Part D plan, you are no longer eligible to remain enrolled in a CalPERS Medicare health plan. Consequently, you and all of your covered dependents will be terminated from CalPERS health coverage.

Medicare Part D standard premiums vary based on the prescription drug plan and are paid to your health carrier as part of the CalPERS health premium. As with Medicare Part B, if your income exceeds established thresholds, the SSA will assess an additional income-related monthly adjustment amount. Payment of this amount is mandatory to protect your Medicare enrollment and eligibility to remain enrolled in a CalPERS Medicare health plan. If you do not pay the additional amount, you will be disenrolled from EGWP and be financially responsible for all of your prescription drug costs.

CalPERS offers several ways to supplement Medicare. See the *CalPERS Medicare Enrollment Guide* for more detailed information. For additional information regarding Medicare, Medicare premiums, enrollment or eligibility, contact the SSA at (800) 772-1213 or TTY (800) 325-0778 or visit their website at [www.ssa.gov](http://www.ssa.gov).

## Disability

If you become eligible for Medicare due to a disability, special rules apply for you to continue your health benefits. Contact CalPERS for additional information.



**Making Direct  
Payment for  
Health Premiums  
to Cover Delays**

If you are aware of a delay in receiving your first retirement check, you should contact your personnel office to discuss making direct payments for your health premiums. The direct payments will ensure continuation of services and claim payments for your current PEMHCA coverage. You will be reimbursed for the direct payment amounts by the plan as soon as the payments are made by CalPERS.

**Making Changes to Your Health Plan After Retirement**

Once you retire, CalPERS becomes your health benefits officer or personnel office. This means you can make most changes to your health enrollment by calling CalPERS at **888 CalPERS** (or **888-225-7377**). For some changes, we will ask you to send additional information to CalPERS.

If you prefer, you can correspond with us in writing. Please include your (or the member's) name, Social Security number or CalPERS ID, a copy of your Medicare card (if applicable), and daytime phone number with area code.

## OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

### Reciprocity—Other California Public Retirement Systems

CalPERS has an agreement with many public retirement systems in California that allows movement from one public employer to another, within a specified time limit, without losing valuable retirement rights and related benefits. This is called “reciprocity.”

There is no transfer of funds or service credit between retirement systems when you establish reciprocity. You become a member of both systems and are subject to the membership and benefit obligations and rights of each system.

You must retire from each system separately, but it must be on the same date for all the benefits of reciprocity to apply. Once you’ve retired, you will receive separate retirement checks from each system.

For more information, or to establish reciprocity, review the CalPERS publication *When You Change Retirement Systems*.

### Cost-of-Living Adjustments

Cost-of-living adjustments are provided by law and are based on the Consumer Price Index for all United States cities. Cost-of-living adjustments are paid the second calendar year of your retirement on the May 1 check and then every year thereafter.

The standard cost-of-living adjustment is a maximum of 2 percent per year. If the Consumer Price Index registers a lower rate of inflation, you could receive a lower percentage.

### Inflation Protection

Added protection against inflation is provided by the Purchasing Power Protection Allowance (PPPA), created to restore your monthly benefit to 75 percent of its original purchasing power.

You will automatically receive PPPA supplemental payments on a monthly basis if your benefit falls below the 75 percent purchasing power level. The additional allowance would start, and adjustments to the allowance would occur, in May of each year.

### Reciprocity

This agreement between retirement systems does not apply to health benefit vesting requirements.



## Sick Leave Credit

At retirement, any unused sick leave you have can be converted to additional service credit. (The additional service will not change your age at retirement.)

You will receive credit for all unused sick leave certified by your employer. It takes 250 days of sick leave to receive one year of service credit. For example: if your employer certified 120 days of sick leave, your additional service credit would be 0.480 ( $120 \times 0.004 = 0.480$ ) of a year's service credit. If your employer submits this information prior to CalPERS processing your retirement application, we will include the additional service credit in your initial retirement benefit. Otherwise, we will adjust your account to reflect a change in service credit at the time your employer submits it.

To receive sick leave credit, your retirement date must be within 120 days of the date of separation from employment. **Note:** The retirement law provides that the conversion of sick leave hours to service credit is based on an 8-hour day, so your total hours of unused sick leave at retirement must be divided by eight to compute the number of days of sick leave your employer can certify to CalPERS.

## Internal Revenue Code (IRC) Section 401(a)(17) Contribution and Salary Limit

If you first became a member of CalPERS on or after July 1, 1996, IRC section 401(a)(17) places limits on the amount of member contributions you can pay into CalPERS, a tax-qualified pension plan. This section applies to annual salaries (earnings) that exceed \$250,000. The actual dollar limit is set each year by the Internal Revenue Service. This section does not limit or place a cap on the salary an employer can pay an employee. It does specify the highest salary on which member contributions can be paid into an employee's CalPERS account. Your employer is responsible for monitoring when your salary reaches or exceeds this annual limit and for refunding any excess contributions. Each year CalPERS issues a Circular Letter to all employers announcing the IRC section 401(a)(17) limit for the calendar year.

At retirement, your highest average salary (final compensation amount) used to calculate your benefit will be the IRC section 401(a)(17) salary limit for that year. For example, if you became a member of CalPERS in August 1996, your annual salary is \$300,000, and the IRC section 401(a)(17) limit in the year you retire is \$250,000, you will pay contributions on \$250,000 of your salary and your retirement benefit calculation would use \$250,000 as your highest final compensation, if your compensation period is 12 months. If your compensation period is 36 months, your final compensation will be subject to the section 401(a)(17) limit in effect for each of those calendar years.



## Internal Revenue Code (IRC) Section 415(b) Retirement Benefit Limit and CalPERS Replacement Benefit Plan (RBP)

IRC section 415(b) places a dollar limit on the annual retirement benefit you can receive from CalPERS, a tax-qualified pension plan. This limit generally applies to retirement benefits of approximately \$210,000 or more a year for employees retiring at their Social Security normal retirement age of 62 through 65. **Note:** The determination of whether your retirement benefit will be subject to this limit can only be made at retirement.

This dollar limit is set each year by the Internal Revenue Service and is adjusted for several factors including inflation, age at retirement, and after-tax contributions. If your retirement benefit must be limited under IRC section 415(b), you will be enrolled in the IRC section 415(b) Replacement Benefit Plan, an employer-funded plan, if eligible.

The CalPERS Replacement Benefit Plan provides a replacement benefit that will, to the extent possible, make up the amount your CalPERS benefit is limited, and is only available if your membership date is prior to January 1, 2013.

For additional information, see the IRC section 415(b) Replacement Benefit Plan Fact Sheet on our website at [www.calpers.ca.gov](http://www.calpers.ca.gov).

### Benefit Forfeiture for Felony Convictions

Under the California Public Employees' Pension Reform Act of 2013, if you are convicted of a felony by a state or federal trial court in connection with your official job duties, you will forfeit all of your accrued rights and benefits from the commission of the felony forward and you will no longer be eligible to accrue further benefits with CalPERS, effective on the date of conviction (Government Code sections 7522.72 and 7522.74).

If you are convicted for such a crime, you and the prosecuting agency must notify your employer within 60 days of your conviction, and your employer must notify CalPERS within 90 days of your conviction.

CalPERS will remove the service credit and return any contributions you made during the forfeiture period, without interest. If after the removal of forfeited service and contributions you remain vested for retirement, you may apply for retirement once you reach minimum retirement age. If after the removal of forfeited service you are not vested for retirement, you may elect a refund of your remaining member contributions.

Should your conviction be overturned, your forfeited service will be restored to your account if you elect to redeposit the returned contributions, with interest.



## RETIREMENT FORMULAS AND BENEFIT FACTORS

The chart below shows how the benefit factor increases for each quarter year of age from 50 to 63.

2% at Age 55 Benefit Formula Minimum Age for Retirement 50				
Age	Exact Year	¼ Year	½ Year	¾ Year
50	1.100%	1.146%	1.190%	1.236%
51	1.280%	1.326%	1.370%	1.416%
52	1.460%	1.506%	1.550%	1.596%
53	1.640%	1.686%	1.730%	1.776%
54	1.820%	1.866%	1.910%	1.956%
55	2.000%	2.016%	2.032%	2.048%
56	2.064%	2.080%	2.096%	2.110%
57	2.126%	2.142%	2.158%	2.172%
58	2.188%	2.204%	2.220%	2.236%
59	2.250%	2.268%	2.282%	2.298%
60	2.314%	2.330%	2.346%	2.360%
61	2.376%	2.392%	2.406%	2.422%
62	2.438%	2.454%	2.470%	2.486%
63 or older	2.500%	—	—	—

PERCENTAGE OF FINAL COMPENSATION



Age	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63+
<b>Benefit Factor</b>	<b>1.100</b>	<b>1.280</b>	<b>1.460</b>	<b>1.640</b>	<b>1.820</b>	<b>2.000</b>	<b>2.064</b>	<b>2.126</b>	<b>2.188</b>	<b>2.250</b>	<b>2.314</b>	<b>2.376</b>	<b>2.438</b>	<b>2.500</b>
<b>Years of Service</b>	<b>Percentage of Final Compensation</b>													
5	5.50	6.40	7.30	8.20	9.10	10.00	10.32	10.63	10.94	11.25	11.57	11.88	12.19	12.50
6	6.60	7.68	8.76	9.84	10.92	12.00	12.38	12.76	13.13	13.50	13.88	14.26	14.63	15.00
7	7.70	8.96	10.22	11.48	12.74	14.00	14.45	14.88	15.32	15.75	16.20	16.63	17.07	17.50
8	8.80	10.24	11.68	13.12	14.56	16.00	16.51	17.01	17.50	18.00	18.51	19.01	19.50	20.00
9	9.90	11.52	13.14	14.76	16.38	18.00	18.58	19.13	19.69	20.25	20.83	21.38	21.94	22.50
10	11.00	12.80	14.60	16.40	18.20	20.00	20.64	21.26	21.88	22.50	23.14	23.76	24.38	25.00
11	12.10	14.08	16.06	18.04	20.02	22.00	22.70	23.39	24.07	24.75	25.45	26.14	26.82	27.50
12	13.20	15.36	17.52	19.68	21.84	24.00	24.77	25.51	26.26	27.00	27.77	28.51	29.26	30.00
13	14.30	16.64	18.98	21.32	23.66	26.00	26.83	27.64	28.44	29.25	30.08	30.89	31.69	32.50
14	15.40	17.92	20.44	22.96	25.48	28.00	28.90	29.76	30.63	31.50	32.40	33.26	34.13	35.00
15	16.50	19.20	21.90	24.60	27.30	30.00	30.96	31.89	32.82	33.75	34.71	35.64	36.57	37.50
16	17.60	20.48	23.36	26.24	29.12	32.00	33.02	34.02	35.01	36.00	37.02	38.02	39.01	40.00
17	18.70	21.76	24.82	27.88	30.94	34.00	35.09	36.14	37.20	38.25	39.34	40.39	41.45	42.50
18	19.80	23.04	26.28	29.52	32.76	36.00	37.15	38.27	39.38	40.50	41.65	42.77	43.88	45.00
19	20.90	24.32	27.74	31.16	34.58	38.00	39.22	40.39	41.57	42.75	43.97	45.14	46.32	47.50
20	22.00	25.60	29.20	32.80	36.40	40.00	41.28	42.52	43.76	45.00	46.28	47.52	48.76	50.00
21	23.10	26.88	30.66	34.44	38.22	42.00	43.34	44.65	45.95	47.25	48.59	49.90	51.20	52.50
22	24.20	28.16	32.12	36.08	40.04	44.00	45.41	46.77	48.14	49.50	50.91	52.27	53.64	55.00
23	25.30	29.44	33.58	37.72	41.86	46.00	47.47	48.90	50.32	51.75	53.22	54.65	56.07	57.50
24	26.40	30.72	35.04	39.36	43.68	48.00	49.54	51.02	52.51	54.00	55.54	57.02	58.51	60.00
25	27.50	32.00	36.50	41.00	45.50	50.00	51.60	53.15	54.70	56.25	57.85	59.40	60.95	62.50
26	28.60	33.28	37.96	42.64	47.32	52.00	53.66	55.28	56.89	58.50	60.16	61.78	63.39	65.00
27	29.70	34.56	39.42	44.28	49.14	54.00	55.73	57.40	59.08	60.75	62.48	64.15	65.83	67.50
28	30.80	35.84	40.88	45.92	50.96	56.00	57.79	59.53	61.26	63.00	64.79	66.53	68.26	70.00
29	31.90	37.12	42.34	47.56	52.78	58.00	59.86	61.65	63.45	65.25	67.11	68.90	70.70	72.50
30	33.00	38.40	43.80	49.20	54.60	60.00	61.92	63.78	65.64	67.50	69.42	71.28	73.14	75.00
31	34.10	39.68	45.26	50.84	56.42	62.00	63.98	65.91	67.83	69.75	71.73	73.66	75.58	77.50
32	35.20	40.96	46.72	52.48	58.24	64.00	66.05	68.03	70.02	72.00	74.05	76.03	78.02	80.00
33	36.30	42.24	48.18	54.12	60.06	66.00	68.11	70.16	72.20	74.25	76.36	78.41	80.45	82.50
34	—	43.52	49.64	55.76	61.88	68.00	70.18	72.28	74.39	76.50	78.68	80.78	82.89	85.00
35	—	—	51.10	57.40	63.70	70.00	72.24	74.41	76.58	78.75	80.99	83.16	85.33	87.50
36	—	—	—	59.04	65.52	72.00	74.30	76.54	78.77	81.00	83.30	85.54	87.77	90.00
37	—	—	—	—	67.34	74.00	76.37	78.66	80.96	83.25	85.62	87.91	90.21	92.50
38	—	—	—	—	—	76.00	78.43	80.79	83.14	85.50	87.93	90.29	92.64	95.00
39	—	—	—	—	—	—	80.50	82.91	85.33	87.75	90.25	92.66	95.08	97.50
40	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	85.04	87.52	90.00	92.56	95.04	97.52	100.0

## RETIREMENT FORMULAS AND BENEFIT FACTORS

The chart below shows how the benefit factor increases for each quarter year of age from 52 to 67.

2% at Age 62 Benefit Formula				
Minimum Age for Retirement 52				
Membership Date on or After January 1, 2013				
Age	Exact Year	¼ Year	½ Year	¾ Year
52	1.000	1.025	1.050	1.075
53	1.100	1.125	1.150	1.175
54	1.200	1.225	1.250	1.275
55	1.300	1.325	1.350	1.375
56	1.400	1.425	1.450	1.475
57	1.500	1.525	1.550	1.575
58	1.600	1.625	1.650	1.675
59	1.700	1.725	1.750	1.775
60	1.800	1.825	1.850	1.875
61	1.900	1.925	1.950	1.975
62	2.000	2.025	2.050	2.075
63	2.100	2.125	2.150	2.175
64	2.200	2.225	2.250	2.275
65	2.300	2.325	2.350	2.375
66	2.400	2.425	2.450	2.475
67 or older	2.500	2.500	2.500	2.500



PERCENTAGE OF FINAL COMPENSATION



Age	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67+
Benefit Factor	1.00	1.10	1.20	1.30	1.40	1.50	1.60	1.70	1.80	1.90	2.00	2.10	2.20	2.30	2.40	2.50
Years of Service	Percentage of Final Compensation															
5	5.00	5.50	6.00	6.50	7.00	7.50	8.00	8.50	9.00	9.50	10.00	10.50	11.00	11.50	12.00	12.50
6	6.00	6.60	7.20	7.80	8.40	9.00	9.60	10.20	10.80	11.40	12.00	12.60	13.20	13.80	14.40	15.00
7	7.00	7.70	8.40	9.10	9.80	10.50	11.20	11.90	12.60	13.30	14.00	14.70	15.40	16.10	16.80	17.50
8	8.00	8.80	9.60	10.40	11.20	12.00	12.80	13.60	14.40	15.20	16.00	16.80	17.60	18.40	19.20	20.00
9	9.00	9.90	10.80	11.70	12.60	13.50	14.40	15.30	16.20	17.10	18.00	18.90	19.80	20.70	21.60	22.50
10	10.00	11.00	12.00	13.00	14.00	15.00	16.00	17.00	18.00	19.00	20.00	21.00	22.00	23.00	24.00	25.00
11	11.00	12.10	13.20	14.30	15.40	16.50	17.60	18.70	19.80	20.90	22.00	23.10	24.20	25.30	26.40	27.50
12	12.00	13.20	14.40	15.60	16.80	18.00	19.20	20.40	21.60	22.80	24.00	25.20	26.40	27.60	28.80	30.00
13	13.00	14.30	15.60	16.90	18.20	19.50	20.80	22.10	23.40	24.70	26.00	27.30	28.60	29.90	31.20	32.50
14	14.00	15.40	16.80	18.20	19.60	21.00	22.40	23.80	25.20	26.60	28.00	29.40	30.80	32.20	33.60	35.00
15	15.00	16.50	18.00	19.50	21.00	22.50	24.00	25.50	27.00	28.50	30.00	31.50	33.00	34.50	36.00	37.50
16	16.00	17.60	19.20	20.80	22.40	24.00	25.60	27.20	28.80	30.40	32.00	33.60	35.20	36.80	38.40	40.00
17	17.00	18.70	20.40	22.10	23.80	25.50	27.20	28.90	30.60	32.30	34.00	35.70	37.40	39.10	40.80	42.50
18	18.00	19.80	21.60	23.40	25.20	27.00	28.80	30.60	32.40	34.20	36.00	37.80	39.60	41.40	43.20	45.00
19	19.00	20.90	22.80	24.70	26.60	28.50	30.40	32.30	34.20	36.10	38.00	39.90	41.80	43.70	45.60	47.50
20	20.00	22.00	24.00	26.00	28.00	30.00	32.00	34.00	36.00	38.00	40.00	42.00	44.00	46.00	48.00	50.00
21	21.00	23.10	25.20	27.30	29.40	31.50	33.60	35.70	37.80	39.90	42.00	44.10	46.20	48.30	50.40	52.50
22	22.00	24.20	26.40	28.60	30.80	33.00	35.20	37.40	39.60	41.80	44.00	46.20	48.40	50.60	52.80	55.00
23	23.00	25.30	27.60	29.90	32.20	34.50	36.80	39.10	41.40	43.70	46.00	48.30	50.60	52.90	55.20	57.50
24	24.00	26.40	28.80	31.20	33.60	36.00	38.40	40.80	43.20	45.60	48.00	50.40	52.80	55.20	57.60	60.00
25	25.00	27.50	30.00	32.50	35.00	37.50	40.00	42.50	45.00	47.50	50.00	52.50	55.00	57.50	60.00	62.50
26	26.00	28.60	31.20	33.80	36.40	39.00	41.60	44.20	46.80	49.40	52.00	54.60	57.20	59.80	62.40	65.00
27	27.00	29.70	32.40	35.10	37.80	40.50	43.20	45.90	48.60	51.30	54.00	56.70	59.40	62.10	64.80	67.50
28	28.00	30.80	33.60	36.40	39.20	42.00	44.80	47.60	50.40	53.20	56.00	58.80	61.60	64.40	67.20	70.00
29	29.00	31.90	34.80	37.70	40.60	43.50	46.40	49.30	52.20	55.10	58.00	60.90	63.80	66.70	69.60	72.50
30	30.00	33.00	36.00	39.00	42.00	45.00	48.00	51.00	54.00	57.00	60.00	63.00	66.00	69.00	72.00	75.00
31	31.00	34.10	37.20	40.30	43.40	46.50	49.60	52.70	55.80	58.90	62.00	65.10	68.20	71.30	74.40	77.50
32	32.00	35.20	38.40	41.60	44.80	48.00	51.20	54.40	57.60	60.80	64.00	67.20	70.40	73.60	76.80	80.00
33	33.00	36.30	39.60	42.90	46.20	49.50	52.80	56.10	59.40	62.70	66.00	69.30	72.60	75.90	79.20	82.50
34	34.00	37.40	40.80	44.20	47.60	51.00	54.40	57.80	61.20	64.60	68.00	71.40	74.80	78.20	81.60	85.00
35	35.00	38.50	42.00	45.50	49.00	52.50	56.00	59.50	63.00	66.50	70.00	73.50	77.00	80.50	84.00	87.50
36	36.00	39.60	43.20	46.80	50.40	54.00	57.60	61.20	64.80	68.40	72.00	75.60	79.20	82.80	86.40	90.00
37	37.00	40.70	44.40	48.10	51.80	55.50	59.20	62.90	66.60	70.30	74.00	77.70	81.40	85.10	88.80	92.50
38	38.00	41.80	45.60	49.40	53.20	57.00	60.80	64.60	68.40	72.20	76.00	79.80	83.60	87.40	91.20	95.00
39	39.00	42.90	46.80	50.70	54.60	58.50	62.40	66.30	70.20	74.10	78.00	81.90	85.80	89.70	93.60	97.50
40	40.00	44.00	48.00	52.00	56.00	60.00	64.00	68.00	72.00	76.00	80.00	84.00	88.00	92.00	96.00	100.00

## BECOME A MORE INFORMED MEMBER

### CalPERS On-Line

Visit our website at [www.calpers.ca.gov](http://www.calpers.ca.gov) for information on all our benefits and services.

### my|CalPERS

Log in at [my.calpers.ca.gov](http://my.calpers.ca.gov) to access real-time details and balances of your CalPERS accounts. With my|CalPERS you can:

- View, print, and save current and past statements.
- Select mailing preferences for your statements and newsletters.
- Confirm which dependents are covered on your health plan and what health plans are available in your area.
- Estimate your future retirement benefit and save the estimates to view later.
- Send and receive secure messages.
- Order and download publications.
- Send account information to third parties, such as banks.
- Search for medical premium rates.
- Apply for service retirement.
- Change your lump-sum beneficiary designation.

### CalPERS Education Center

Whether you're in the early stages of your career or getting ready to retire, visit the CalPERS Education Center in my|CalPERS to:

- Take online classes that help you have a better understanding of your CalPERS benefits.
- Register for instructor-led classes at a location near you.
- Download class materials and access information about your current and past classes.
- Schedule a one-on-one appointment with a representative at your nearest CalPERS Regional Office.

### Experience CalPERS Through Social Media

- Facebook: [www.facebook.com/myCalPERS](http://www.facebook.com/myCalPERS)
- Twitter: [www.twitter.com/CalPERS](http://www.twitter.com/CalPERS)
- Instagram: [www.instagram.com/CalPERS](http://www.instagram.com/CalPERS)
- YouTube: [www.youtube.com/CalPERSNetwork](http://www.youtube.com/CalPERSNetwork)
- Google Plus: [www.calpers.ca.gov/googleplus](http://www.calpers.ca.gov/googleplus)
- LinkedIn: [www.linkedin.com/company/calpers](http://www.linkedin.com/company/calpers)

### Reach Us by Phone

Call us toll free at **888 CalPERS** (or **888-225-7377**).  
Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.  
TTY: (877) 249-7442

## Visit Your Nearest CalPERS Regional Office

### **Fresno Regional Office**

10 River Park Place East, Suite 230  
Fresno, CA 93720

### **Glendale Regional Office**

Glendale Plaza  
655 North Central Avenue, Suite 1400  
Glendale, CA 91203

### **Orange Regional Office**

500 North State College Boulevard, Suite 750  
Orange, CA 92868

### **Sacramento Regional Office**

Lincoln Plaza East  
400 Q Street, Room 1820  
Sacramento, CA 95811

### **San Bernardino Regional Office**

650 East Hospitality Lane, Suite 330  
San Bernardino, CA 92408

### **San Diego Regional Office**

7676 Hazard Center Drive, Suite 350  
San Diego, CA 92108

### **San Jose Regional Office**

181 Metro Drive, Suite 520  
San Jose, CA 95110

### **Walnut Creek Regional Office**

Pacific Plaza  
1340 Treat Boulevard, Suite 200  
Walnut Creek, CA 94597

Visit the CalPERS website for directions to your local office.

Regional Office hours are Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.



## GLOSSARY

This glossary can help you understand some of the words and phrases you may encounter when dealing with CalPERS.

### **Beneficiary**

A person you designate to receive a benefit after your death, or other benefit recipient. (Also, see survivor, which has a different definition. Your beneficiary and survivor may or may not be the same person.)

### **Benefit Factor**

The percentage of pay you are entitled to for each year of CalPERS-covered service. It is determined by your age at retirement and your retirement formula.

### **Break in Service**

A break in service begins when you permanently separate from CalPERS-covered employment. A leave of absence, such as maternity leave, military leave, etc., is not considered a break in service.

### **CalPERS Medicare Plan**

For CalPERS members in Social Security due to age (over 65) or Social Security-approved disability, Medicare becomes the primary payer of claims. If you have CalPERS health benefits coverage in retirement, the CalPERS Medicare health plan helps pay costs not covered by Medicare.

### **COBRA**

The Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA) is federal legislation that allows you or a family member to continue your health plan enrollment when coverage is lost. A loss of coverage could include separation from employment, a dependent reaching age 26, or divorce.

### **Dependent**

Those family members who meet specific eligibility criteria for coverage in the CalPERS Health Program. This includes your children up to age 26 who may or may not be dependent upon you for support.

### **Disability**

An inability to substantially perform the duties of your job due to illness or injury, which is determined to be permanent or of an extended and uncertain duration.

### **Domestic Partner**

Registered domestic partners legally recognized by California law are qualified for benefits and rights that apply to a spouse.

### **Final Compensation**

Your final compensation is the highest average pay rate and special compensation during any consecutive one-year or three-year period. Which compensation



period we use depends on your retirement formula(s). If you are not sure, ask your personnel office. We use your full-time pay rate, not your earnings. If you work part time, we will use your full-time equivalent pay rate to determine your final compensation. myCalPERS automatically finds and uses the highest compensation period during your employment with CalPERS.

**Fiscal Year**

CalPERS operates on a fiscal year calendar, which is July 1 to June 30 each year.

**Health Insurance Portability & Accountability Act (HIPAA)**

This federal law protects health insurance coverage for workers and their families when they change or lose their jobs. It also includes provisions providing national standards to protect the privacy of personal health information.

**Member**

An employee who qualifies for membership in CalPERS and whose employer has become obligated to pay contributions into the Retirement Fund.

**Open Enrollment Period**

A period of time determined by the CalPERS Board when you can enroll or change health plans, or add eligible family members not currently enrolled in the CalPERS Health Program.

**PEMHCA**

Public Employees' Medical and Hospital Care Act. Government Code §§22751 et seq.

**Reciprocal Agreement**

An agreement between CalPERS and many public retirement systems within California that allows movement from one public employer to another, within a specified time limit, without losing valuable retirement rights and benefits.

**Service Credit**

Your credited years of employment with a CalPERS employer. This amount of service is credited to your CalPERS account and used in the formula to determine your retirement benefits. In some cases, other types of service credit (e.g., sick leave and service credit purchases) can be credited to your retirement account and used to enhance your retirement benefits.

**Special Compensation**

Additional income you might receive for uniform allowance, holiday pay, longevity pay, etc., and is reported separately from your base pay.

**Survivor**

A family member defined by law as eligible to receive specific benefits at your death.

## INFORMATION PRACTICES STATEMENT

The Information Practices Act of 1977 and the Federal Privacy Act of 1974 require the California Public Employees' Retirement System (CalPERS) to provide the following information to individuals who are asked to supply information to CalPERS. The information requested is collected pursuant to the Government Code (Sections 20000, et seq.) and will be used for administration of the CalPERS Board's duties under the California Public Employees' Retirement Law, the Social Security Act, and the Public Employees' Medical and Hospital Care Act, as the case may be. Submission of the requested information is mandatory. Failure to supply the information may result in the System being unable to perform its function regarding your status and eligibility for benefits. Portions of this information may be transferred to entities including, but not limited to, State and public agency employers, State Attorney General, Office of the State Controller, Franchise Tax Board, Internal Revenue Service, Workers' Compensation Appeals Board, State Compensation Insurance Fund, county district attorneys, Social Security Administration, beneficiaries of deceased members, physicians, insurance carriers, and various vendors who perform services on behalf of CalPERS. Disclosure to the aforementioned entities is done in strict accordance with current statutes regarding confidentiality.

You have the right to review your membership file maintained by the System. For questions concerning CalPERS information practices, please contact the Information Practices Act Coordinator, CalPERS, 400 Q Street, P.O. Box 942702, Sacramento, CA 94229-2702.

*While reading this material, remember that we are governed by the Public Employees' Retirement Law and the Alternate Retirement Program provisions in the Government Code, together referred to as the Retirement Law. The statements in this publication are general. The Retirement Law is complex and subject to change. If there is a conflict between the law and this publication, any decisions will be based on the law and not this publication. If you have a question that is not answered by this general description, you may make a written request for advice regarding your specific situation directly to CalPERS.*

## SPECIAL THANKS

We thank the Folsom Cordova Unified School District and the San Juan Unified School District for their cooperation to make the photos for this publication possible.

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**Joe Lashinsky**

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