

PERS FAQ PAGE

Refer to Nevada PERS website: <https://www.nvpers.org>

Active Members

How is my benefit calculated when I retire? Your service credit is multiplied by the service time multiplier (2.5% for each year completed prior to July 1, 2001 and 2.67% for each year completed on or after July 1, 2001). The total percentage earned is then multiplied by your average compensation.

Members newly enrolled in PERS on or after January 1, 2010, receive 2.5% for all service earned in the system.

When did the maximum benefit percentage change from 90% to 75%? The change became effective July 1, 1985. Members enrolled in PERS before July 1, 1985 may still receive up to 90% of their average compensation when they retire. Those hired on or after July 1, 1985, may earn a maximum of 75% of their average compensation when they retire. The percentage is calculated for each member based on the years, months and days of service they earn while employed with a Nevada public employer in a PERS eligible position.

How does the 75% at 30 years of service compute with the new rate of 2.67%? Service credit earned before July 1, 2001, will be calculated using the 2.5% multiplier. Service credit earned on or after July 1, 2001 will be calculated using the 2.67% multiplier. Members may reach the 75% Service Time Factor before completing 30 years of service.

Members newly enrolled in PERS on or after January 1, 2010 receive 2.5% for all service earned and are not entitled to the 2.67% Service Time Factor.

What is average compensation? The average of a member's 36 highest consecutive months of compensation as certified by the public employer.

For members newly enrolled in PERS on or after January 1, 2010, the average compensation shall be based on the average of the 36 highest consecutive months of compensation subject to a 10% salary cap.

What does it mean to be vested? Vesting refers to the time period necessary for you to work in order to earn the right to receive a retirement benefit. For example, once you have attained 5 years of service we consider you "vested" in the system and eligible to receive retirement benefits at age 65. Vesting also occurs at other time periods such as 10, 20, 25 and 30 years, which makes you eligible to receive benefits earlier than age 65.

When are Member Statements issued? Member Statements are issued in yearly cycles for each of the public employers and available online to members. You need to set up a username and password to access the information via PERS website <https://www.nvpers.org/>.

I need a letter stating what is in my account because I'm refinancing my house. How do I get it? Please contact our office and speak with a PERS representative who will initiate your request.

Can I borrow against my PERS account to buy a home? No. There are no statutory provisions for members to borrow against their retirement accounts.

How will an increase in retirement contribution rates affect me? If you are under the Employee/Employer Contribution Plan, the retirement deduction from your paycheck will increase. If you are under the Employer-Pay Contribution Plan, your portion of the increase will either be paid through salary reduction or in lieu of a pay increase depending on the employer for whom you work.

How do I change my mailing address? Active members may print the [Change of Personal Information form](#), make changes and return the form to PERS. Active members may also change their address online by logging into their account and clicking the "Address & Phone Number" link.

How do I find out who I have listed as my beneficiary? Log into your account using the username and password you selected. Click on "Account" to see your beneficiaries and their relationships.

How can I change my beneficiary? Access the [Survivor Beneficiary Designation form](#) through our website and type in your changes. You will then print and sign the form before mailing or faxing to the PERS office. Upon request, PERS can also mail you the form for completion.

What's in my account? Log into your account and click on "Account". The amount of money that has been contributed, your accumulated service credit and designated beneficiaries will be displayed. If you would like to see your account details you can click on "Account Details" and see the yearly or monthly transactions reported by your employer.

Your service credit and salary will be displayed based on a fiscal year which will be July of one year through June of the next year. If you are a school district employee who works less than 12 months in a school year, your service credit and salary will be displayed based on September of one year through August of the next year.

What is the difference between the Employee/Employer Pay Plan and the Employer Pay Plan? How does the choice of plan affect my retirement benefit? Under the Employee/Employer Pay Plan (EES/ERS) the member pays 50% of the retirement contributions through a payroll deduction and the employer pays the other 50% of the contributions. If you terminate employment, you may elect to refund the employee contributions you personally paid into the system, which will cancel your membership in PERS. Under the Employer Pay Plan (ER Paid or EPC), the employee pays for their portion of the contribution through a salary reduction or in lieu of pay increase and the employer pays 100% of the retirement contributions to PERS. Under this plan, the member does not accrue refundable contributions and will retain their service credit in the event of termination. In addition, your average compensation is adjusted at the time of retirement if you are under the ER Paid plan.

Whether or not you will have the choice between the two contribution plans when you are newly hired depends upon the public employer in which you work. Some public employers require mandatory participation under the ER Paid plan for their employees and others, like the State, allow for a choice.

Regardless of which plan you are under, you share equally in the PERS contribution rate and there is no difference in how your monthly benefit will be calculated.

When is my anniversary date? Please contact one of our offices and we can calculate the date for you.

I have accepted a position for a Nevada public employer, is it possible to transfer my service from another public retirement system into PERS? No. Nevada does not have reciprocity rights with any other state.

What is the value of my account for a divorce? PERS does not place a value on your retirement account. PERS will provide you with an estimate of retirement benefits, which you can take to an Actuary or Certified Public Accountant to have the value determined and be utilized in the negotiation process of your divorce. We highly recommend you review our [Divorce and Your PERS Retirement](#) publication for more detailed information.

What is the difference between a regular retirement benefit and a disability retirement benefit? A disability retirement benefit is calculated in the same manner as a service or regular retirement benefit. The only difference is that the disability benefit is not reduced for retiring early.

I am getting ready to retire, what steps do I take? Six to eight months before your intended retirement date, we recommend you review the [Pre-Retirement Guide](#) publication and obtain an estimate of your retirement benefit by contacting one of our offices and requesting one. Up to six months before your intended retirement date, you will need to complete and return an Application for retirement benefits. Applications can be mailed to you or are available in our offices. Counselors are available to assist you in completing your application in both our Carson City and Las Vegas offices, or you may mail in your completed application directly to our Carson City office.

When can I retire? Below we have listed the eligibility requirements for retirement based on when you were first enrolled in PERS:

<u>Members enrolled in PERS before 1-1-2010</u>		<u>Members enrolled in PERS on or after 1-1-2010</u>	
<u>Regular Members</u>	<u>P/F Members</u>	<u>Regular Members</u>	<u>P/F Members</u>
5 years, age 65	5 years, age 65	5 years, age 65	5 years, age 65
10 years, age 60	10 years P/F, age 55	10 years, age 62	10 years P/F, age 60
30 years, any age	20 years P/F, age 50	30 years, any age	20 years P/F, age 50
	25 years P/F, any age		30 years, any age

If I am a part-time employee, do I get 1 full year of service credit or is it 1/2 year of service credit for each year worked? Part-time members of PERS earn service credit based on the percentage of full-time hours they work. For example, if you work exactly half-time for one calendar year, you earn six months of service credit. However, special vesting rules apply for part-time employees. If you work at least half-time for one calendar year, you receive one full year toward vesting. Specific rules apply to school district employees.

What is service credit? How do I earn service credit? Service credit is the accumulation of the actual years, months and days you worked for your public employer while in a PERS eligible position. Service credit is based on hours or salary earned as reported by your employer. Service credit is not earned for any periods of leave without pay (LWOP).

Where can I find out how much service credit I have? Create a username and password on our website and then log into your account to see your accumulative service credit. You may also call one of our offices and speak with a PERS representative or review your service credit on your Member Statement.

How do I know if I have a survivor beneficiary on file at PERS? Log in to your account and look at your designated beneficiaries. If any of your beneficiaries have the relationship of "Survivor Beneficiary", this would indicate that a form was properly completed and is on file at the PERS office. You may also call one of our offices and a PERS representative can verify the receipt of your form. If you haven't completed the form, or need to change your information, complete the [Survivor Beneficiary Designation](#) and return it to one of our offices.

Why do I need to designate a survivor beneficiary if I am married? A Survivor Beneficiary applies to both married and single members who have not retired. In the event of simultaneous death of you and your spouse or registered domestic partner, your designated Survivor Beneficiary will receive the lifetime benefit your spouse or registered domestic partner would have received. You may also choose to designate additional payees to share the survivor beneficiary benefit based on a percentage you indicate on your form.

If I am terminated by my employer or I quit, do I lose my future retirement benefit? As long as you do not take a refund of employee contributions, your service credit will not be cancelled. The service credit you earned as of the date you stopped working will remain in the System. Should you later return to employment with a Nevada public employer in a PERS eligible position, your new service credit will be combined with your previous service.

Refund of Contributions

Several years ago I took a refund of my personal contributions, how do I pay this back and restore the service credit? Once you have been re-employed by a Nevada public employer and earned six months of service credit, you can repay your refund. Contact one of our offices and we can provide you with an estimate of what it will cost and the amount of service credit that will be restored. When you are ready to repay the refund, you must request a Repayment Agreement from the PERS office which will list the conditions of your repayment. You may repay the refund through a lump-sum payment, through payroll deductions with interest, or by a lump-sum rollover from a qualified tax-deferred plan.

I have terminated with my employer, how do I get a refund of my contributions? Contact the PERS office and request a Refund Request Form. The refund form provides instructions regarding the completion of the form and the conditions that must be met before a refund can be issued. Your public employer is required to provide PERS with a notice of your termination of employment before your refund can be issued. A refund of employee contributions will cancel your membership in the system and all rights to a retirement benefit, including survivor and disability benefits.

Purchasing Service Answers

Can I purchase service? Any member who has obtained 5 years of service credit may purchase up to an additional 5 years of service credit. You may purchase as little as one day or any combination of years, months and days provided it doesn't exceed the five year maximum. Please note the five year maximum also applies to purchases made by your employer on your behalf. Members who have qualifying military service in Operation Desert Storm, Operation Iraqi Freedom or Operation Enduring Freedom may purchase additional service credit beyond the 5 years once they have completed the initial 5 year purchase.

When do I notify PERS that I want to purchase service? Members who were first enrolled in PERS after January 1, 2000, must request a purchase of service agreement from PERS while they are still actively employed by their public employer. Members who are planning to purchase service and then immediately retire have additional deadlines to meet in order to purchase service. It is best to contact us no later than 30 days before your last day of employment. The earlier you notify PERS, the better.

How much does it cost to purchase service? The cost to purchase service is determined based on two factors: Your average compensation (the monthly average of your 36 highest months of consecutive salary) and your age at the time of the purchase. On average, the cost for a one year purchase is approximately one-third of your annual salary. Typically, the purchase rates increase with your age. To get an idea of what your purchase cost will be, go to the OSC Estimator or log-in to your member account and click on "Service Credit Purchase Estimate."

How do I pay for a purchase of service? A purchase of service may be paid for in one of three ways: (1) a lump-sum payment, (2) Payroll deductions (if you choose to have a payroll deduction, 8% interest will be added to your total purchase cost for the timeframe in which you make payments) and (3) direct rollovers from qualified annuity and IRA plans described in sections 401(a), 403(b), and 457(b) of the Internal Revenue Code. This would include using any employer sponsored deferred compensation plans in which you may participate.

What are the procedures to purchase service? Contact one of our offices and request an agreement for a purchase of service. We will confirm how you plan to pay for the purchase at that time. An agreement will be mailed to you within 10-14 business days. Your agreement will include specific instructions and the terms of the contract. You will have 60 days to activate the agreement by signing and returning it to our office. If you request a rollover agreement, the agreement will include an additional form that you must provide to your tax deferred administrator. If you request a payroll deduction, the agreement will include a form that you must provide to your agency payroll office. Once your purchase is paid in full, you will receive written confirmation and the service credit will be added to your account.

How do I payoff my purchase of service agreement? The first step is to contact PERS and request a payoff amount. PERS will calculate the payoff amount, including interest, and provide the amount to you in writing. You will have several options for paying off the balance due; lump-sum payment or with a direct rollover. If you have been paying for your purchase through a payroll deduction, you will be responsible for notifying your payroll office to stop the deduction. PERS representatives are available to discuss how a payoff works and the paperwork required.

Survivor Benefits Answer

How do survivor benefits work? If you die as an active member with at least 2 years of service, your survivors are paid monthly survivor benefits. The amount of the benefit is based on your years of service at the time of your death. Survivors include a spouse or registered domestic partner, designated survivor beneficiary with or without additional payees, and dependent children who are under the age of 18 at the time of your death. A lifetime benefit is paid to the spouse or registered domestic partner or survivor beneficiary with or without additional payees. Dependent children are paid their benefit until they reach age 18 or 23 if they remain unmarried, full-time students.

How does my selection of beneficiaries affect my retirement benefits in the event I die before I retire? If you die as an active member, PERS statute determines the eligibility of benefits payable to your survivors. Your spouse or registered domestic partner is first in line to receive any benefit available from your account as well as any dependent children. If you are not married and have no registered domestic partner at the time of your death, PERS will refer to the [Survivor Beneficiary Designation form](#) on file and pay survivor benefits based on your designations.

Are step-children eligible for survivor benefits? No. Only children who are the progeny or biological offspring, or children who have been legally adopted by the deceased member are eligible for survivor benefits.

Disability Retirement Answers

What happens if I become disabled? If you have at least 5 years of service, you may apply for a Disability Retirement Benefit as long as you are still employed with your Nevada public employer at the time you submit your retirement application to the PERS office. We strongly recommend you read our [Disability Retirement Guide](#). We also recommend you contact one of our offices to request an estimate of benefits and the disability retirement packet.