

Guidelines to Apply for Retirement

If you are no longer working, waiting to apply for retirement past your normal retirement age will not increase your retirement benefit. Benefit payments will begin the first day of the month after you meet eligibility requirements and will not be retroactive.

When applying for retirement you must specify your retirement date on the PERS Application for Retirement Benefits.

By law, your retirement date will be the first of the month after the following requirements are met:

- You meet the minimum service and age requirements for retirement. You should not leave employment until you are absolutely certain that you are eligible to retire.
- You have terminated employment. **Note:** If you terminate your employment on the first day of the month, you will not be appointed to retirement until the following month.
- Your Application for Retirement Benefits is received by the Division of Retirement and Benefits prior to the date you plan to retire.

Benefit Calculation

Your pension benefit calculation is dependent on your years of service as well as your average monthly salary. If you terminate employment before working 115 days in your last year of employment, your last salary will not be included in your average monthly salary.

You should know the eligibility requirement for your tier so you can request an application packet for retirement benefits at least 120 days before your anticipated retirement date. It is your responsibility to contact the Division to initiate the retirement process.

Tier I
First entered the PERS on or before June 30, 1986
Early retirement at age 50 if vested, and normal at age 55 if vested. Any age with 30 years service or 20 years of police/fire service.

Tier II
First entered the PERS on or after July 1, 1986
Early retirement at age 55 if vested, and normal at age 60 if vested. Any age with 30 years service or 20 years of police/fire service.

Tier III
First entered the PERS on or after July 1, 1996 but before July 1, 2006
Early retirement age at 55 if vested, and normal at age 60 if vested. Any age with 30 years service or 20 years of police/fire service.

Health Benefits

New benefit recipients will be covered under the State of Alaska Retiree Health Plan (AlaskaCare) as of the retirement effective date. Those who must pay for coverage are also covered as of the retirement effective date if they elect coverage prior to retirement.

Your application should be filed with the Division a minimum of 60 days prior to your retirement effective date. If the Division does not receive your application by this requested time, eligibility reporting to the health carrier may be delayed. To ensure a smooth transition with your health insurance coverage, please submit your application early.

When your application is received, a health plan welcome kit with information and forms will be sent to you. This will be confirmation that your eligibility is being reported to the claim administrator. Your health insurance identification cards will be mailed to you shortly after your eligibility has been reported. At that time, you will be able to file for reimbursement of any covered medical services that occurred since your retirement date.

If you first entered the PERS after June 30, 1986, and you are under age 60 or if you first entered PERS after June 30, 1996, and have less than 10 years of credited service, you must enroll and pay the monthly premiums to be covered under the medical plan.

Police/fire plan members who first entered the PERS on or after July 1, 1986, and who have at least 25 years of police/fire service are not required to pay premiums for medical insurance regardless of age.

Checklist for Pre-Retirement Planning

- Contact Pre-Retirement Services and request an estimate of benefits and retirement application packet at least 120 days before your prospective date of retirement.
- Arrange for a counseling appointment.
- Fill out your packet and mail to the Division at least 60 days before your retirement effective date.

Required Items:

Court certified copies of divorce or dissolution documents (if applicable.)

Retirement benefits are paid once at the end of each month. However, the processing of your first benefit check can take approximately six weeks from your retirement effective date. Once your application has been processed, benefit checks will be automatically issued at the end of each month.

Taxes

PERS benefits are taxable by the federal government as soon as they are received.

Alaska Division of Retirement and Benefits

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Member Education Center

Hours: Monday-Thursday 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. | Friday 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Toll-Free: (800) 821-2251 | In Juneau: (907) 465-4460 | Fax: (907) 465-4668 | TDD: (907) 465-2805

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