

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SURVEY RESPONSE!

Remember: Your Retirement Benefits are Separate from Your Health Insurance Benefits

Thank you for your response to our [member service survey](#) this summer!

Our [new four-year strategic plan](#) is to offer you more online and self-service options to manage your retirement benefit accounts, in addition to our long-standing services in person, by phone, and through paper forms and materials. As mentioned in the [spring edition](#) of this newsletter, "your input will direct our efforts to the most popular services."



As we have been working through the flood of hard copy responses, we found several items for other organizations -- whether a union, insurance provider, retirement group, the [Public School Employees' Retirement System](#), or other entity -- that we have sent on to those organizations for you.

We also received several questions from retirees asking that we work to change their health insurance options or offer dental, vision, and/or hearing insurance coverage.

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Retired Members:

DID YOU CHOOSE A PENSION PAYMENT OPTION THAT PROVIDES A MONTHLY PAYMENT TO SOMEONE AFTER YOUR DEATH?

The payment option you selected on your pension application is final and binding, except in very limited circumstances. Those circumstances include the death of the individual you named as your "survivor" (someone who will receive monthly payments after your death), your marriage, or your divorce.

In those limited cases, you have **seven years** from the "qualifying event" (survivor's death, your marriage or divorce) in which you may change your pension payment option by submitting your option change application.

Please keep in mind that choosing a new payment option requires the recalculation of your pension. A recalculation could reduce your monthly payments; however, your life situation may

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Defined Contribution & Deferred Compensation Plan Participants:

LOOKING FOR INVESTMENT ADVICE?

Schedule a Retirement Readiness Review with Empower Today!

If you participate in the [Defined Contribution Plan](#) or [Deferred Compensation Plan](#), you have access to investment counseling and advice at no additional cost.

The service is referred to as a *Retirement Readiness Review*¹ and is offered free of charge from the third-party administrator of the plans, Empower.

Retirement Readiness Reviews provide personalized recommendations based on your individual situation and goals, while answering your in-depth retirement questions.

Whether you are early in your career, approaching retirement, or already retired, a Retirement Readiness Review can help ensure you're on the right path.



[Empower's team of registered investment advisors](#) are located throughout the state. These specialists can meet with you virtually or on-site to provide guidance and advice on how to invest and save within your SERS/ Empower investment accounts.²

Click the QR code to schedule your personal [Retirement Readiness Review](#) today.

¹ The Retirement Readiness Review is provided by an Empower representative registered with Empower Advisory Group, LLC and may provide investment counseling and/or recommendations at no additional cost to participants. There is no guarantee provided by any party that use of the review will result in a profit.

² Point-in-time advice provided by an Empower representative may include savings, investment allocation, distribution, and rollover advice, including advice on consolidating outside retirement accounts.

Point-in-time advice is provided by an Empower representative registered with Empower Financial Services, Inc. at no additional cost to account owners. There is no guarantee provided by any party that use of the advice will result in a profit.

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DID YOU CHOOSE A PENSION PAYMENT OPTION THAT PROVIDES A MONTHLY PAYMENT TO SOMEONE AFTER YOUR DEATH? (CONTINUED)

make the decrease worth it. For example, having the opportunity to provide monthly payments for another person after your death.

If you have a qualifying event, please [contact your Defined Benefit Plan Specialist](#) for more information and the proper forms.

This limited right to change your pension payment option is detailed in 4 Pa. Code §247.5a.

Defined Contribution Plan Participants:

DOES YOUR DEFINED CONTRIBUTION PLAN PROVIDE A DISABILITY BENEFIT?

The straight [Defined Contribution Plan](#) does not provide a disability annuity benefit, however, agencies under the Governor's jurisdiction will offer the [Retired Employees Health Program](#) (REHP) to employees who become disabled and meet eligibility requirements. REHP is administered by the Governor's Office of Administration through the [Pennsylvania Employees Benefit Trust Fund](#) (PEBTF). If you are a participant in the Defined Contribution Plan and want to apply, contact the Office of Administration, ra-rehp@pa.gov or **717.787.9872**.

If you are a participant in either [Hybrid Plan](#) option as an A-5 or A-6 class of service member, the pension portion of your benefit includes a [disability retirement annuity benefit](#) that is administered by SERS if you meet eligibility requirements and are approved. Both plans include majority state-paid health coverage for the term of your disability retirement benefit.

If you terminate state service before applying for a disability retirement, you will no longer be eligible to apply. Contact us for more information at 1.800.633.5461.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SURVEY RESPONSE! (CONTINUED)

Please know that your SERS retirement benefit does not include, and SERS does not negotiate or coordinate, insurance options. While different employers handle retiree health benefits in different ways, agencies under the Governor's jurisdiction and a few other employers offer the [Retired Employees Health Program](#) (REHP) coordinated by the [Governor's Office of Administration](#). If you retired from an employer outside the Governor's jurisdiction, your prior employer can provide you with information about your health care options.

Eligibility for the REHP is based on your years of service and age at retirement. As a result, your [pension plan specialist](#) can help current commonwealth employees by:

- Researching your service record to see if you qualify for REHP coverage
- Enrolling you in REHP as part of the retirement process, if appropriate
- Withholding money from your pension payments for premiums
- Enrolling and/or changing dependents assigned to your coverage
- Canceling coverage
- Verifying the amount of your premium at the time you retire, which is subject to change during retirement, due to collective bargaining

Our State College office is moving!

During our move, please remember that many forms are available at sers.pa.gov, and upon request by emailing ra-SERSretc@pa.gov or calling **1-800-633-5461**.

Check our website for the latest information!



pennsylvania

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