

## Service Retirement

There are two types of service retirement: normal and early. Normal service retirement provides full benefits, while early service retirement provides a reduced benefit. Your eligibility for either type of service retirement depends on two factors: your service credit and age.

*Normal:* At least 90 years of combined age and years of eligibility service. For example:

- Age 57 with 33 years of service,
- Age 60 with 30 years of service or
- Age 63 with 27 years of service

Active members with at least 10 years of eligibility service become eligible for normal service retirement at age 65.

*Early:* Age 60 with at least 15 years of eligibility service.

When you retire, you will be able to choose from a number of payment options. These options range from the Basic Allowance, which provides the highest monthly allowance for you alone, to options that reduce your monthly payment but provide varying degrees of protection to your beneficiary(ies) upon your death.

## During Retirement

As a retiree, once you have been retired one full year as of July 1, your retirement allowance may be adjusted each July to help your benefit payments keep pace with inflation.

## If You Leave Employment Before Retirement

If you should leave employment once you have accrued at least 10 years of eligibility service, you are vested and have earned the right to receive a future benefit

based on your service at termination. If you withdraw any of your contributions at termination, you will forfeit the right to a future benefit.

If you are not vested at the time of termination and you don't anticipate returning to membership, you should contact the agency to receive a refund of any contributions with interest you may have made.

## Resources

Visit the State Retirement Agency online at [sra.maryland.gov](http://sra.maryland.gov) for newsletters, member handbooks, retirement benefit estimators, printable forms and updates on the system's financial performance.

To visit the office or write a letter:

State Retirement Agency  
120 East Baltimore Street  
Baltimore, MD 21202-6700

Email inquiries to [sra@sra.state.md.us](mailto:sra@sra.state.md.us)

To speak with a retirement benefits specialist:

410-625-5555 or 1-800-492-5909

# Welcome to the Employees' & Teachers' Pension System\*



Baltimore Checkerspot Butterfly  
Maryland State Insect

\* For members enrolled on or after July 1, 2011

Maryland State Retirement  
and Pension System  
120 East Baltimore Street  
Baltimore, MD 21202-6700

410-625-5555  
1-800-492-5909

[sra.maryland.gov](http://sra.maryland.gov)

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Butterfly photo courtesy of Sue Muller  
Howard County Department of Recreation & Parks

[sra.maryland.gov](http://sra.maryland.gov)

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# Welcome!

The Maryland State Retirement and Pension System has a long history of providing retirement benefits to employees and teachers of Maryland state and municipal employers.

This overview deals with the highlights of the Employees' and Teachers' Pension System for members enrolled on or after July 1, 2011. Please refer to the pension system handbook on our website at [sra.maryland.gov](http://sra.maryland.gov) for more details about any of these topics.

A retirement coordinator, usually someone in your human resources department, can help you file enrollment forms and answer basic questions about your benefits. The Maryland State Retirement Agency also maintains a staff of retirement benefits specialists to answer questions from members and retirees.

## Enrollment

Membership in the Employees' and Teachers' Pension System is mandatory. You must enroll by submitting an *Application for Membership* (Form 1), a *Designation of Beneficiary* (Form 4) and a valid proof of birth date. The forms are available from your retirement coordinator.

If you have membership credit in another Maryland state or Maryland local retirement/pension system, you may be able to transfer that service credit to your new plan. To qualify for the transfer, your employment must be continuous and you must apply within one year of becoming a member in your new system. Contact a retirement benefits specialist if this situation applies to you.

## Employee Contributions

You contribute seven percent of your annual compensation to the Pension System.

## Service Credit

You earn service credit toward your retirement benefits each day you work and pay your required contribution. Your service credit and age determine when you are eligible for retirement and how much your retirement benefit will be.

Eligibility service is used to determine when you are eligible for a benefit. You earn one year of eligibility service during any fiscal year when you work a minimum of 500 regular hours, excluding overtime.

The amount of your retirement benefit is based on creditable service which is determined on the hours you work in a fiscal year. A full-time employee will earn one month of creditable service for each month of employment.

## Your Benefits

The Pension System provides survivor, disability and service retirement benefits. More information on your benefits is available online at [sra.maryland.gov](http://sra.maryland.gov).

## Survivor Benefits

The Pension System provides valuable beneficiary protection for members who die during active membership.

If a member dies after accruing at least one year of eligibility service, or dies in the course of duty, the beneficiary(ies) receives a one-time payment of the member's annual salary plus the member's accumulated contributions and interest.

If a member is eligible to retire or has at least 25 years of eligibility service at the time of death, his or her

surviving spouse may be eligible to receive a monthly benefit in lieu of the one-time payment if the spouse is the sole primary beneficiary.

In lieu of the survivor benefits mentioned here, if a member of the Employees' and Teachers' Pension System is killed in the line of duty, a monthly allowance of two-thirds of the member's average final compensation will be paid to the surviving spouse (if no spouse, to the member's children under age 26 or disabled children. If no spouse, children under age 26 or disabled children, the benefit is paid to the member's dependent parent for life.) Plus, a return of the member's accumulated contributions with interest is paid to the designated beneficiary.

## Disability Benefits

If you are permanently and totally disabled from performing your job duties, as determined by the System's medical board, you may be eligible for a lifetime monthly disability retirement benefit.

### *Types of Disability Retirement*

There are two types of disability benefits:

*Ordinary:* Any permanently disabling physical or mental condition.

*Accidental:* Any permanently disabling condition caused by injuries sustained from an accident on the job.

To file for ordinary disability, you must have accrued five years of eligibility service. As an active member, you are eligible to file for accidental disability from your first day on the job provided you file within five years of the date of the accident.

Your retirement coordinator can provide you with the necessary forms to file for a disability retirement benefit.