

We work better, when we work together...

January 2018

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Annual Reports Posted

You may have noticed the recent release of our [Comprehensive Annual Financial Report](#) as well as our [Summary Annual Report](#) under the popular publication MPERS FYI. We encourage you to look these reports over and offer any questions you might have. We also would appreciate you posting notice of these reports for those that do not have access to email in your organization.

Use of SAMII Leave Code L15 – Extended Leave Without Pay

As you are aware, there is a leave code available in SAMII of L15 – “Extended Leave Without Pay.” It has recently come to our attention that this leave code is not being utilized consistently. In order for this leave to be considered creditable for retirement purposes, it must be due to sickness or injury. If you are using this code for any other purpose, the time period will not be considered creditable and the member will not receive service or salary credit for the time in which they are placed on this leave. We are in the process of updating our Leave of Absence form so that if you place a member on an L15 leave, you **must** specify whether the leave is due to sickness or another reason. If the information is not marked on the form, or if you fail to submit a Leave of Absence form, we **will** be contacting you to determine the type of leave. If the member is placed on L15 for “other”, we will change the leave type to “Special Leave w/o Pay” in our pension system so that the member’s service and salary is not credited in our system.

Buyout

The buyout program that applied to our former vested members is very near completion. Most of the payments were issued on Thursday, January 11th. Approximately 17% of the eligible members participated in the program. As a reminder, if any of these participants come back to work in a benefit eligible position, they will be enrolled into the 2011 Tier retirement plan and should start out with a sick leave balance of “0”. A listing of members who chose the buyout provision will be sent to your agency so that the sick leave balances can be cleared out in SAMII.

Vesting Changes for 2011 Tier

The passage of Senate Bill 62 changed the vesting requirement for 2011 Tier members from 10 years to 5 years. The change is effective January 1, 2018, for any members that are still actively employed as of January 1, 2018. We are working with our database administrator to update our pension system including myMPERS Secure Member Access. When any 2011 Tier members attempt to review their records, check their retirement eligibility dates or run benefit estimates, the information they see has not been updated to accommodate the vesting change and therefore their information may not be accurate. If you have a 2011 Tier member who thinks they are now eligible to retire, or has any other questions about their benefits, please have them contact our benefit specialists directly so that we can provide them with accurate information. We will let you know when our system has been updated, but in the meantime, we appreciate your patience.

1099-R's

In case any retired member calls you, we will be mailing the 1099-R forms this month. There is no definite date on when the benefit recipient will receive the form, but by federal law the forms must be mailed in the month of January. New for this year is the ability of our benefit recipients to log into their account (using myMPERS Secure Member Access) and viewing their 1099-R form in the same format of what they will receive in the mail. In other words, they can print off their own copy of their 1099-R form if they lose their paper copy or get impatient waiting for the postal service to deliver their paper form. Previously they could only see the data that would appear on their 1099-R form.

COLAs

January is also the month when we determine the annual COLA rates for our benefit recipients. The COLA rate is based on the Consumer Price Index for all Urban Consumers (also known as the CPI-U). The rate for 2018 is 1.704%. We will post that rate to the front page of our website under "News and Updates." For more information on how the COLAs work, please go to <http://www.mpers.org/retirees/cost-of-living-adjustments-colas/>.

The Feedbag

Newsletters were mailed to our retired members in late December. Our active member edition is scheduled to be issued later this month. Copies of our newsletter are available under the [Publications/Newsletters](#) section of our website.

2018 Board Meeting Schedule

February 15, 2018

April 26, 2018 – only if necessary

June 21, 2018

September 27, 2018

November 29, 2018