



The HR Connection

We work better, when we work together....

May 2015

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New Member Correspondence

When a benefit eligible employee becomes a member of MPERS, we send them a welcome letter, with a brief description of their benefits. There are two versions of this letter, one for Closed Plan & Year 2000 Plan members (non-contributory), and one for 2011 Tier members (contributory). Now that the majority of you are providing 2011 Tier employees with the *Designation of Beneficiary for Employee Contributions* form during your new employee orientation, we felt like it was time to make some updates to our letter. Therefore, we will no longer be sending the *Designation of Beneficiary for Employee Contributions* form or the *Transfer of Creditable Service* form to members when they are hired. This prevents duplication and confusion since you are already providing the beneficiary form, and most members are already requesting their prior service when they complete their *Membership Record*. We've also taken this opportunity to update our letter to direct members to our website, and more importantly, to their Secure Member Access. Attached are samples of the new letters. Please take a moment to review the letters and let us know if you have any questions.

Understanding Your Retirement Decisions Brochure

How many times have we all heard the phrase “No one ever told me that”? As you can imagine, we hear that statement quite often. Therefore, we've put together a new brochure, *Understanding Your Retirement Decisions*, which we plan to distribute to members when they apply for retirement. This brochure depicts the items we most often receive calls about, such as returning to work after retirement, the Temporary Benefit...and when it goes away, when retirees get paid, marriage, divorce, etc. We hope this will give members an extra reminder, or point out something they may have previously missed.

2011 Tier Updates

We recently had a member list both their spouse, and another person as primary beneficiaries for their employee contributions. The question came up whether the spouse had to sign the form agreeing to this designation. It was determined that the spouse **does** need to sign if they are not the sole primary beneficiary. Therefore, we have revised the *Designation of Beneficiary for Employee Contributions* to reflect that the spouse must sign in this situation. The new form is available on our website, under Active Member forms.

According to 104.1091.8(5) the interest rate effective 6/30/2015 shall be equal to the investment rate that is published by the US Department of Treasury for fifty-two week treasury bills for the relevant auction that is nearest to the preceding July first. For 2015, the rate is 0.112%. For more information please review our 2011 Tier Brochure on our website. ***In order for members to receive interest on their employee contributions, they must be actively employed, or vested, on the last working day in June.***

We recently received a phone call from a member questioning why we were withholding federal taxes from his employee contribution refund, as he was told from someone in his office that taxes had already been withheld from his active pay check. Just to clarify, all employee contributions are pre-tax, which means the member does not pay taxes on them while actively employed. If the member terminates and chooses to request a refund of their contributions as "cash", they will be taxed on their contributions at that time.

Scanning/Emailing Documents

Now that we are receiving more documents via fax or email, there are a few reminders we want to pass along.

1. Please remember to NOT include full SSNs when submitting any paperwork to MPERS via email.
2. Please review any documents you send to ensure no information has been cut off. We have received several proof of age documents (mostly driver's licenses) where the edges are cut off and therefore we cannot view the pertinent information.

Pre-Retirement Seminars for May

May 13th – Macon

May 14th – Hannibal