



Serving the People Who Serve Our Schools

# Welcome to SERS

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Established by state law in 1937, SERS is one of five Ohio public pension funds and provides retirement, disability, survivor, and other benefits to its eligible members, retirees, and beneficiaries. The retirement plan SERS offers is a **defined benefit (DB)** plan. Under a DB plan, the amount of a person's retirement allowance is a fixed lifetime benefit.

**Working Together to Build Your Secure Retirement** SERS funds the benefits it provides from three sources: member contributions (you make your member contributions through your employer), employer contributions, and investment earnings. Earnings on SERS' investments are the major source of SERS' assets. The System provides retirement benefits to more than 63,000 retired members. You are joining more than 123,000 current, active members.

**Ensuring Funds Will Be Available When You Retire** SERS takes very seriously its mission to provide pensions, benefits, and services to our members, retirees, and beneficiaries that are soundly financed, prudently administered, and delivered with understanding and responsiveness.

## **SERS' Member Publications and Website Keep You Connected**

Soon you will receive your *Member Handbook* in the mail. It contains detailed information about your retirement plan and benefits. Also, please make sure to read the quarterly publications that SERS will mail to your home address. It is important that you keep your address current with SERS.

Please visit our website at [www.ohsers.org](http://www.ohsers.org) for comprehensive benefit information and the latest SERS news. You can use the website's Member Log-in feature to safely access your personal account and updated contribution balance.

## **SERS' Benefits Available to You**

**Your Member Contributions** You are **guaranteed** the return of your member contributions in the form of a retirement allowance, survivor benefit, or refund. Your right to receive a retirement allowance becomes guaranteed when your retirement application is approved. Instead of a retirement allowance, you may receive a refund of your member contributions if you stop working for your SERS employer. However, if you take a refund, you give up all of your SERS membership rights including the right to receive a retirement allowance, and tax penalties will apply unless you roll the money into a qualified account. For more information, see your *Member Handbook*.

**Your Retirement Benefits** Your retirement allowance is based on your age, number of years of service ("service credit"), and final average salary (FAS). For more information, see your *Member Handbook*.

A member who joins SERS before **May 14, 2008** will be eligible for a guaranteed lifetime monthly pension with the following combinations of age and service credit:

- 5 years of service credit at age 60; or
- 25 years of service credit at age 55; or
- 30 years of service credit at any age.

Those who become SERS members **on or after May 14, 2008** will be eligible for a guaranteed lifetime monthly pension with the following combinations:

- 10 years of service credit at age 62; or
- 25 years of service credit at age 60; or
- 30 years of service credit at age 55.

**Disability Benefits** If you become physically or mentally unable to perform the duties of your school job, and you have at least five years of service credit, you can apply for disability benefits. If approved, your benefit amount will range from 45% to 60% of your final average salary (FAS). For more information, see your *Member Handbook*.

**Survivor Benefits** Monthly survivor benefits are payable to qualified beneficiaries of a member who dies before retirement. Qualified beneficiaries who are receiving a monthly survivor benefit also have access to SERS health care plan.

Also, upon the death of a disability or service retiree, a \$1,000 lump sum death benefit is paid to the designated beneficiary. For more Survivor Benefit information, see your *Member Handbook*.

**Health Insurance** SERS has provided retirees with access to health insurance since 1974, and it is the goal of the retirement system to continue this access. Plan benefits, premiums, and continued access depend upon available resources and are subject to change.

**Members should be aware, however, that health insurance is not guaranteed. Unlike pensions, which are required by Ohio law, health insurance is provided at the discretion of SERS' Retirement Board and the available plans can change at any time.** For more information, see your *Member Handbook*.

SERS is your partner in helping you achieve a secure retirement. Our staff is here to help you, so please don't hesitate to contact us toll free at 1-866-280-7377 if you have any questions or would like to schedule a retirement counseling session.



# SCHOOL EMPLOYEES RETIREMENT SYSTEM OF OHIO

300 EAST BROAD ST., SUITE 100 • COLUMBUS, OHIO 43215-3746 • (614) 222-5853

Toll-Free 1-866-280-7377 • www.ohsers.org

## Membership Record

### PART A - TO BE COMPLETED BY MEMBER

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SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER

LAST NAME FIRST MIDDLE MAIDEN

PERMANENT MAILING ADDRESS STREET CITY STATE ZIP MALE FEMALE

DATE OF BIRTH MONTH DAY YEAR E-MAIL ADDRESS SINGLE MARRIED DIVORCED WIDOWED

PHONE NUMBER ( )

### FAMILY DATA

LAST NAME FIRST MIDDLE OR MAIDEN DATE OF BIRTH MONTH/DAY/YEAR

SPOUSE

CHILDREN

FATHER

MOTHER

### JOB CLASSIFICATION *Mark one box only:*

- Administrative Educational Aide Supplemental (Coach, Advisor, Etc.) Clerical/Secretarial Food Service School Board Member Custodial/Maintenance Transportation Other

### MEMBERSHIP IN OTHER OHIO SYSTEM

For all of the following, check "yes" or "no" if you ever were a member of or received benefits from:

	MEMBER		BENEFIT	
School Employees Retirement System of Ohio	YES	NO	YES	NO
State Teachers Retirement System of Ohio	YES	NO	YES	NO
Ohio Public Employees Retirement System	YES	NO	YES	NO
Ohio Police and Fire Pension Fund	YES	NO	YES	NO
Ohio State Highway Patrol Retirement System	YES	NO	YES	NO
Cincinnati Municipal Retirement System	YES	NO	YES	NO

### MEMBER CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify the information given hereon to be true to the best of my knowledge.

SIGNATURE DO NOT PRINT DATE

### PART B - TO BE COMPLETED BY EMPLOYER

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COUNTY DISTRICT NO.

SCHOOL DISTRICT COUNTY

MEMBER'S FIRST DATE OF SERVICE THIS SCHOOL YEAR (July 1 - June 30)

I hereby certify that I have verified the employee's social security number, the job title, and the first date of service for the current employment.

TREASURER'S SIGNATURE

## Statement Concerning Your Employment in a Job Not Covered by Social Security

**Employee Name** \_\_\_\_\_

**Employee ID#** \_\_\_\_\_

(Social Security #)

**Employer Name** \_\_\_\_\_

**Employer ID#** \_\_\_\_\_

Your earnings from this job are not covered under Social Security. When you retire, or if you become disabled, you may receive a pension based on earnings from this job. If you do, and you are also entitled to a benefit from Social Security based on either your own work or the work of your husband or wife, or former husband or wife, your pension may affect the amount of the Social Security benefit you receive. Your Medicare benefits, however, will not be affected. Under the Social Security law, there are two ways your Social Security benefit amount may be affected.

### **Windfall Elimination Provision**

Under the Windfall Elimination Provision, your Social Security retirement or disability benefit is figured using a modified formula when you are also entitled to a pension from a job where you did not pay Social Security tax. As a result, you will receive a lower Social Security benefit than if you were not entitled to a pension from this job. For example, if you are age 62 in 2005, the maximum monthly reduction in your Social Security benefit as a result of this provision is \$313.50. This amount is updated annually. This provision reduces, but does not totally eliminate, your Social Security benefit. For additional information, please refer to Social Security Publication, "Windfall Elimination Provision."

### **Government Pension Offset Provision**

Under the Government Pension Offset Provision, any Social Security spouse or widow(er) benefit to which you become entitled will be offset if you also receive a Federal, State or local government pension based on work where you did not pay Social Security tax. The offset reduces the amount of your Social Security spouse or widow(er) benefit by two-thirds of the amount of your pension.

For example, if you get a monthly pension of \$600 based on earnings that are not covered under Social Security, two-thirds of that amount, \$400, is used to offset your Social Security spouse or widow(er) benefit. If you are eligible for a \$500 widow(er) benefit, you will receive \$100 per month from Social Security (\$500 - \$400=\$100). Even if your pension is high enough to totally offset your spouse or widow(er) Social Security benefit, you are still eligible for Medicare at age 65. For additional information, please refer to Social Security Publication, "Government Pension Offset."

### **For More Information**

Social Security publications and additional information, including information about exceptions to each provision, are available at [www.socialsecurity.gov](http://www.socialsecurity.gov). You may also call toll free 1-800-772-1213, or for the deaf or hard of hearing call the TTY number 1-800-325-0778, or contact your local Social Security office.

**I certify that I have received Form SSA-1945 that contains information about the possible effects of the Windfall Elimination Provision and the Government Pension Offset Provision on my potential future Social Security benefits.**

**Signature of Employee** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_