

Frequently Asked Questions About Colorado PERA for Retirees



Q: When will I receive my benefit payment?

A. Colorado PERA benefits are paid at the end of the month for that month. Benefit payments will be mailed or deposited into your bank or credit union account (if your benefit is paid by electronic funds transfer) on the last workday of each month. For example, your March 2024 benefit will be paid on March 29, 2024.

Q: Is my PERA benefit taxable?

A. Yes, your PERA benefit is subject to federal and state income tax. The taxable amount of your benefit will depend on the tax-paid plus the tax-deferred balances in your member contribution account at retirement. If you have tax-paid money, based upon your age (and the age of your cobeneficiary, if applicable), part of your PERA benefit will not be taxable at the federal level for a specified number of months. Depending on your age, a portion of your benefit may not be taxable by the state of Colorado. With the exception of a small number of retirees in the Denver Public Schools (DPS) benefit structure, the IRS Form 1099-R you receive from PERA in late January each year will report the taxable and nontaxable portions of your benefit.



See the *Taxes on PERA Benefits* booklet for more information.

Q: Will I receive annual increases to my PERA benefit?

A. After retirement, you may receive an annual increase (AI) to your monthly retirement benefit. You must receive benefits for 36 months before you are eligible to receive your first AI in retirement. For all benefit recipients, AIs will be paid in July and are subject to change with the automatic adjustment provision.

If you are a retiree under the PERA benefit structure and began membership before January 1, 2007, or you are a retiree under the DPS benefit structure, the AI amount to be paid in July 2024 will be 1.0%.

If you are a retiree under the PERA benefit structure and began membership on or after January 1, 2007, the AI to be paid in July 2024 will be the lesser of 1.0%, or the average of the monthly CPI-W amounts for 2023 (to be calculated in 2024).



See the *Annual Increases* fact sheet for detailed information.

Automatic Adjustment Provision

The automatic adjustment provision responds to economic or demographic events that could cause a deviation in the path toward full funding, which helps ensure long-term fund stability. Specific to the AI:

- **If PERA is ahead of schedule** on reaching the full funding goal, the AI percentage paid to eligible benefit recipients can be increased by up to 0.25% in one year, not to exceed a cap of 2.0%.
- **If PERA is behind schedule** on reaching the full funding goal, the AI percentage paid to eligible benefit recipients can be decreased by up to 0.25% in one year, not to be reduced below a floor of 0.5%.

Q: How are PERA benefits coordinated with Social Security benefits?

A. Your PERA benefit is not affected by Social Security. However, your Social Security benefit may be reduced if you are receiving a PERA benefit. Contact Social Security for specific information about a reduction to your Social Security benefit by calling 800-772-1213 or visiting their website at ssa.gov. You may also review the *PERA and Social Security* fact sheet.

Q: May I change my option and cobeneficiary choices?

A. If you have a PERA benefit structure account, you may change your benefit option or cobeneficiary up to 60 days after the date your first benefit payment is issued. After 60 days have passed, you may not change your option or cobeneficiary, except in certain situations involving marriage, civil union, divorce, or death.

(Continued on reverse)

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Under the DPS benefit structure, you may change your option or cobeneficiary before the date your first benefit payment is issued. After your first benefit payment is issued, you may not change your option or cobeneficiary, except in certain situations involving divorce.

Under both benefit structures, there are additional exceptions if you suspend your retirement and return to work for a PERA employer for more than a year.

 See the *Changing Your Cobeneficiary or Benefit Option* booklet for more information.

Q: Can I work after retirement?

A. Yes. If you work for a private company or work for a public employer not affiliated with PERA, you can work without limitations.

If you return to work for a PERA employer, there are specific rules about returning to work during the month of your retirement, working as an independent contractor, and limits to the number of days/hours you can work per year.

When you return to work for a PERA employer, there are forms you may be required to complete. In most cases, your employer will be responsible for paying employer contributions on your salary, and you will be required to pay a working retiree contribution.

 See the *Working After Retirement* booklet for detailed information.

Q: What happens to my PERA life insurance after retirement?

A. If you have PERA life insurance, it will continue when you retire unless you cancel it in writing. As a retiree, your monthly premium will increase and will be paid by a deduction from your monthly benefit.

 See the PERA Life Insurance Program information on PERA's website.

Q: Does PERA offer health insurance?

A. Yes, PERA offers health care, dental, and vision insurance under the PERACare Health Benefits Program to retirees, other benefit recipients, and their eligible dependents. You may enroll at retirement or during the annual open

enrollment period. In addition, you may become eligible to enroll, change plans, or add dependents based on certain life events.


 See the PERACare information on PERA's website.

Q: Will I be eligible for Medicare as a PERA retiree?

A. Yes. You will be eligible for Medicare when you turn age 65. Medicare is the federal health insurance program for everyone age 65 and older. See Social Security's booklet #05-10043, *Medicare*, for information about enrolling in Medicare.

Everyone qualifies for Medicare Part B and pays a premium for Part B. Most PERA retirees also qualify for premium-free Medicare Part A, but if you do not, you do not have to purchase it if you are enrolled in one of PERACare's Medicare plans.


PERA offers health care information webinars. See the "Webinars" section on PERA's website at copera.org.

 See the *PERACare Health Benefits Program—Medicare Coverage* booklet for more information.

Q: What happens to my PERAPLus 401(k) and/or PERAPLus 457 Plan after I retire?

A. When you retire, you may leave your PERAPLus 401(k) and/or 457 Plan account(s) at PERA and continue to make transfers between investment funds, roll money into the PERAPLus 401(k) Plan, or request a loan or distribution. Even if you did not contribute to the PERAPLus 401(k) Plan prior to retirement, you may still roll money into the Plan after retirement.

If you have a PERAPLus 401(k) account and work for a PERA employer after retirement, you can continue to make contributions from your salary earned. If you have a PERAPLus 457 account and work for a PERA employer that participates in the PERAPLus 457 Plan, you can continue to make contributions from your salary earned.

 See PERA's website for more information about the PERAPLus plans.