

Employer Information Circular



Volume: 17 Issue: 10
Date: November 29, 2001

Administration Branch • P.O. Box 15275 • Sacramento, CA 95851-0275

2002 CalSTRS/EMPLOYER INSTITUTE

“TOGETHER WE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE”

The purpose of this circular is to inform you that the California State Teachers' Retirement System (CalSTRS) will be presenting two Institutes in the Spring of 2002. **The Northern California Institute will be held at the Napa Valley Marriott, 3425 Solano Avenue, Napa, CA 94558 on March 26 and 27, 2002. The telephone number is (707) 253-7433. The Southern California Institute will be held at the Mira Monte Resort, 45-000 Indian Wells Lane, Indian Wells, CA 92210 on May 14 and 15, 2002. The toll free telephone number is (800) 237-2926.**

The Institutes are offered as a complete two-day conference. Past experiences have proven that the full benefit of the information available at the Institutes cannot be obtained by attending only one day. The first day's presentations will not be repeated on the second day's agenda.

Again this year we are offering a second track on the first day that is designed for managers, supervisors, and human resources staff. The emphasis will be on legal authority, policy, and rationale for CalSTRS procedures as opposed to the more technical description of forms and procedures provided in the membership, reporting, and accounting workshops. Space allocated for the two tracks is about one third for the manager, supervisor, and human resources track, and two thirds for the membership, reporting, and accounting track.

The workshop agenda on the second day will be technical workshops on the benefit processes, Accounting, Cash Balance Benefit/403(b) Programs, Survivor Benefits, CalSTRS web site, Auditing, and Disability Services. Each is presented only once. Workshops the second day are scheduled to end at 12:35pm with lunch taking place immediately after the last workshop.

For the first time, we will host a reception in the afternoon following the first day of the workshops at both locations. The reception will be an opportunity for attendees and CalSTRS staff to mingle and get to know one another. The time will probably be about 4:00 to 5:30. This information will be included in your registration confirmation packages.

On both days, CalSTRS staff will be available for questions on specific problem areas and cases at an area located close to the registration table.

Come join us to prove that together we can make a difference!

Continued . . .

CALIFORNIA STATE TEACHERS' RETIREMENT SYSTEM

PRESENTS

**“TOGETHER
WE CAN
MAKE A DIFFERENCE”**



2002 CalSTRS/EMPLOYER INSTITUTE

MARCH 26 AND 27, 2002 – NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

MAY 14 AND 15, 2002 - SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

The **Institute** is an educational conference to provide you with an opportunity to develop a better understanding of the CalSTRS environment and how to operate within it. Those attending will become more familiar with the retirement system, its benefit programs, employer reporting, and the various benefit processes.

This year's Institutes promise to be both exciting and informative. **We expect a large number of attendees, so register by January 25, 2002 to secure your space and receive the "early bird" registration fee of \$210.00 (hotel reservation deadlines are listed below).** Come join us to prove that together we can make a difference.

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

**March 26 and 27, 2002
Napa Valley Marriott
3425 Solano Avenue
Napa, CA 94558**

1 (707) 253-7433

Hotel Reservation Deadline:

FEBRUARY 23, 2002

Room Rate: Single/Double \$119.00

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

**May 14 and 15, 2002
MiraMonte Resort
45-000 Indian Wells Lane
Indian Wells, CA 92210**

**1 (800) 237-2926 – Toll Free
or 1 (760) 341-2200**

www.miramonte-resort.com

Hotel Reservation Deadline:

APRIL 13, 2002

Room Rate: Single/Double \$109.00

SUMMARY OF THE WORKSHOPS PRESENTED AT THE CalSTRS/EMPLOYER INSTITUTE

Overview of CalSTRS

This will be a brief overview of the CalSTRS functional organization and communication network. The goal is to help employer staff better understand the interrelationships of the various CalSTRS units with which they conduct business.

Defined Benefit Program – Reporting and Membership

This workshop is designed for retirement and payroll employees. Discussion will center on the preparation of information required by CalSTRS Membership Division. A question and answer session will follow.

AB 2700 Presentation

This workshop will discuss the upcoming changes to creditable compensation resulting from the passage of AB 2700, effective July 1, 2002.

Service Retirement Workshop

This workshop is intended for those who may advise or work with members applying for or receiving CalSTRS retirement benefits. General information describing the Service Retirement Program, Application Processes, and Post-Retirement Employment will be provided. Topics will include: Pre-Retirement Election of an Option, Retirement Application Process, One-Year Final Compensation, Golden Handshake, Unused Sick Leave, Employer Responsibilities, Post-Retirement Earnings Limitations, Exemptions, and Monitoring Process. The presenters will be available to answer questions.

Accounting I Workshop – Remittance and Variance Reports Training Workshop

The accounting workshop offers detailed instruction on the contribution remittance process as well as the variance report process. Detailed examples will be discussed.

Accounting II Workshop – Accounting TOO!

This portion of the accounting workshop will offer a general overview of various accounting functions including Contribution accounting, accounting activities associated with new CalSTRS funds and programs and member accounts receivable and the Tax Deferred Payroll Deduction PC Program. This workshop is designed to offer insight into areas of Accounting in addition to Contribution Remittance and Variance Reports.

Cash Balance Benefit Program and 403(b) Program – Overview

This workshop is designed to provide Business Service Representatives, Human Resources Coordinators, Staff Development and Benefit Managers and their representatives with the features and benefits of CalSTRS' Cash Balance Benefit Program and the Voluntary Investment Program [403(b)]. This workshop will cover program features, employer and employee benefits and eligibility guidelines for the Cash Balance Benefit Program. The workshop will also cover the basics

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PRESENTED AT THE CalSTRS/EMPLOYER INSTITUTE
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Cash Balance Benefit Program and 403(b) Program – Overview - Continued

of an often overlooked, but important component of a potential benefit package – the tax deferred Voluntary Investment Program 403(b). Included in this portion of the workshop will be a description of the low fee tax-sheltered savings program available to CalSTRS members and participants, hold harmless agreement procedures, the important role this program can play in an employee's overall retirement planning, and the changes made by the federal “Economic Growth and Tax Relief Reconciliation Act of 2001” (EGTRRA).

Cash Balance Benefit Program Workshop - Technical/Reporting

This workshop is designed for supervisory and technical level personnel and payroll staff at the county and/or district level. The workshop will benefit employers who are already implementing the Cash Balance (CB) Benefit Program, but may also be of interest to those who wish to gain knowledge on what is required to report to CalSTRS when implementing this alternative retirement program. This workshop will not provide a general overview on benefits or eligibility issues, but will focus on the implementation/reporting/technical processes only. Topics covered will include program implementation, reporting and remittance methods, forms prescribed by the System, and on-going employer support.

Survivor Benefits Workshop

Survivor Benefits is responsible for determining eligibility and processing benefits for family allowance, death payments/benefits, and refunds of the contributions and interest.

This workshop is intended for those who may advise or work with members applying for CalSTRS survivor benefits. Participants in this workshop will receive specific information on Survivor Benefits Programs, which include death benefits, refunds, and the importance of death beneficiary designations, and also family allowances. New legislation effecting the Survivor Benefits Programs will also be discussed.

CalSTRS Web Site Demonstration

The CalSTRS web site, www.calstrs.ca.gov/, is intended to provide information for members, employers, and CalSTRS business partners. This presentation will give an overview of the CalSTRS web site. After the presentation, there will be a question and answer session. Feedback on additions or changes to the CalSTRS web site is encouraged.

School District Audit Workshop

This workshop will cover the effects of the new CalSTRS laws have on the school district audit process. We will discuss the types of audit issues that could occur because of the new laws.

**SUMMARY OF THE WORKSHOPS
PRESENTED AT THE CalSTRS/EMPLOYER INSTITUTE**

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Disability Services

This workshop is intended for those who may advise or work with members applying for the CalSTRS Disability benefit coverage. Topics to be discussed include:

- ⊃ Overview of the Disability Program
- ⊃ The Application Process and Criteria
- ⊃ Determining the Benefit Effective Date
- ⊃ Continuing Qualification
- ⊃ Benefit Calculations
- ⊃ How Other Public Benefits Affect the CalSTRS Benefit
- ⊃ Vocational Rehabilitation Program & Reasonable Accommodation

Manager/Supervisor /Human Resources Track Workshop

Your evaluations for past CalSTRS/Employer Institutes have requested a track for managers, supervisors and human resource staff. The theme of those requests was for more emphasis on policy, law, and processing concepts and less on specific procedural details. The materials for the track have been developed with those guidelines. The workshop will run on a schedule from 9:15 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. on the first day. The subjects included are:

- Introduction and CALSTRS Overview
- Defined Benefit vs Cash Balance vs Deferred Compensation
- CalSTRS Benefit Programs
- Basic Membership Criteria – Including Cash Balance Benefit Program
- CalPERS/CalSTRS Elections
- Minimum Standards for Membership
- Relationship of Earnings and Earnable Salary to Service Credit
- Relationship of Earnable Salary to Final Compensation
- AB 2700 – Credit Compensation and Service Changes
- Can we Negotiate a Higher Earnable?
- Part-time Employee Issues with Credit Final Compensation, including impact of AB 2700
- Service Credit and Final Compensation in Benefits
- Annual Statement of Account
- Charter Schools
- Accounting Variance Report as a Tool
- C-118 Remittance Policy
- Clearinghouse
- Elective Credit Purchase
- Audit Process; Why, What, and Key Issues
- Technology Projects
- Possible Impact of Mandatory Social Security
- Possible Impact of Social Security on CalSTRS Benefits
- Medicare Premium Payment Program
- Legislation for 2002
- Process and Policy Questions

ROME RATE: SINGLE/DOUBLE \$119.00

ROOM RATE: SINGLE/DOUBLE \$109.00

SPECIAL

ACCOMMODATIONS

/___/HANDICAP ACCESS /___/HEARING IMPAIRED /___/SIGHT IMPAIRED /___/SPECIAL DIETARY NEEDS (Be Specific)

Please explain

WORKSHOP SELECTION

I plan on attending the following workshops:

DAY ONE

PAYROLL/RETIREMENT/TECHNICAL TRACK

MANAGER/SUPERVISOR/HUMAN RESOURCES TRACK

- 8:15 - 8:25 Introduction
8:25 - 8:45 Overview of CalSTRS
8:45 - 9:15 Defined Benefit Program Reporting and Membership
9:15 - 12:15 AB 2700 Presentation
1:30 - 3:00 Service Retirement Employers Role in Retirement

- 8:25 - 8:40 Introduction
8:40 - 9:15 Overview of CalSTRS
9:15 - 12:15 Workshop
1:30 - 3:00 Process & Policy Questions
3:15 - 4:15 Process/Policy Questions (If needed)

DAY TWO

- 8:00 - 8:55 ACCOUNTING I - Employer's Role in Contribution Remittance Process
9:00 - 10:00 ACCOUNTING II - Accounting T00
10:15 - 11:30 SURVIVOR BENEFITS
11:35 - 12:35 SCHOOL DISTRICT AUDITS

- 8:00 - 8:55 INTERNET
9:00 - 10:00 DISABILITY SERVICES
10:30 - 11:30 CASH BALANCE VIP/DBS - Overview
11:35 - 12:35 CASH BALANCE BENEFIT PROGRAM - Technical

DEMOGRAPHIC SURVEY

Table with 3 columns: EMPLOYER, POSITION LEVEL, FUNCTION. Lists various roles and organizational types with checkboxes.

Have you attended other CalSTRS/Employer Institutes? Yes ___ No ___

If yes, When? _____

Return entire form to: California State Teachers' Retirement System ATTN: Pamela Madrigal - MS#-32-A P.O. Box 15275 Sacramento, California 95851-0275