Access Your Information on myCalSTRS

Find your account information and more on myCalSTRS any time, from anywhere you have Internet service.

Start at myCalSTRS.com. Once you complete the one-time, five-step registration process, your myCalSTRS account will be active.

With myCalSTRS, you can:

- Keep your mailing and email addresses and phone number current.
- Review your annual Retirement Progress Report, which includes your account balances and years of service credit.
- Designate and update your one-time death benefit recipient information.
- View your option beneficiary information.
- Ask questions and receive prompt, secure answers.
- Find Preretirement Election of an Option and other forms.
- Complete and submit your Service Retirement Application online.

View the self-paced, interactive online registration guide on myCalSTRS.

On our cover

Sierra is a 6th grade teacher at an elementary school in Northern California. She has been a CalSTRS member for six years.
Welcome to CalSTRS

I am pleased to present the 2016 edition of the CalSTRS Member Handbook.

Whether you’re just starting your career or are an experienced educator, this handbook answers many of the questions you may have about your benefit coverage. It can help you make informed decisions throughout your career, so that you are fully prepared for retirement.

With the new funding structure in place, enacted in Chapter 47, Statutes of 2014 (Assembly Bill 1469-Bonta), the CalSTRS Defined Benefit Program is expected to be fully funded by 2046. The new plan relies on contribution rate increases from all parties—members, employers and the state—without reducing benefits. In exchange for the increased member contribution rates, the Legislature cannot reduce the 2 percent annual benefit adjustment for members who retire on or after January 1, 2014. For those who retired before then, the Legislature continues to reserve the right to reduce the annual benefit adjustment, a right that has never been exercised.

A year earlier, the California Public Employees’ Pension Reform Act of 2013 made changes to our plan structure that primarily affect members first hired on or after January 1, 2013, to perform CalSTRS creditable activities. Our two benefit structures are:

**CalSTRS 2% at 60:** Members first hired on or before December 31, 2012, in addition to certain other members (see page 20).

**CalSTRS 2% at 62:** Members first hired on or after January 1, 2013.

Serving you and protecting your savings remain our highest priorities. We are committed to providing exemplary service to every person who emails, calls, visits or writes us.

We look forward to assisting you and helping you plan for your secure financial future.

Jack Ehnes
Chief Executive Officer
CalSTRS is governed by the Teachers’ Retirement Law, available at CalSTRS.com, and other sections of state law. If there is a conflict between the law and this handbook, the law prevails.
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Changes to CalSTRS Benefits for 2016

2014 Law Requires a Return of Excess Contributions

Under the 2014 CalSTRS Full Funding Plan, approved by the Governor under AB 1469, member contribution rates for the Defined Benefit Program are gradually increasing (see New Contributions Rates sidebar). The member contribution rate for compensation creditable to the Defined Benefit Supplement Program, which includes compensation earned for service in excess of one year, is still 8 percent.

CalSTRS is unable to determine if you performed service in excess of one year until the end of the school year. Contributions made in excess of the 8 percent Defined Benefit Supplement rate will be returned to employers in late September. Any excess member contributions you made during the school year are reported on your Retirement Progress Report and your myCalSTRS account.

Your employer is responsible for returning your excess member contributions to you, less any authorized adjustments or tax withholding. The timing of the return of your excess member contributions by your employer will vary.

See “Return of Excess Contributions,” page 25, to learn more.

Cash Balance Benefit Lump-Sum Payment Changes

Under a new state law effective January 1, 2016, if you’re a Cash Balance Benefit participant and receive your retirement benefit as a lump-sum payment, your benefit will not be payable until 180 calendar days after the date you terminated employment. If you return to work in a CalSTRS-covered position during this waiting period, your retirement will be canceled and you will not receive your payment. The 180-calendar day waiting period is consistent with the current separation-from-service requirement. Under this requirement, Defined Benefit members and Cash Balance Benefit annuitants who retire and return to work in a CalSTRS-covered position will have their retirement benefit reduced dollar for dollar by the amount they earn during the first 180 calendar days following their most recent retirement effective date. See pages 36 and 82 to learn more.

New Contribution Rates

Members

**CalSTRS 2% at 60 members** (first hired on or before December 31, 2012): Rates are gradually increasing 2.25 percent from 8 percent to 10.25 percent. Your contribution rate for 2015–16 increased to 9.2 percent and will increase to 10.25 percent in 2016–17.

**CalSTRS 2% at 62 members** (first hired on or after January 1, 2013): Rates are gradually increasing 1.205 percent, in addition to the base CalSTRS 2% at 62 contribution rate, which is equal to 50 percent of the normal cost of benefits or 8 percent in 2015–16. For 2015–16, your rate is 8.56 percent. Assuming there is no change to the normal cost of benefits, it is anticipated your rate will be 9.205 percent in 2016–17.

Employers

Rates are increasing gradually over seven years from 8.25 percent in 2013–14 to 19.1 percent in 2020–21; 10.73 percent in 2015–16.

State

Rates are increasing over three years from 5.541 percent (includes contributions for purchasing power protection) to 8.828 percent.

The Governor and Legislature can make statutory changes that may affect your CalSTRS benefits and career or retirement decisions. While CalSTRS makes every effort to inform you of these changes, legislation sometimes changes quickly. To stay informed, consult a variety of resources, including CalSTRS.com, the California State Legislative information website at leginfo.legislature.ca.gov, or your union or elected legislative representatives.
CalSTRS Is Here for You

CalSTRS offers services and information for every stage in your career:

- Your annual *Retirement Progress Report*, which provides your CalSTRS account and service credit balances.
- Convenient online services and access to your account information with *myCalSTRS*.
- Customer service by email, phone or letter.
- Benefits specialists to help you understand your benefits, review your forms and more.
- Publications about benefits and services.
- Retirement planning workshops and benefits planning sessions.
- CalSTRS Pension2® 403(b), 457(b) and Roth 403(b) investment plans.
- Comparisons of 403(b) plans in California at 403bCompare.com.
The Basics
CalSTRS provides retirement, disability and survivor benefits for full-time and part-time California public school educators through its Defined Benefit, Defined Benefit Supplement and Cash Balance Benefit programs. CalSTRS also has a voluntary defined contribution plan called CalSTRS Pension2, which offers 403(b), 457(b) and Roth 403(b) investment plans for additional retirement income.

Your Retirement Plan
CalSTRS administers a hybrid retirement system consisting of traditional defined benefit, cash balance and voluntary defined contribution plans:

- **Traditional defined benefit plan:** Your CalSTRS retirement benefit is a defined benefit pension. It’s based on the following formula, not on how much you contribute or how well CalSTRS investments perform:

  \[
  \text{service credit} \times \text{age factor} \times \text{final compensation} = \text{your retirement benefit}
  \]

- **Cash balance plan:** CalSTRS Defined Benefit Supplement Program is a cash balance plan. Your member contributions and your employer’s contributions are credited to your Defined Benefit Supplement account. Your account earns guaranteed interest and, when the Teachers’ Retirement Board declares, additional earnings credits. At retirement, you receive a benefit that is equal to your total account balance. The CalSTRS Cash Balance Benefit Program, an alternative to membership in the Defined Benefit Program for part-time educators, is also a cash balance plan.

- **Defined contribution plan:** With CalSTRS Pension2, you can set aside additional savings for retirement. Select from a variety of investment plans, then contribute to your tax-advantaged account through paycheck deductions. The amount you have at retirement depends on your contributions, investment gains or losses, and account expenses.
### Defined Benefit Program
Mandatory for full-time California public school preK–12 teachers, community college instructors and public school administrators; part-time educators can choose to become members.

**Retirement Benefit**
With five years of service credit, you’re eligible for a guaranteed lifetime retirement benefit based on a formula set by law:

\[
\text{service credit} \times \text{age factor} \times \text{final compensation}
\]

You can choose to provide a lifetime monthly benefit to someone after your death.

### Defined Benefit Supplement Program
A supplemental cash balance plan for Defined Benefit Program members.

**Retirement Benefit**
Your Defined Benefit Supplement account balance, including interest earned, is payable to you at retirement.

**Contributions**
You and your employer each contribute 8 percent of your earnings to your Defined Benefit Supplement account for certain types of creditable compensation, including earnings in excess of one year of service credit. For 2% at 60 members, contributions also include limited-term payments and retirement incentives. These types of compensation are not creditable for 2% at 62 members.

From January 1, 2001, to December 31, 2010, one-fourth of your 8 percent member contribution to the Defined Benefit Program was credited to your Defined Benefit Supplement account.

**Survivor Benefits**
If you die before retirement, a lump-sum payment equal to the total balance of your Defined Benefit Supplement account will be distributed to your one-time death benefit recipient. If you die after retirement, your Defined Benefit Supplement account balance may be paid to your option beneficiary as a monthly annuity, or your one-time death benefit recipient as a lump-sum payment or a period-certain annuity.

You may also receive your Defined Benefit Supplement account balance if you receive a CalSTRS disability benefit.

### Cash Balance Benefit Program

A cash balance retirement plan employers can choose to offer their part-time educators as an alternative to the Defined Benefit Program or Social Security.

**Retirement Benefit**
Your Cash Balance Benefit account balance, which includes your contributions, employer contributions, guaranteed interest and any additional earnings credits, is payable to you at retirement.

**Contributions**
You typically contribute 4 percent of your pay.

Your employer must contribute an amount equal to at least 4 percent of your salary.

Employers may bargain alternative rates, but the combined employer/employee contribution must be 8 percent. For contracts entered into or changed on or after January 1, 2014, the employee contribution rate can’t be less than the employer’s rate.

**Survivor and Disability Benefits**
Your survivors typically receive a lump-sum distribution of the total account balance, which includes your contributions, employer contributions, guaranteed interest and any additional earnings credits.

Your disability benefit is the total account balance, which includes your member contributions, employer contributions, guaranteed interest and any additional earnings credits.

- See “Cash Balance Benefit Program,” page 35.

### CalSTRS Pension2

CalSTRS’ voluntary defined contribution plan, with 403(b), 457(b) and Roth 403(b) investment options for additional retirement income.

**Retirement Benefit**
Your investment account balance at retirement—early withdrawal tax penalty may apply if you are under age 59½.

**Contributions**
You contribute to your tax-advantaged account through paycheck deductions or rollover.

**Survivor and Disability Benefits**
403(b) and 457(b) funds can be withdrawn upon death and disability.

Social Security, CalSTRS and You

As a California public school educator, you do not pay into Social Security, so you will not receive Social Security benefits for your CalSTRS-covered position.

If you expect to receive a Social Security benefit through other employment or your spouse, two federal rules—the Windfall Elimination Provision and the Government Pension Offset—could leave you with a smaller Social Security benefit or no benefit at all.

Your CalSTRS retirement benefit will not be reduced by these rules.

Windfall Elimination Provision

• Affects your Social Security benefit that is based on your earnings from other employment.

• May reduce your Social Security benefit, but not eliminate it.

Government Pension Offset

• Affects your spousal, widow or widower Social Security benefit that is based on your spouse’s earnings.

• Will reduce—and may eliminate—your Social Security benefit by two-thirds of your CalSTRS benefit.

Important Things to Consider

• If you receive Social Security now, your Social Security benefit may be reduced or eliminated when you begin receiving your CalSTRS benefit. Let the Social Security Administration know when you plan to retire so that your Social Security benefit can be adjusted. Otherwise, you may have to repay any excess Social Security benefits you receive after you began receiving your CalSTRS benefit.

• If you take a refund of your CalSTRS accounts, your Social Security benefit still will be reduced by both rules.

• Your annual Social Security statement is based on your projected income and may not accurately reflect the impact of the offsets.

• After retirement, when you receive your annual benefit adjustment each year, contact the Social Security Administration. Your Social Security benefit may need to be adjusted.

Steps to Take Near Retirement

• Visit Social Security at socialsecurity.gov/gpo-wep.

• Request an estimate of your Social Security benefit from the Social Security Administration.

• Use the online calculators at ssa.gov/planners/benefitcalculators.html to estimate any reductions to your Social Security check.

• Contact the Social Security Administration when you’re ready to retire.


Also see the Social Security, CalSTRS and You fact sheet at CalSTRS.com/publications.
Your Retirement Progress Report

Your Retirement Progress Report is one of your most important CalSTRS records. It provides the balance of your contributions, interest and earnings credits and service credit total as of June 30 of the prior school year.

Your report summarizes:

- The service credit you earned or purchased the previous year.
- Your total accumulated service credit.
- The name of your one-time death benefit recipient and option beneficiary, if you elected one.
- Accumulated contributions and interest in your accounts.
- Any excess member contributions in the year.
- Balance of contributions, guaranteed interest and any additional earnings credits in your Defined Benefit Supplement account (or your Cash Balance Benefit account).
- Your disability and survivor benefits under Coverage A or Coverage B.
- Two estimates of your retirement benefits beginning when you turn age 45.

Inactive members who have contributions and interest remaining in their Defined Benefit account balance, but who did not perform creditable service during the prior school year, also receive a report. Retired members and other benefit recipients do not receive a report.

If you believe there is a discrepancy on your report, contact your employer. Your employer must submit any adjustments to us through the regular reporting process. Adjustments made to service credit and contributions after June 30 will be included on your report for the next school year. If you purchased service credit or redeposited contributions previously refunded, the changes will appear on your report for the school year during which the final payment was made.

Your Retirement Progress Report is available online on myCalSTRS. If you would like to receive your report by mail, use your myCalSTRS account to request your delivery preference, or complete the Retirement Progress Report Delivery Preference form, available at CalSTRS.com/forms.

For security and privacy, all members have a randomly generated Client ID number for identification. Your Client ID is available on any letter from us and on your annual Retirement Progress Report. You should use it when you communicate with us about your account.

myCalSTRS is your online resource for managing your personal information and accounts with CalSTRS.

Activate your account at myCalSTRS.com.
CalSTRS Overview
The California State Teachers’ Retirement System is your retirement system. It was established by law in 1913 to provide retirement benefits to California’s public school educators from prekindergarten through community college.

Teachers’ Retirement Board
The Teachers’ Retirement Board administers CalSTRS and sets policies and rules to ensure benefits are paid according to the law.

The 12-member board is composed of:

- Three active CalSTRS members representing current educators.
- One retired CalSTRS member appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate.
- Three public representatives appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate.
- One school board representative appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate.
- Four board members who serve in an ex-officio capacity by virtue of their office: Director of Finance, State Controller, State Superintendent of Public Instruction and State Treasurer.

The board appoints a chief executive officer to administer CalSTRS consistent with the board’s policies and rules, and selects a chief investment officer to direct the CalSTRS Investment Portfolio in accordance with board policy.

The board has six standing committees: Appeals, Audits and Risk Management, Benefits and Services, Board Governance, Compensation and Investments.

Teachers’ Retirement Fund
The Teachers’ Retirement Fund is a special trust fund established by law that holds the assets of the CalSTRS Defined Benefit, Defined Benefit Supplement and Cash Balance Benefit programs. The assets come from contributions by employees, employers and the State of California. The fund’s investments provide a stream of income to add to those assets.

When selecting investments, the board applies standards of safety, diversification, liquidity and structure for a complete and profitable investment portfolio. The portfolio includes stocks, bonds, real estate and short-term investments. Within these categories, CalSTRS further diversifies by holding a variety of investments within each segment.

The market value of the CalSTRS Investment Portfolio was $191.4 billion as of June 30, 2015. CalSTRS is the largest educator-only pension fund in the world, and the second largest pension fund in the U.S.
Take Advantage of CalSTRS Resources

**Online**

*myCalSTRS*
Access your account balances, service credit, forms and more. Start at myCalSTRS.com.

*CalSTRS.com*
Find information about CalSTRS benefits and services, workshops, publications, forms, benefit estimate calculators and more.

*Pension2.com*
Learn about CalSTRS Pension2 403(b), Roth 403(b) and 457(b) investment plans, find enrollment forms and financial planning tools.

*403bCompare.com*
Make side-by-side comparisons of 403(b) plans in California.

**Stay Connected**

Facebook  Twitter  Google+  LinkedIn  YouTube  Pinterest  Placebo  Instagram

**CalSTRS Ombudsman**
The Office of the Ombudsman was created by the California Legislature to receive complaints from our members and other entities regarding the actions of our employees. The Office of the Ombudsman can help you by:

- Providing information, answering questions or identifying staff or resources to address your issues.
- Researching CalSTRS policies and law that may assist you in resolving your problem.
- Addressing your concerns in a prompt and professional manner.

CalSTRS.com/contact, select CalSTRS Ombudsman to send us a secure email

**Publications**
Find publications online:

- CalSTRS Comprehensive Annual Financial Report
- Cash Balance: A Retirement Plan for Part-Time and Adjunct Educators
- Community Property Guide
- Concurrent Retirement
- Introduction to CalSTRS Disability Benefits
- Join CalSTRS? Join CalPERS?
- Member Handbook
- Purchase Additional Service Credit
- Refund: Consider the Consequences
- Social Security, CalSTRS and You
- Survivor Benefits: Remember Your Loved Ones
- Tax Considerations for Rollovers
- Welcome to CalSTRS
- Working After Retirement
- Your Disability Benefits Guide (Disability Benefits Application)
- Your Retirement Guide

**Newsletters**

- CalSTRS Connections: Your Money Matters (for active members under 50)
- CalSTRS Connections: Reaching Your Retirement (for active members over 50)
- Retired Educator (for retired members and other benefit recipients)
Workshops
Explore benefits and services with the help of a CalSTRS benefits specialist.

Workshops—Find a list of workshops on page 52 or visit CalSTRS.com/workshops to register for one near you.

Financial Awareness Series—Learn to save for, plan and protect your future with a series of workshops on financial topics.

Benefits Planning Sessions
Meet with a CalSTRS benefits specialist to prepare for the decisions you’ll need to make when you transition into retirement. Learn with fellow educators in a confidential, yet interactive, small-group setting. Find a list of benefits planning sessions on page 52. Contact your local office or visit myCalSTRS to schedule a session.

Pension Abuse Reporting Hotline
Anonymously report suspicions of pension abuse to CalSTRS: toll free 855-844-2468.

Forms
Find the forms you need to designate a one-time death benefit recipient, apply for a service retirement, change your address and more online and on myCalSTRS. Also, find the CalSTRS offices that accept hand-delivered forms.

Videos
Browse our growing library of three- to five-minute member education videos:

Introduction to CalSTRS
myCalSTRS
Understanding the Formula
The Gap
Refund: Consider the Consequences
Introduction to Social Security
Purchasing Service Credit
Defined Benefit Supplement Program
Beneficiary Options
Survivor Benefits
Disability Benefits
CalSTRS Pension2
Connect Now

CalSTRS.com/videos
### CalSTRS Benefits Planning Offices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Office Locations</th>
<th>Telephone Numbers</th>
<th>Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Auburn</td>
<td>530-886-2012</td>
<td>M–F 8–5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bakersfield</td>
<td>661-636-4880</td>
<td>M–F 8–5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eureka</td>
<td>800-228-5453, ext. 3</td>
<td>M–F 8–4:30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fresno *Visalia</td>
<td>559-497-3797</td>
<td>M–F 8–4:30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glendale Member Service Center *Culver City, Lancaster, Oxnard, Walnut</td>
<td>800-228-5453, ext. 3</td>
<td>M–F 8–5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irvine Member Service Center *Downey, Santa Fe Springs</td>
<td>800-228-5453, ext. 3</td>
<td>M–F 8–5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Riverside Member Service Center</td>
<td>800-228-5453, ext. 3</td>
<td>M–F 8–4:30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Diego *San Marcos</td>
<td>619-718-6783</td>
<td>M–F 8–5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santa Clara Member Service Center *Pleasant Hill, San Francisco</td>
<td>800-228-5453, ext. 3</td>
<td>M–F 8–5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santa Cruz *Salinas</td>
<td>831-466-5755</td>
<td>M–F 8–5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santa Maria *Santa Barbara</td>
<td>805-928-0542</td>
<td>M–F 8:30–5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santa Rosa</td>
<td>800-228-5453, ext. 3</td>
<td>M–F 8–5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stockton</td>
<td>209-468-4864</td>
<td>M–F 7–5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Sacramento Member Service Center *Elk Grove, Fairfield, Modesto, Oroville, Redding</td>
<td>800-228-5453, ext. 3</td>
<td>M–F 8–5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Hours and services vary at satellite offices. Appointments are scheduled through the corresponding CalSTRS office.

All member service centers accept CalSTRS applications and forms. Contact satellite offices directly to find out if they accept forms. For a current listing of offices, visit CalSTRS.com/localoffices.
Keys to Your Secure Financial Future
CalSTRS shares your goal—a secure financial future.

1. Determine How Much You’ll Need
CalSTRS members typically have four sources of retirement income:
- CalSTRS monthly retirement benefit.
- Defined Benefit Supplement benefit.
- Additional investment savings, such as CalSTRS Pension2, which offers 403(b), 457(b) and Roth 403(b) plans.
- Other personal savings.

You do not receive Social Security benefits from your CalSTRS-covered employment. If you’ll receive Social Security through other employment or a spouse’s earnings, see page 10.

Recent CalSTRS members—on average—retired at nearly age 62 after more than 25 years of service with a retirement benefit that replaced about 55 percent of their salary. Financial planners recommend that to maintain your current lifestyle after retirement, you should plan to replace 80 percent to 90 percent of your salary. You’ll need to close any gap between your target retirement income and CalSTRS retirement benefit with personal savings and investments.

Plan ahead so you’ll have the lifestyle you desire after you leave the classroom.

2. Attend a CalSTRS Workshop and View Member Education Videos
CalSTRS offers workshops and benefits planning sessions designed to meet your needs at different stages of your career.
- CalSTRS.com/workshops
- CalSTRS.com/benefits-planning

View member education videos that address topics for targeted career stages.
- CalSTRS.com/videos
Purchase Service Credit
You may be eligible to purchase permissive service credit. The more service credit you have at retirement, the greater your CalSTRS retirement benefit.

**CalSTRS 2% at 60:** With the additional service credit, you may qualify for one or more benefit enhancements that will further increase your benefit.

**One-Year Final Compensation:** If you retire with 25 or more years of qualified service credit, your final compensation is your highest average annual compensation earnable for any 12 consecutive months rather than any 36 consecutive months.

**Career Factor:** If you retire with 30 or more years of service credit, 0.2 percent will be added to the age factor up to a maximum combined age factor and career factor of 2.4 percent.

**Longevity Bonus:** If you had at least 30 years of qualified service credit by December 31, 2010, you’re eligible for a longevity bonus that adds a set dollar amount to your monthly retirement benefit.

**CalSTRS 2% at 62:** Your final compensation is based on your highest average annual compensation earnable for 36 consecutive months. You’re not eligible for the career factor benefit enhancement.

See the *Purchase Service Credit* publications on CalSTRS.com/publications.

Find forms on myCalSTRS and CalSTRS.com/forms.

Calculate how your service credit purchase would increase your retirement benefit at CalSTRS.com/calculators.

Save More With CalSTRS Pension2
CalSTRS Pension2 offers investment plans for additional retirement savings. Flexible investment portfolios, low fees and expenses, and financial planning tools and services make Pension2 an attractive way to save.

It’s never too early to start saving for retirement—and never too late.

- Pension2.com
- 403bCompare.com
- 403bCompare provides objective, side-by-side comparisons of registered 403(b) plans in California.
- 403bCompare.com

Attend a Benefits Planning Session
You can attend a CalSTRS benefits planning session at any career stage to help you make the most of your CalSTRS membership. Current sessions include CalSTRS and You, CalSTRS and Your Retirement, and the Retirement Application Roundtable. Individual sessions in person or by telephone are also available.

- CalSTRS.com/benefits-planning

Save More With CalSTRS Pension2
CalSTRS Pension2 offers investment plans for additional retirement savings. Flexible investment portfolios, low fees and expenses, and financial planning tools and services make Pension2 an attractive way to save.

It’s never too early to start saving for retirement—and never too late.

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- 403bCompare provides objective, side-by-side comparisons of registered 403(b) plans in California.

- 403bCompare.com

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You can attend a CalSTRS benefits planning session at any career stage to help you make the most of your CalSTRS membership. Current sessions include CalSTRS and You, CalSTRS and Your Retirement, and the Retirement Application Roundtable. Individual sessions in person or by telephone are also available.

- CalSTRS.com/benefits-planning
Less than one year of service credit

- Activate your myCalSTRS account at myCalSTRS.com to view your account balances, service credit, update your contact information and more online.

- Designate a one-time death benefit recipient using myCalSTRS or by completing the Recipient Designation form, available at CalSTRS.com/forms.

- Watch the member education videos at CalSTRS.com/videos for a quick way to learn more about your benefits.

- Start a tax-advantaged 403(b), 457(b) or Roth 403(b) account for additional money in retirement. Consider CalSTRS Pension2, which offers low fees and expenses. See the Pension2 ebook at Pension2.com or page 39 to learn more.

One to five years of service credit

You're eligible to designate a CalSTRS one-time death benefit recipient and monthly survivor benefit if you should die before retirement.

- Designate a one-time death benefit recipient using myCalSTRS or by completing the Recipient Designation form, available at CalSTRS.com/forms, if you haven't already done so.

- Check your Retirement Progress Report every year to make sure your service credit is accurate.

- Attend a CalSTRS workshop or benefits planning session for new members.

Five years of service credit

You're eligible now for a lifetime monthly retirement benefit when you retire. You can retire as early as age 55.

- Attend a CalSTRS workshop or benefits planning session tailored to your career stage.

- Save more for retirement. Increase payroll contributions to your 403(b), 457(b) or Roth 403(b) account.

- Consider purchasing additional service credit. You may be eligible to redeposit service credit or purchase permissive service credit. The earlier you purchase service credit, the lower the cost. Use the calculator at CalSTRS.com/calculators, to estimate the cost or submit the Redeposit or Purchase Permissive Service Credit form at CalSTRS.com/forms.

- Estimate your retirement benefit using the Retirement Benefits Calculator at CalSTRS.com/calculators.

- Develop a financial plan for your secure future.

- Continue to review your Retirement Progress Report every year.
10 years of service credit

It's time to plan for transitioning from career to retirement.

- Review your one-time death benefit recipient designation, account balances and service credit total as of the prior fiscal year on your Retirement Progress Report.
- Update your financial plan.
- Step up payroll contributions to your 403(b), 457(b) or Roth 403(b) account. Or open an account today—it’s never too late to start saving.
- Look into purchasing service credit to increase your retirement benefit.
- Ask your employer about health insurance in retirement. Consider setting aside extra money now for medical expenses later.

Age 55 with at least five years of service credit—or fewer if you retire under the special circumstances of concurrent service retirement (or age 50 with at least 30 years of service credit if under CalSTRS 2% at 60)

You're eligible to retire.

- Get the facts on Social Security. Know the rules that could affect your Social Security benefit based on other employment or your spousal Social Security benefit.
- Attend a CalSTRS and Your Retirement session to receive personalized benefit estimates prepared by a CalSTRS benefits specialist.
- Submit the Preretirement Election of an Option form if you want to provide a lifetime monthly benefit to someone should you die before retirement.
- Review your one-time death benefit recipient information.
- Complete and submit your Service Retirement Application online using myCalSTRS for faster processing, no earlier than six months before your retirement date. If you have a complex application, you can still complete it online, then print and mail or fax it to us.
California Public Employees’ Pension Reform Act of 2013

The California Public Employees’ Pension Reform Act of 2013 made changes to the plan structure that primarily affect benefits for members first hired on or after January 1, 2013, to perform CalSTRS creditable activities. These members are under the CalSTRS 2% at 62 benefit structure.

Members under the CalSTRS 2% at 60 benefit structure are those who:

- Were first hired to perform service that could be credited to the Defined Benefit Program on or before December 31, 2012.
- Were a CalSTRS member before 2013, terminated their membership and then returned to active membership on or after January 1, 2013.
- Performed service that could be credited to the Defined Benefit Program and was subject to coverage under a different retirement system, including Social Security, on or before December 31, 2012.
- Were members of a concurrent retirement system on or before December 31, 2012, and who performed service that could be credited to the Defined Benefit Program under that system within six months of becoming a CalSTRS member.

Look here for benefit differences for CalSTRS 2% at 62 members

CalSTRS 2% at 62 = members first hired on or after January 1, 2013, to perform service that could be credited to the Defined Benefit Program and who never before performed service that could be credited to the Defined Benefit Program under a different retirement system, including Social Security.
Your Defined Benefit Membership

CalSTRS Defined Benefit Program is a traditional defined benefit plan that provides retirement, survivor and disability benefits. Your retirement benefit is based on a formula set by law using your age, service credit and final compensation. CalSTRS has two benefit structures:

**CalSTRS 2% at 60:** Members first hired to perform service that could be credited to the Defined Benefit Program on or before December 31, 2012, in addition to certain other members (see previous page).

**CalSTRS 2% at 62:** Members first hired to perform service that could be credited to the Defined Benefit Program on or after January 1, 2013.

The 2 percent refers to the percentage of your final compensation that you’ll receive as a retirement benefit for every year of service credit, also known as the age factor. Other differences between the two benefit structures are final compensation, age factors, normal retirement age, creditable compensation cap and contribution rate. In addition, 2% at 62 members aren’t eligible for benefit enhancements, the Reduced Benefit Election or the CalSTRS Replacement Benefits Program.

Membership

If you’re an educator or are performing other activities that are creditable service, you may be a member of the Defined Benefit Program as mandated by law or you may be eligible to elect membership. You’re eligible for the Defined Benefit Program if you’re an employee of a California public school system, prekindergarten through community college, and are performing activities:

- In a position that requires certification qualifications adopted by the Commission on Teacher Credentialing, OR
- In a position that meets the minimum standards adopted by the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges, OR
- Under the provisions of an approved charter for a charter school eligible to receive state apportionment.

Only activities identified as creditable service count toward years of service for CalSTRS retirement.

**creditable service = activities such as teaching, vocational or guidance counseling, mentoring, services related to school curriculum and certain administrative duties that count toward your service credit and require certification standards, minimum standards and other requirements defined in the California Education Code.**

**creditable compensation = salary and other earnings paid in cash by your employer under a publicly available written contractual agreement to everyone in the same class of employees and paid to you for performing creditable service. Certain payments, including allowances and cash in lieu of fringe benefits, are not creditable compensation.**

**CalSTRS 2% at 62:** Only compensation paid in cash each pay period in which creditable service is performed under a publicly available written contractual agreement is considered creditable compensation. Certain additional payments, including bonuses and limited-period compensation or compensation determined to have been paid to enhance a benefit, are not creditable to any CalSTRS benefit program.
Full-Time Educators
If you’re employed to perform creditable service on a full-time basis, you will automatically become a member of the Defined Benefit Program on your first day of employment.

**full time = the days or hours of creditable service your employer requires a class of employees to work in a school year in order to receive full compensation earnable.**

Part-Time Educators
If you’re a part-time, substitute or temporary employee performing creditable service in the California public school system, you can choose to belong to the Defined Benefit Program or an alternative program offered by your employer, such as the Cash Balance Benefit Program. Your employer must formally notify you of your right to elect membership in the Defined Benefit Program within 30 days of hiring. You can elect membership only during a pay period in which you actually performed creditable service and on the appropriate form provided by your employer. The date of membership is the first day of the pay period in which you made your election. If you participate in the Cash Balance Benefit Program and later become a full-time employee, you automatically will become a member of the Defined Benefit Program. See tables below for information about mandatory Defined Benefit Program membership for part-time educators. When you permissively elect membership in the Defined Benefit Program, all subsequent creditable service in that position will be covered by CalSTRS.

Charter School Educators
If you’re a charter school employee performing creditable service in a charter school that is eligible to receive state apportionment, you are eligible for the Defined Benefit Program only if your school’s charter designates the school’s participation in the Defined Benefit Program.

Eligibility for Benefits
You’ll be eligible for a guaranteed lifetime retirement benefit when you have five years of service credit under the Defined Benefit Program. If you’re a CalSTRS 2% at 60 member, you can retire as early as age 50 if you have at least 30 years of service credit. Or you can retire at age 55 with at least five years of service credit—or fewer if you service retire concurrently from certain other California public retirement systems. See “Retiring From More Than One Public Retirement System,” page 44, for a list of the California public systems.

**CalSTRS 2% at 62:** The earliest age you can retire is 55 with five years of service credit—or fewer under the special circumstances of concurrent service retirement. You are not eligible for retirement at age 50 with 30 years of service credit.

When you terminate CalSTRS-covered employment and receive a refund of your Defined Benefit member contributions, you are no longer eligible for CalSTRS benefits.

### Membership When the Cash Balance Benefit Program Is Offered

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employment Status</th>
<th>Mandatory Defined Benefit Membership Begins</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PreK-12 or county office of education on a contracted,</td>
<td>First day of the pay period following employment to perform creditable service for more than 50 percent of</td>
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<tr>
<td>part-time, hourly or daily basis for more than 50 percent</td>
<td>full-time position.</td>
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<td>of full-time position</td>
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<tr>
<td>Community college district hired part time or temporary</td>
<td>First day of the pay period following employment to perform creditable service for more than 67 percent</td>
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<td></td>
<td>of full-time assignment. Mandatory Defined Benefit membership does not apply to temporary employees of</td>
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<td></td>
<td>adult education or community college districts.</td>
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Contributions

Your Contributions

For CalSTRS 2% at 60 members, you contribute 9.20 percent of your earnings (creditable compensation) to your CalSTRS retirement for service performed in 2015–16, up to the compensation cap (see "Section 401(a)(17)" on page 111).

Under the 2014 full funding plan, contribution rates for CalSTRS 2% at 60 members will be increasing to 10.25 percent in 2016–17. See page 5.

CalSTRS 2% at 62: You contribute 50 percent of the normal cost of benefits, rounded to the nearest .25 percent, in addition to the increase required under the 2014 full funding plan, so your contribution rate will be adjusted up or down depending on the normal cost of benefits. Your contribution rate is 8.56 percent in 2015–16 and is anticipated to be 9.205 percent in 2016–17.

Employer Pick-Up of Contributions

Most employers participate in the federal Employer Pick-Up Program under Internal Revenue Code section 414(h)(2). Under this provision, your employer “picks up” your CalSTRS member contributions so that you can defer income taxes on that portion of your compensation. The contributions are taxable when returned to you or your beneficiaries as a lump sum or monthly benefit.


Your Employer’s Contributions

For 2015–16, your employer—school district, community college district, participating charter school or county office of education—contributes an amount equal to 10.73 percent of your earnings to CalSTRS. Your employer’s contributions are not credited to your Defined Benefit account but are deposited into the Teachers’ Retirement Fund to help fund the benefits paid to all members and beneficiaries. Under the 2014 full funding plan, the employer contribution rate is increasing gradually to 19.1 percent in 2020–21.

Membership When the Cash Balance Benefit Program Is Not Offered

In school districts, county offices of education, participating charter schools and community colleges that do not offer the Cash Balance Benefit Program, the following mandatory Defined Benefit Program membership requirements apply:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Employment Status</th>
<th>Mandatory Defined Benefit Membership Begins</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PreK-12/community office of education—part-time</td>
<td>First day of the pay period following the pay period in which at least 60 hours of creditable service was performed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PreK-12/community office of education—part-time</td>
<td>First day of the pay period following the pay period in which 10 days of creditable service was performed.</td>
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<tr>
<td>PreK-12/superintendent’s office/</td>
<td>Same as above except for 100 or more complete days in which creditable service was performed during the school year.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>community college district substitute</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community college district hired</td>
<td>First day of the pay period following employment to perform creditable service for more than 67 percent of full-time assignment. Mandatory Defined Benefit membership does not apply to temporary employees of adult education or community college districts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>part time or temporary</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Designate your one-time death benefit recipient using your myCalSTRS account or the Recipient Designation form, available at CalSTRS.com. You can change your one-time death benefit recipient at any time, with no financial penalty.
The State’s Contributions
For 2015–16, the state of California contributes 4.891 percent of the annual earnings of all members. The state also contributes an amount equal to about 2.5 percent of annual member earnings into the CalSTRS Supplemental Benefit Maintenance Account. The SBMA account is used to maintain the purchasing power of benefits.

Under the 2014 full funding plan, the state contribution rate is increasing to 8.828 percent in 2016–17, including the contributions to maintain the purchasing power of benefits.

See “Purchasing Power Protection,” page 83.

Your Defined Benefit Account
Your Defined Benefit account represents your accumulated retirement contributions and credited interest. You and your beneficiaries are entitled to the balance of this account if you terminate CalSTRS-covered employment and withdraw your contributions, or if you die and none of your survivors are eligible for a monthly benefit.

The amount in your account is not used to calculate your retirement benefit. Your retirement benefit is a guaranteed lifetime benefit using a formula based on your service credit, age and final compensation. You’ll forfeit any right to a benefit immediately upon a withdrawal of your accumulated retirement contributions and credited interest.

You will not receive your employer’s contributions if you terminate your membership—employers’ contributions go toward paying all members’ retirement benefits.

Interest
Interest is credited to your accumulated Defined Benefit contributions and past interest earned. The interest rate is adopted annually by the Teachers’ Retirement Board and approximates the yield on two-year Treasury notes. The rate through June 30, 2016, is .49 percent.

Your Defined Benefit Supplement Account
As a Defined Benefit member, you have a Defined Benefit Supplement account. Your Defined Benefit Supplement account is a cash balance retirement plan that provides additional guaranteed income for retirement.

As of January 1, 2011, you and your employer each contribute 8 percent of your earnings, for a total of 16 percent, to your Defined Benefit Supplement account on the following types of earnings:

- Earnings in excess of one year of service.
- Special limited-term payments or retirement incentives.

From January 1, 2001, to December 31, 2010, one-fourth of your 8 percent member contribution to the Defined Benefit Program was redirected to your Defined Benefit Supplement account. The redirection did not affect your CalSTRS retirement benefit. Your entire Defined Benefit member contribution is now credited to your Defined Benefit account.

If you’ve never had earnings in excess of one year of service, special limited-term payments or retirement incentives—and you were hired on or after January 1, 2011—your Defined Benefit Supplement account balance will be $0.

Contributions to your Defined Benefit Supplement account don’t affect your ability to make contributions to 403(b), 457(b) or similar tax-advantaged savings plans.
CalSTRS 2% at 62: If you have earnings in excess of one year of service credit but below the compensation cap, contributions on those earnings will be credited to your Defined Benefit Supplement account. Special limited-term payments and retirement incentives are not creditable to any CalSTRS program. There are no other sources of funds for your Defined Benefit Supplement account.

Interest
Your Defined Benefit Supplement account earns interest at a rate set at the beginning of each plan year, July 1 through June 30, by the Teachers’ Retirement Board, based on the average 30-year Treasury rate. The rate through June 30, 2016, is 3.15 percent.

If the actual investment earnings exceed the board-set interest rate at the end of the year and program assets sufficiently exceed the amount needed to meet liabilities, the board may declare an additional earnings credit.

The benefit payable to you or your beneficiaries at retirement, disability, termination or death is equal to the balance of your and your employer’s contributions, interest earnings and any additional earnings credits declared by the board.

Return of Excess Contributions
Your Defined Benefit account contains your member contributions on up to one year of service performed in a school year. Any contributions on earnings in excess of one year of service go into your Defined Benefit Supplement account. Under the 2014 CalSTRS Full Funding Plan, member contribution rates for the Defined Benefit Program increased beginning July 1, 2014. The member contribution rate for compensation creditable to the Defined Benefit Supplement Program, which includes compensation earned for service in excess of one year, is still 8 percent.

CalSTRS determines if you performed more than one year of service at the end of the school year. Any excess member contributions you made during the school year are reported on your Retirement Progress Report. Your myCalSTRS account shows a breakdown of excess contributions by employer.

CalSTRS will return excess member contributions to your employer in late September. Your employer is responsible for returning your excess member contributions to you, less any authorized adjustments or tax withholding. Keep in mind it may take 30 or more days for the excess member contributions to be transferred from CalSTRS to your employer. The timing of the return of your excess member contributions by your employer will vary. If you have any questions regarding the return of your excess contributions, please contact your employer.

Your returned pre-tax member contributions are considered taxable income in the year you receive the funds regardless of when you initially paid the contributions. See CalSTRS.com/excess-contributions to learn more.

Accessing Your Funds
Your Defined Benefit Supplement account balance is distributed to you:

- When you begin receiving your monthly service retirement benefit or a disability benefit, OR
- Six months after you terminate CalSTRS-covered employment and receive a refund of your Defined Benefit contributions. If you return to CalSTRS-covered employment within the six-month time frame, your Defined Benefit Supplement distribution will be canceled.
If you return to CalSTRS-covered employment after receiving a distribution of your Defined Benefit Supplement account, you’ll have to wait five years before you can receive another distribution. You cannot redeposit Defined Benefit Supplement funds.

- See "Your Survivor Benefits," page 87, and "Your Disability Benefits," page 97, for Defined Benefit Supplement distributions upon your death or disability.

**Sick Leave**

At service retirement, CalSTRS will process and convert your unused sick leave to additional service credit using the information your employer provides on the *Express Benefit Report* form. As soon as you change employers during your career, coordinate with your former employer to arrange for the transfer of your accumulated unused sick leave to your new employer.

For service retirements effective on or after January 1, 2013, each of your employers during the last school year in which you earned creditable compensation can submit the *Express Benefit Report* form if your unused sick leave was not transferred between districts. For service retirements effective before January 1, 2013, only your last employer can report unused sick leave by submitting the *Express Benefit Report* form.

- See also "Converting Unused Sick Leave to Service Credit," page 56.

**Refund: Consider the Consequences**

Considering a career change? If you no longer work in a CalSTRS-covered position, you can leave your money in CalSTRS until you reach age 70½ or request a refund.

- See also "Internal Revenue Codes Affecting Benefits," page 110.

**Know the Consequences of a Refund**

If you have fewer than five years of service credit and do not plan to return to teaching, and you are not eligible for concurrent service retirement with another California public system, you may wish to consider a refund. Otherwise, carefully consider the consequences of taking a refund.

**Benefits of leaving your contributions with CalSTRS:**

- You’ll keep your service credit.
- Your accounts will continue to accrue interest.
- You’ll be eligible for a monthly retirement benefit when you are age 55 with at least five years of service credit.

**Consequences of receiving a refund:**

- You’ll no longer be a CalSTRS member.
- You’ll cancel your eligibility for your CalSTRS retirement benefit, as well as survivor and disability benefits, unless you return to CalSTRS-covered employment.
- You may not redeposit your Defined Benefit contributions unless you re-qualify for CalSTRS membership or are a member of certain other California public retirement systems.
- Any option beneficiary or one-time death benefit recipient designation will be canceled. If you return to CalSTRS membership and later retire, we will calculate an assessment...
at retirement for the preretirement election of an option you previously made. The assessment may reduce your lifetime monthly retirement benefit. (If you reinstate, you may designate a new one-time death benefit recipient or option beneficiary.)

- You must receive the total balance of your Defined Benefit Supplement account as a termination benefit. You cannot redeposit this distribution.

- Your refund and termination benefit may be taxed as income unless they are rolled over into a qualified retirement account. CalSTRS is required to withhold 20 percent federal income tax on all payments distributed directly to you. If you choose to have state income tax withheld, CalSTRS will withhold at 2 percent. You may have to pay additional federal and state taxes if you take your refund before age 59½ and do not roll over your funds to a qualified retirement plan. Consult a tax professional to determine your tax liability. Also see the Tax Consideration for Rollovers booklet at CalSTRS.com/publications.

In addition, keep in mind your Social Security benefit, if you’re eligible to receive one from other employment or a spouse, still may be offset by two federal rules—the Windfall Elimination Provision or the Government Pension Offset—even if you take a refund.

**If you return to membership after taking a refund:**

- You will be covered under Coverage B for survivor and disability benefits even if you previously had Coverage A.

- You must earn one year of service credit since your last refund and have at least five years of service credit before being eligible for a CalSTRS retirement benefit.

- You will be under the CalSTRS 2% at 60 benefit structure if you were first hired to perform service that could be credited to the Defined Benefit Program before January 1, 2013.

You must purchase, or redeposit, the service credit previously refunded to you if you wish to restore your past service credit and receive full retirement benefits from your past CalSTRS membership. All service credit purchases must be paid in full before retirement.

**Taking a Refund**

**Defined Benefit Account**

When you terminate your CalSTRS-covered position, you can request a refund of your Defined Benefit member contributions, including interest earned. After your employer verifies your separation and CalSTRS receives your Refund Application, CalSTRS will refund your Defined Benefit member contributions, including any tax-deferred member contributions under the federal Employer Pick-Up Program, plus the interest earned on your contributions. Partial refunds are not allowed. In addition, employer and state contributions are not refundable.
Defined Benefit Supplement Account
After terminating employment and receiving a refund of your Defined Benefit contributions and interest earned, if you have not performed creditable service, including substitute teaching, for six months, CalSTRS will provide you with a termination benefit from your Defined Benefit Supplement account after you respond to correspondence from us regarding the payout. Your termination benefit will include your member contributions and your employer’s contributions that were credited to your Defined Benefit Supplement account.

If you return to CalSTRS-covered employment, you cannot redeposit your Defined Benefit Supplement Termination Benefit. In addition, only one termination benefit under the Defined Benefit Supplement Program is allowed in a five-year period.

Visit CalSTRS.com/members and see the Refund: Consider the Consequences fact sheet and the Tax Considerations for Rollovers booklet at CalSTRS.com/publications.

Redepositing to Restore Service Credit
Redepositing allows you to restore any service credit lost if you took a refund of your Defined Benefit contributions and interest earnings. If you return to CalSTRS-covered employment, or if you are a member of certain other California public retirement systems, you may restore past Defined Benefit refunded service credit by redepositing your refunded contributions plus interest.

You may choose to restore a portion rather than all of the service credit you lost when you took a refund. The more time between your refund and redeposit, the higher the cost to redeposit. You may not redeposit Defined Benefit Supplement distributions.

Before being eligible for CalSTRS benefits, you must have earned at least one year of service credit after you received your most recent refund of accumulated retirement contributions and have at least five years of service credit, unless you’re retiring for service concurrently from certain other California public retirement systems.

In some community property settlements, your service credit, contributions and interest are divided to create a separate account for your former spouse or registered domestic partner. If your former spouse or partner takes a refund of his or her account, you can choose to purchase all or a portion of the service credit awarded to your former spouse or partner.

Cost to Redeposit
The cost to redeposit and the benefits you will receive from restoring service credit will vary depending on your individual situation.

For example, a teacher who withdrew $10,000 (representing three years of service credit) on May 1, 1994, and wanted to purchase those years of service credit on May 1, 2015, would be required to redeposit $33,782.

See “Purchasing Service Credit,” page 57, and the Purchase Additional Service Credit booklet at CalSTRS.com/publications.

Former Local Service Members
If you have Local Service credit listed on your Retirement Progress Report (certain members who worked for the Los Angeles Unified School District or the San Francisco Unified School District), it will not be fully funded. Unless you submit additional contributions, your retirement benefit will include only up to $2.40 per year of Local Service credit toward your retirement benefit. To fully fund this service, contact CalSTRS.

Your redeposit must be paid in full before your retirement date. You may not redeposit Defined Benefit Supplement distributions.

Redepositing does not re-establish your earlier membership date for calculating your retirement benefit—or benefits that may have been available to you before you received a refund. Note: If you were first hired to perform service that could be credited to the Defined Benefit Program before January 1, 2013, you’ll still be under the CalSTRS 2% at 60 benefit structure.
Changing Employment to a Different Public Retirement System

If you are a CalSTRS member and change to public education employment covered under certain other public retirement systems in California, such as the California Public Employees’ Retirement System, you can continue your existing CalSTRS coverage or change to that other system. For example, you may move from a job as a classroom teacher to a position as a budget analyst in the district office, a position usually under CalPERS. Likewise, a school district budget analyst may decide to take a teaching position, a position usually under CalSTRS.

If You Change to a CalPERS Position

If you are a Defined Benefit member and become employed by the same or a different school district, community college district, county office of education or have limited State of California employment to perform service that requires membership in CalPERS, you may elect to continue coverage under CalSTRS. If you do, service in your new position will be treated as creditable service under the CalSTRS Defined Benefit Program.

The election:

- Must be made within 60 days of the date of hire into your new position.
- Must be done on the appropriate CalSTRS form provided by your employer.
- Is effective as of the date of hire into your new position.
- Is irrevocable and applies to all service for that employer.

If You Are a CalPERS Member

Certain members of CalPERS who subsequently are employed to perform CalSTRS creditable service can elect within 60 days of their new hire date to continue coverage under CalPERS for all subsequent CalSTRS creditable service. This applies to CalPERS members employed by one or more of the following:

- A school district.
- The Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges.
- The California Department of Education as of January 1, 2002.
- A local or state agency not listed above (applies only to vested CalPERS members).
- A CalPERS and CalSTRS participating charter school.

The election:

- Must be made within 60 days of the date of hire into the new position.
- Must be done on the appropriate CalPERS form.
- Is effective as of the date of hire into the new position.
- Is irrevocable and applies to all service for that employer.

Social Security

CalSTRS members do not participate in Social Security, but CalPERS members do. Contact the Social Security Administration at 800-772-1213 to determine how an employment change would affect any Social Security benefit due to you.

Dual Membership

Members of CalPERS who are employed full time and accept part-time, temporary employment to perform creditable service covered by the CalSTRS Defined Benefit Program can permisively elect membership in CalSTRS and have their part-time service reported to CalSTRS.

See the Join CalSTRS? Join CalPERS? booklet at CalSTRS.com/publications, and ask your employer for the CalPERS benefit information brochure.
Part-Time Educators: 
Choosing a Plan That Works for You

As a part-time, adjunct or temporary employee, you have a choice of retirement plans. Your employer must offer the Defined Benefit Program and either Social Security or an alternative to Social Security, including the Cash Balance Benefit Program or another program chosen by the district. Contact your employer to determine your plan eligibility.

Things to Consider

Choose the CalSTRS Defined Benefit Program if you:

- Plan to work as a California educator long enough to become eligible for a CalSTRS retirement benefit (five years of service credit). This could take up to 10 years of half-time employment.
- Want a monthly benefit that is based on a percentage of your average full-time equivalent salary.
- Are comfortable contributing up to 10.25 percent of your pay toward your retirement. For 2% at 62 members, your contribution rate is expected to be 9.2 percent beginning in 2016–17.

Choose the Cash Balance Benefit Program if you:

- Want a program that provides immediate vesting of your benefit, which includes your member contributions, your employer’s contributions and interest earned.
- Want a lump-sum payment or lifetime monthly benefit based on the total balance of contributions credited to your account, guaranteed interest and any additional earnings credits.
- Are comfortable with the contribution rate, which is typically 4 percent of your earnings, depending on your local bargaining agreement. Your contribution and your employer’s contribution must equal at least 8 percent. Employers must contribute at least 4 percent, and your contribution rate cannot be less than the employer contribution rate, starting with contracts entered into or changed on or after January 1, 2014.

Questions to Ask

If your employer offers an alternative program other than the Cash Balance Benefit Program:

- Do you plan to be a career educator?
- Does teaching provide supplemental income or is it your primary source of income?
- Before teaching, did you have employment that required you to pay into Social Security?
- What is the contribution rate for the plan and does your employer also make contributions?
- Is there a minimum requirement to be eligible for benefits?
- Does the plan offer a monthly retirement benefit for life, or is it a non-lifetime benefit based on contributions and interest?
- Does the plan charge administrative fees?
- Is there a guaranteed annual interest rate?
- Does the plan have a sound investment record?
- When does the plan permit distribution of your account?
Benefits for Part-Time Educators

As a part-time educator, you have access to all the benefits CalSTRS offers and may have a choice of retirement plans. Your employer must offer the Defined Benefit Program, and may also offer an alternative retirement plan such as the CalSTRS Cash Balance Benefit Program or Social Security. Contact your employer to determine your plan eligibility.

Retirement Plans and Options

If you are in a certificated position in a public school and your time base is less than half time, your employer must offer you either Social Security or another retirement program as an alternative to Social Security, in addition to the Defined Benefit Program. The CalSTRS Cash Balance Benefit Program is an alternative program to Social Security.

Contact your employer for details about the programs it offers. In addition, offering the Cash Balance Benefit Program may be bargained. Contact your district, county superintendent of schools or union representative to find out if the Cash Balance Benefit Program is available to you.

Defined Benefit Program

If you choose to be a member of the Defined Benefit Program, your retirement benefit calculation uses the same components as a member who works full time:

\[ \text{your retirement benefit} = \text{service credit} \times \text{age factor} \times \text{final compensation} \]

Your final compensation and service credit depend on the amount you would have earned if you were working full time at the pay rate in your position. This amount of work is called full-time equivalent, and the amount of annual compensation for the full-time equivalent is called compensation earnable.

Full-Time Equivalent

The full-time equivalent is the time that a member who is employed part time would be required to perform service in one school year if he or she were employed full time in that position. If you are employed part time in a community college or as an adult education instructor, the FTE must be identified in your collective bargaining agreement or your employment agreement. It also must be at least the minimum number of days or hours specified by law.

Be sure your employer determines your FTE properly. Different assignments, even with the same employer, may have different FTEs. Refer to your employment agreement or collective bargaining agreement for your employing district’s established FTE for your type of employment. If you see a discrepancy, contact your employer.

The FTEs listed in the tables on the next page are minimum standards. Your individual FTE could be higher if your employer requires full-time employees to work more days or hours in the same activity in a school year.
### Minimum Full-Time Equivalent

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>If you are a:</th>
<th>Then the <em>minimum</em> FTE is:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Part-time community college instructor</td>
<td>525 instructional hours, plus mandatory office hours, if paid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full-time or part-time community college librarian or counselor</td>
<td>1,050 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community college instructor employed in adult education programs</td>
<td>875 instructional hours, plus mandatory office hours, if paid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PreK–12 teacher or any other person who works directly with pupils, including an instructor in an adult education program</td>
<td>175 days or 1,050 hours</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Part-Time Community College and Adult Education Instructor Service Credit Example

In one school year, Veronica teaches as a community college instructor for 270 hours, which is 45 percent of the full-time equivalent, FTE, in her district. She also works as an adult education instructor for 350 hours, or 40 percent of the FTE for that position.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percent Time Worked</th>
<th>FTE</th>
<th>Actual Earnings</th>
<th>Full-Time Rate</th>
<th>Service Credit Earned</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community College Instructor</td>
<td>45% (270 hours)</td>
<td>600 hours</td>
<td>$21,600</td>
<td>$48,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult Education Instructor</td>
<td>40% (350 hours)</td>
<td>875 hours</td>
<td>$16,800</td>
<td>$42,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Service Credit</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Veronica would earn .850 of service credit for the year.

### Part-Time PreK–12 Teacher Service Credit Example

During the school year, John taught 30 percent of the FTE for preK–12 teachers in his district, or 315 hours. The full-time pay rate was $42,000. Because he worked every day of his 30-percent teaching contract, he earned $12,600 for the school year.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percent Time Worked</th>
<th>FTE</th>
<th>Actual Earnings</th>
<th>Full-Time Rate</th>
<th>Service Credit Earned</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PreK–12 Instructor</td>
<td>30% (315 hours)</td>
<td>1,050 hours</td>
<td>$12,600</td>
<td>$42,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

John would earn .300 of service credit for the year.
Calculating Your Compensation Earnable

Your compensation earnable is not the salary you actually were paid, but what you would have been paid if you had worked in those assignments full time based on your pay rate. To determine your compensation earnable, take the hourly or daily rate for the position and multiply it by the FTE for the position. For 2% at 60 members, the cap on compensation that can be used to provide a CalSTRS benefit if you became a CalSTRS member or Cash Balance participant on or after July 1, 1996, is $265,000 for calendar year 2016 (see “Section 401(a) (17),” page 111).

CalSTRS 2% at 62: The cap on compensation, even if earned through a combination of employers, for 2015–16 is $137,941. The cap is adjusted each July based on changes in the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers: U.S. City Average.

Calculating Your Final Compensation

Another key component of your retirement calculation is your final compensation. For 2% at 60 members, your final compensation is equal to the highest average annual compensation earnable for 36 consecutive months, or any 12 consecutive months of your highest average annual compensation earnable if you have earned 25 or more years of service credit.

CalSTRS 2% at 62: Your final compensation is based on your highest average annual compensation earnable for 36 consecutive months. You’re not eligible for the one-year final compensation benefit enhancement.

Calculating Your Service Credit

For part-time, temporary, substitute or adjunct educators, service credit for one school year is equal to the compensation you actually earned in an assignment divided by your compensation earnable for that assignment. If you work multiple assignments, your service credit is the total service credit you earn from all your individual assignments, up to one year of service credit in a school year.

Increasing Your Retirement Benefit

Increase Service Credit With Additional Assignments

As a part-time educator, you may wish to consider taking on additional assignments to earn more service credit if you are not earning one full year of service credit under your existing assignment. You can earn service credit for activities such as teaching summer school or intersession, working paid office hours, attending staff development days, or serving as a coach, band director or department chair. Additional service credit will be included in calculating your total service credit for that school year.

Consider Final Compensation If Working in Multiple Positions

When you work in multiple jobs for the same or different employers, your compensation earnable is the sum of all your actual earnings divided by the sum of all the service credit you earned for the school year.

Your final compensation is the average annual compensation earnable during your final compensation period, which is generally your highest consecutive 36 months. If your salary rates and service credit vary within a school year for your different assignments, your final compensation may be lower, which can lower your retirement benefit. This means it’s possible to earn a larger retirement benefit if you reduce the number of different jobs you work in during your final compensation period. See example calculations on the next page.

See also “Your Defined Benefit Membership,” page 21.
Working in Multiple Positions

EXAMPLE

In the example, Kali decided that the increase of $178 per month in his retirement benefit was significant enough to terminate two of his part-time jobs 36 months before he retires. Over the lifetime of his retirement, the difference in income would likely be about $53,000, not including the 2 percent annual benefit adjustment and purchasing power payments.

However, Kali could not afford to work at only one part-time job during his final 36 months before retirement. To compensate for the loss in salary, he found part-time work outside the public school system in addition to teaching.

Here’s the impact of the three alternatives on Kali’s retirement benefit calculation:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employer</th>
<th>Earnings</th>
<th>Service Credit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>$3,360</td>
<td>.100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>30,250</td>
<td>.500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>6,563</td>
<td>.250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>$40,173</td>
<td>.850</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Kali’s annual compensation earnable: $40,173 ÷ .850 = $47,262

To increase his retirement benefit, Kali could terminate the employment where he receives the lowest annual pay rate 36 months before he retires and his retirement benefit would be higher:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employer</th>
<th>Earnings</th>
<th>Service Credit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>$3,360</td>
<td>.100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>30,250</td>
<td>.500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>$33,610</td>
<td>.600</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Kali’s annual compensation earnable: $33,610 ÷ .600 = $56,017

However, if Kali also terminates the position with the next lowest annual pay rate 36 months before he retires, his annual compensation earnable would be even higher:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employer</th>
<th>Earnings</th>
<th>Service Credit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>$30,250</td>
<td>.500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>$30,250</td>
<td>.500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Kali’s annual compensation earnable: $30,250 ÷ .500 = $60,500
Cash Balance Benefit Program

The Cash Balance Benefit Program is the CalSTRS retirement plan for part-time, substitute, adjunct or temporary educators. Your district may offer the Cash Balance Benefit Program as an alternative to Social Security. Your eligibility to participate in the program is determined by your basis of employment rather than the actual number of hours or days you work, and whether your employer offers the program.

Your Cash Balance Benefit contributions are made through pre-tax payroll deductions. There are no fees or expenses. In addition to a retirement benefit, you’re eligible for survivor and disability benefits.

The California Public Employees’ Pension Reform Act of 2013 made changes to the plan structure for Cash Balance Benefit participants first hired to perform creditable activities on or after January 1, 2013, unless they were members of a concurrent retirement system on or before December 31, 2012, and performed service in that system within six months of becoming a Cash Balance Benefit participant. For these participants hired on or after January 1, 2013:

- Salary must be paid in cash each pay period in which creditable service is performed for compensation to count toward salary for a Cash Balance benefit.
- Salary credited to CalSTRS from all employers is capped at $137,941 in 2015–16, adjusted annually based on changes to the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers: U.S. City Average.
- The normal retirement age is 62.

The Cash Balance Benefit Program provides:

- **Immediate vesting**
  You’re immediately eligible for a benefit equal to the sum of the balance of your and your employer’s contributions, including compounded interest earned on the contributions.

- **Variable contribution rates that can be bargained**
  Your employer contributes at least 4 percent of your salary and, generally, you also pay 4 percent. Alternative rates may be bargained; however, the combined employer and employee contribution must be at least 8 percent. In addition, the employee contribution rate cannot be less than the employer contribution rate, starting with contracts entered into or changed on or after January 1, 2014. You can receive a termination benefit equal to the total balance in your member and employer accounts if you terminate public school employment. If you leave your contributions and interest in your accounts, they will continue to earn interest.

  If you decide to receive a Cash Balance Termination Benefit before age 59½ and do not roll over your benefit to a qualified retirement plan, you may be subject to additional federal and state income taxes.

- **Guaranteed interest rate**
  The interest rate is set annually by the Teachers’ Retirement Board based on the average 30-year Treasury rate. The current rate through June 30, 2016, is 3.15 percent.

- **Additional earnings credit**
  At the end of the year, the board may grant an additional earnings credit to be added to your account if program assets sufficiently exceed the amount needed to meet liabilities.

You’ll find the booklet, *Cash Balance Benefit Program: A Retirement Plan for Part-Time and Adjunct Educators*, at CalSTRS.com/publications for more information.
• **Portability**
  In most cases, you can continue to participate in the Cash Balance Benefit Program if you move to another employer that offers it. You also can roll over funds from other outside personal or employer plan pre-tax accounts into your Cash Balance Benefit account. If you become a member of the Defined Benefit Program and are no longer contributing to the Cash Balance Benefit Program, you may elect to receive service credit in the Defined Benefit Program for your eligible Cash Balance Benefit service.


• **Options if you leave teaching**
  If you leave CalSTRS-covered employment, you have two options:

  » Leave your funds on deposit with CalSTRS. The contributions in your Cash Balance account will continue to accrue interest.

  » Receive a termination benefit directly or roll it over to another eligible retirement plan. Your termination benefit may be taxed as income if it isn't rolled over. CalSTRS is required to withhold 20 percent federal income tax on all payments distributed to you. If you choose to have state income tax withheld, CalSTRS will withhold at 2 percent. If you receive a termination benefit before age 59½ and do not roll over your benefit to a qualified retirement plan, you may be subject to additional federal and state taxes.

If you decide to receive a termination benefit, your benefit will be issued six months after you terminate employment. If you return to CalSTRS-covered employment within the six-month time frame, your termination benefit will be canceled. If you receive a termination benefit and return to CalSTRS-covered work, you will not be eligible to apply for a termination benefit again for five years.

• **Flexibility at retirement**
  You can take your contributions and your employers’ contributions, plus compounded interest, in a lump sum or as an annuity to provide a monthly retirement benefit if your balance is $3,500 or more.

If you receive your retirement benefit as an annuity benefit, you’ll be subject to the separation-from-service requirement. If you return to work in a CalSTRS-covered position, your annuity benefit will be reduced dollar for dollar by the amount you earn during the first 180 calendar days following your most recent retirement date.

If you receive your retirement benefit as a lump-sum payment, your benefit will not be payable until 180 calendar days after the date you terminate employment. If you return to work in a CalSTRS-covered position during this waiting period, your retirement will be canceled and you will not receive your benefit.

**Eligibility**
When you’re hired by a preK–12 district, county office of education, participating charter school or community college district, your employer must inform you that as a part-time employee you can elect membership in the Defined Benefit Program. You have the option to participate in the Cash Balance Benefit Program, if your district offers it, the Defined Benefit Program, or another retirement plan your employer may offer.
If you choose the Cash Balance Benefit Program as a preK–12 educator and your basis of employment changes to 50 percent or more of the full-time position or is no longer defined as a temporary position, you’ll automatically become a member of the Defined Benefit Program. If you’re a community college educator and your employment changes from temporary to permanent, you’ll automatically become a Defined Benefit member.

Working for Multiple Employers
If you’re hired to perform temporary or part-time creditable service for more than one employer, you may participate in more than one retirement program with different employers at the same time. If you’re hired in a full-time position with one employer, you’re a Defined Benefit member with all your employers.

Social Security
Your district will offer Social Security to its part-time employees if it does not offer an alternative retirement plan. If you qualify for Social Security from any employment, including your spouse’s, and you receive a benefit from CalSTRS or another retirement plan offered by your employer, your Social Security benefit may be reduced or eliminated under two federal provisions—the Windfall Elimination Provision and the Government Pension Offset.

The federal Social Security rules are complex. To learn more, contact Social Security at 800-772-1213 or visit socialsecurity.gov for publications on the Windfall Elimination Provision (reduction in your Social Security benefits) and the Government Pension Offset (reduction in your spousal Social Security benefits).

Also see “Social Security Offsets,” page 49.

Consolidating Your Cash Balance and Defined Benefit Coverage
If you have benefit coverage under both the Defined Benefit and the Cash Balance Benefit programs, you may be able to consolidate your benefit coverage under the Defined Benefit Program. To be eligible, you must:

- Currently be making contributions under the Defined Benefit Program.
- No longer be contributing to your Cash Balance Benefit account.
- Have eligible Cash Balance Benefit service to convert.
- Have funds in your Cash Balance Benefit account.

When you elect to consolidate your benefits, we will transfer your Cash Balance Benefit contributions and interest to your Defined Benefit account and close your Cash Balance Benefit account. We will determine the service credit that can be added to your Defined Benefit account based on your work performed as a Cash Balance Benefit participant, then apply those funds toward the cost of consolidating your eligible Cash Balance service under the Defined Benefit Program.

In most cases, your Cash Balance contributions and interest will not cover the full cost of all eligible Cash Balance service because the contribution rate to buy Defined Benefit permissive service credit is significantly higher than the Cash Balance contribution rate. You may use other retirement or personal funds to cover the remaining cost.
If you have more funds in your Cash Balance account than are required to cover the cost of your eligible service—perhaps your account includes funds that were rolled over from another retirement plan or you had past overtime service under the Cash Balance Benefit Program—you must specify how you would like CalSTRS to allocate the amount remaining in your Cash Balance account after funds are transferred to cover the cost of consolidating benefits.

You may use the remaining amount to redeposit previously withdrawn contributions in the Defined Benefit Program or use it to pay for additional service that you may be eligible to purchase. Any funds remaining in your account can be transferred to your Defined Benefit Supplement account and your Cash Balance account will be closed.

**Advantages of consolidating your benefits:**

- You may increase the amount of service credit that will be used to determine your retirement benefit, which will increase your monthly retirement benefit.
- Service credit for your eligible Cash Balance Benefit service also may be used toward your eligibility for benefit enhancements under the Defined Benefit Program, such as the one-year final compensation and the career factor. CalSTRS 2% at 62 members hired on or after January 1, 2013, are not eligible for these benefit enhancements.

To consolidate your Cash Balance Benefit coverage under the Defined Benefit Program, complete the **Cash Balance Request to Consolidate Benefits Packet**, available at CalSTRS.com/forms.
CalSTRS Pension2

CalSTRS Pension2 is CalSTRS' voluntary defined contribution plan, an important piece of the CalSTRS hybrid retirement system. Pension2 offers 403(b), 457(b) and Roth 403(b) plans with low fees and flexible investment options.

Pension2 Complements Your Retirement Benefit

The median CalSTRS retirement benefit replaces about 50 to 60 percent of a member’s salary. You’ll need to close any gap between your retirement goal and your retirement benefit with savings and investments.

Put the power of a Pension2 tax-advantaged account to work for you:

• **Designed with your interests in mind**—your Pension2 account comes with low-cost investment choices selected by CalSTRS, professional advice and planning tools, plus other support to help you reap the rewards of financial security in retirement.

• **Simple, low-cost and transparent fees**—so keep more of your hard-earned savings working for you. There are no commissions or surrender charges.

• **Investments for everyone**—Pension2 offers choices to match every type of investor:
  
  * **Easy Choice Portfolios provide** ready-made diversified portfolios that simplify your investment decisions.
  
  * **Core investment options** to build your own portfolio.
  
  * **Self-Directed Brokerage Account** gives experienced investors access to hundreds of mutual funds.

• **Services and a team to help you succeed**—you can manage your account 24/7 online or use the automated toll-free phone line. Online tools can help you plan and make decisions. Experienced retirement specialists can help you define and pursue goals in retirement.

At retirement, consider rolling over the funds in your Defined Benefit Supplement or Cash Balance Benefit account into Pension2.
Online Planning Tools

With Pension2, you have access to workshops, webinars, planning tools and account management features, including myOrangeMoney and the Personal Financial Dashboard.

myOrangeMoney is designed to help you focus on what matters most—how your accumulated savings translate into estimated monthly income in retirement. The Personal Financial Dashboard is an easy way to organize your finances. This tool gives you a secure online environment to set your financial goals, assess where you stand today, create budgets, track spending and more. The consolidation feature lets you add all your accounts to one place, so you always have a current and comprehensive view of your finances.

Three Steps to Opening Your Pension2 Account

1. Enroll online at Pension2.com or call 844-electP2 (844-353-2872).
2. Determine how much you want to invest.
3. Fill out your district’s salary reduction agreement. Find the form at your payroll office or 403bCompare.com (select Your Employer, then look for the link on your district’s page).

Tax Advantages

When you contribute to your 403(b) or 457(b) account directly out of your paycheck, you defer taxes on the money you invest each month. Your earnings grow tax-deferred, and your monthly taxable income is lower. With a Roth 403(b), you invest after-tax dollars, and your contributions and earnings are tax-free at retirement when you withdraw funds.

Pension2.com
Learn more about investment plans, find online enrollment forms, ebook, videos and more.
Or call 888-394-2060.

403bCompare.com
Compare fees charged by 403(b) plans in California.

Scan for the Pension2 ebook at Pension2.com.
The Power of Time and Money

How a 403(b) or 457(b) Can Work for You

A monthly contribution of $50 to your tax-deferred account may reduce your paycheck by only $32.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monthly Contribution</th>
<th>Reduces Your Take-Home Pay By</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$50</td>
<td>$32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$100</td>
<td>$63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$150</td>
<td>$95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$200</td>
<td>$126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$250</td>
<td>$142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$300</td>
<td>$173</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$400</td>
<td>$252</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$500</td>
<td>$315</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A Little Now Can Really Add Up Later

Let’s say you contribute $100 a month to your account directly from your paycheck. If your account averages a 7 percent rate of return annually, after 20 years you could have $52,093. If you increase your monthly contribution to $300 a month, your savings could grow to $156,278—an increase of $104,185. An added benefit of tax-deferred contributions: Your $300 investment may reduce your paycheck by only $173.*

*These hypothetical illustrations assume a combined 37% state and federal tax rate. They are not meant to represent the performance of any investment product and should not be used to predict investment performance. Any taxes and expenses associated with an actual investment are not reflected. While taxes are paid when funds are withdrawn, investors are often in a lower tax bracket at retirement. CalSTRS Pension2 does not guarantee any rate of return on investments. Investing involves risk, including risk of loss of principal.
Your Retirement Income Gap Worksheet
How much money will you have to enjoy the future you want?

1. My Retirement Goal

My goal is to retire with ____________ % of my working income.
According to financial advisers, you’ll need 80–90 percent of your monthly income to maintain your standard of living in retirement.

2. Calculate My Gap

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Service Credit} & \times \frac{\text{Age Factor}}{\%} = \% \\
\% & - \% = \% \\
\text{My Goal} & = \% \\
\end{align*}
\]

Note: Your % of final compensation will be less if you choose to elect an option benefit for a loved one.

3. Bridge My Gap: What if I extend my career?

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Adjusted Service Credit} & \times \frac{\text{Adjusted Age Factor}}{\%} = \% \\
\% & - \% = \% \\
\text{My Goal} & = \% \\
\end{align*}
\]

4. Bridge My Gap: What if I purchase service credit?

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Adjusted Service Credit} & \times \frac{\text{Age Factor}}{\%} = \% \\
\% & - \% = \% \\
\text{My Goal} & = \% \\
\end{align*}
\]

See "Purchasing Service Credit" on page 57 and the Age Factor and Career Factor tables on pages 69–70.

View The Gap video at CalSTRS.com/videos.
Planning for Retirement

When you are eligible to retire, you’ll have important decisions to make, from determining when to retire to deciding if you want to provide a lifetime benefit to someone after your death.

In addition, be sure to get the facts on Social Security. If you qualify for Social Security through your spouse or other employment, your Social Security check may be smaller or you may get no check at all because of two federal rules: the Windfall Elimination Provision and the Government Pension Offset. Your CalSTRS retirement benefit will not be reduced or eliminated by these rules.


Deciding When to Retire

If you’re a CalSTRS 2% at 60 member, you can retire as early as age 50 with at least 30 years of service credit, or you can retire at age 55 with at least five years of service credit—or fewer if you service retire concurrently from certain other California public retirement systems.

If you took a refund and then reinstated, at least one year of your service credit must have been performed after your most recent refund unless you service retire concurrently from certain other California public retirement systems.

Under the Uniformed Service Employment and Reemployment Rights Act of 1994, time you spent in the military while a CalSTRS member is considered when determining your eligibility for a retirement benefit.

CalSTRS 2% at 62: The earliest age you can retire is 55 with five years of service credit—or fewer if you retire under the special circumstances of concurrent service retirement. See page 44.

Choosing Your Retirement Date

You’ll be officially retired as of the date you request on your Service Retirement Application. Your retirement date must be after your last day of work, vacation or compensated approved leave. Your age factor is based on how old you are on the last day of the month in which your retirement becomes effective. Consider carefully your retirement date. If it’s not the first of the month, your first benefit payment will be prorated from your retirement date to the end of the month.

If you are unable to submit your application before your retirement date, you can backdate your retirement effective date to the day following the date you terminated your CalSTRS-covered position, but no earlier than January 1, 2012.
Retiring From More Than One Public Retirement System

If you’re at least age 55 and a member of certain other California public retirement systems, you may retire with fewer than five years of CalSTRS service credit if you retire for service concurrently from both systems. To receive concurrent benefits, you must service retire on the same day from both systems. Or you may retire for service on different dates as long as you do not perform service creditable to either system between those dates.

CalSTRS may use the compensation earnable for your service performed under the other retirement system to calculate your CalSTRS service retirement benefit. However, if you perform creditable service with both retirement systems during the same pay periods of your final compensation period, CalSTRS is required by law to use your CalSTRS compensation earnable to calculate your final compensation.

You may retire for service concurrently from CalSTRS and any of the following retirement systems:

- California Public Employees’ Retirement System.
- San Francisco Employees’ Retirement System.
- University of California Retirement System.
- Legislators’ Retirement System.
- Systems established under the County Employees’ Retirement Law of 1937. For a list of counties covered by this law, see the glossary, “County Employees’ Retirement Law of 1937.”

Be sure to check the retirement eligibility requirements for the other retirement systems.

See the Concurrent Retirement fact sheet at CalSTRS.com/publications.

Reduced Benefit Election

For 2% at 60 members, if you’re at least age 55, but under age 60, and have at least five years of service credit, you can apply for retirement under the Reduced Benefit Election. You will receive one-half of the monthly benefit amount calculated as if you were age 60. The reduced benefit will continue for the same number of months after age 60 that you received benefits before age 60. After that, your retirement benefit amount will be the amount you would have received had you retired at age 60. For an example calculation, see the Reduced Benefit Election form at CalSTRS.com/forms.

If you previously retired for service or disability, or received a disability benefit, you’re not eligible for the Reduced Benefit Election.

With the Reduced Benefit Election, annual benefit adjustments accrue. However, you will not receive the benefit payment increases until you receive your normal service retirement benefit.

Due to the initial reduction in your retirement benefit, talk to a CalSTRS benefits specialist to estimate your monthly retirement benefit before electing this program. The Reduced Benefit Election form at CalSTRS.com/forms has an example calculation. Use your actual numbers to determine your approximate benefit reduction and the length of time you would receive the reduced benefit.

CalSTRS 2% at 62: You’re not eligible for the Reduced Benefit Election.
Reduced Workload Program

The CalSTRS Reduced Workload Program (also known as the Willie Brown Act) allows you to reduce your workload from full-time to part-time duties, defined as at least 50 percent of full time, for up to 10 years—normally the last 10 years before retirement. Participation is available only if your employer offers the program.

Both your and your employer's contributions will be paid based on the full-time compensation earnable, rather than your actual part-time earnings while participating in the program. In addition, your employer pays a higher contribution rate for you to participate, which is set each year by the Teachers' Retirement Board.

Because contributions are based on your full-time compensation earnable, you will receive full-time service credit while working less than full time. At retirement, your benefit will be calculated as if you continued to work full time, including determining your final compensation and service credit, provided you complete your contractual agreement.

Eligibility

To be eligible for the program, you must:

• Be age 55 or older.
• Have at least 10 years of service credit.
• Have been employed to perform creditable service in a full-time position for five years immediately before entering the program.

The agreement to reduce your workload must be in effect and CalSTRS must verify your eligibility before the beginning of the school year.

After discussing the Reduced Workload Program with your employer and reviewing your qualifications, you must enter into a contractual agreement with your employer to participate in the program for the entire school year. You must enroll before the school year begins.

Important Considerations

If you do not work at least one-half of the time your employer requires for full time, your service credit for the year will be calculated on actual time worked.

For example, if you were employed 50 percent of full time and your pay was docked because you became ill and ran out of sick leave, you would not have performed creditable service for at least 50 percent of full time that year. Therefore, for that year, you would not be eligible to participate in the Reduced Workload Program and would earn service credit for the time worked.

If you retire or terminate employment before the end of the school year, your agreement under the Reduced Workload Program will be revoked. You will receive service credit only for the part-time service you actually performed.

Retirement Incentive Program

If your school district offers the CalSTRS Retirement Incentive Program, you have at least five years of service credit and you're eligible to retire, you can receive two additional years of service credit. Retirement incentives are offered at your employer’s discretion, not CalSTRS’.
You must be eligible for service retirement and retire from active service within the time period specified by your employer to take advantage of the incentive. To be eligible for the incentive, you must also not have received any unemployment insurance payments as a result of employment with your school district within one year after your school district’s decision to offer the CalSTRS Retirement Incentive Program.

The additional service credit given under the incentive program will not count toward eligibility for service retirement or the one-year final compensation and career factor benefit enhancements.

Your employer must pay for the additional service credit. In addition, your employer must fund the full two years of service credit—CalSTRS does not grant partial benefits.

You’ll lose the ongoing increase in your benefit if you do any of the following:

• Become an active member again by returning to CalSTRS-covered employment (reinstate).
• Return within five years to any job, including substitute teaching, with the employer that granted your incentive credit.
• Receive unemployment benefits within one year of your retirement date.

Visit CalSTRS.com/calculators or meet with a CalSTRS benefits specialist to help you determine the potential boost to your retirement benefit.

Protecting Your Loved Ones Before You Retire

When you’re eligible to retire, you may make a preretirement election of an option to provide a monthly lifetime income for another person or persons if you should die before retirement. When you elect an option, your monthly retirement benefit will be reduced from the Member-Only Benefit. The percentage of the reduction is based on the option you elect, your age and your beneficiary’s age at the time you elect an option.

Visit CalSTRS.com/calculators or meet with a CalSTRS benefits specialist to help you determine the potential boost to your retirement benefit.

If you make a preretirement election of an option and die before retirement, the monthly retirement benefit paid to your beneficiaries will be based on the percentage of the reduced benefit that would have been paid if you had retired as of the date of your death.

In addition, if you make a preretirement option election, the option factor when you retire will be the higher of the option factor in effect when the option was chosen or on the date of retirement. In most cases, this will result in a higher Modified Benefit than if you elected an option at retirement.

Nonspouse Option Beneficiary

Under federal law, if you name someone other than your current or former spouse to be your option beneficiary, the type of option you may elect depends on your age and the age of your beneficiary:

• Under the 75% Beneficiary Option, your nonspouse beneficiary cannot be more than exactly 19 years younger than you.
• If you elect the Compound Option, your nonspouse beneficiaries cannot be either more than exactly 19 years younger than you under the 75% Beneficiary Option, or more than exactly 10 years younger than you under the 100% Beneficiary Option.

These federal age restrictions also apply to registered domestic partners.
Example: Effect of a Preretirement Option Election vs. Option Election at Retirement

Choosing a Preretirement Election of an Option

- Member retires at age 60
- 100% Option Beneficiary is also age 60
- Both member and option beneficiary were age 55 when preretirement option was chosen

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<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Member-Only Benefit</td>
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<tr>
<td>Member's Reduced Benefit</td>
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Choosing an Option at Retirement

- Member retires at age 60
- 100% Option Beneficiary is also age 60

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Benefit Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Member-Only Benefit</td>
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<tr>
<td>Member's Reduced Benefit</td>
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</tbody>
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The example above illustrates the difference in benefits if you choose an option beneficiary before retirement or wait until retirement. Your benefit will be reduced based on the option you choose and the ages of both you and your option beneficiary at the time of election. Therefore, the reduction in your benefit may be slightly higher than if you wait until retirement to choose that same option.

Advantages and Disadvantages of Preretirement Elections

Be sure to consider the advantages and disadvantages of choosing a preretirement election of an option. Only you can decide whether to reduce your monthly benefit by electing an option. Consider consulting a financial adviser. CalSTRS can provide you with information on your benefit choices but does not provide advice.

**Advantages**

If you die before retirement and you made a preretirement election of an option, your beneficiary will receive a lifetime monthly retirement benefit. The benefit begins immediately after your death, regardless of the ages of your beneficiaries. In most cases, the reduced benefit will be higher than if you elected an option at the time of retirement.

If you become disabled after making a preretirement election of an option and you have a disability benefit under Coverage A, you may retain the option election to provide a monthly benefit to your option beneficiary.

If you’re a CalSTRS 2% at 60 member with at least 30 years of service and you die before retirement, benefit enhancements such as the career factor that you may otherwise be eligible to receive will not apply to benefits for your survivors unless you have a preretirement option election on file with CalSTRS.

- **CalSTRS 2% at 62:** You’re not eligible for the longevity bonus or the career factor enhancement to the age factor.
Disadvantages
If you cancel or change your preretirement election of an option before retiring, or if your option beneficiary dies before you retire, your retirement benefit will be subject to an assessment and may be reduced for life.

Electing a Preretirement Option
To elect a preretirement option:

1. Contact CalSTRS if you would like to receive an estimate of your retirement benefit based on the option you would like to elect.

2. Complete the Preretirement Election of an Option form or the Preretirement Compound Option Election form, available at CalSTRS.com or myCalSTRS.

3. Your spouse or registered domestic partner must sign your form or you must complete and return the Justification for Non-Signature of Spouse or Registered Domestic Partner form with your preretirement election. Your preretirement election will not be accepted and your election will not be effective until the requirement is met.

To be valid, CalSTRS must receive your election form within 30 days of the date you signed it, and all other requirements must be met. Your preretirement option election is effective as of your signature date.

Date of Birth Verification
CalSTRS requires verification of your and your option beneficiary’s dates of birth. Acceptable documentation for verification includes clear, unaltered photocopies of one of the following:

- Birth certificate
- State-issued ID
- Passport ID page
- Certain military IDs

If a name has been changed from the name shown on the record of birth, a copy of the marriage certificate or court order documenting the change is required. If you do not have any of these records, contact CalSTRS for assistance.

Canceling a Preretirement Election of an Option
If you cancel your preretirement election of an option for any reason, an assessment will apply and will be calculated at retirement. The assessment may reduce your monthly retirement benefit for life.

A preretirement election of an option is canceled automatically if:

- You take a refund.
- You elect a new option or a new option beneficiary.
- Your option beneficiary predeceases you.

CalSTRS will calculate the assessment factor as of the cancellation date of your preretirement election based on:

- The option you elected.
• The amount of time your preretirement option election was in effect.
• Your age at the time of election and cancellation.
• Whether you have Coverage A or Coverage B.
• Whether your option beneficiary is your spouse or registered domestic partner.

Your preretirement option election will become irrevocable when you retire except under limited circumstances (see pages 63–65).

Your spouse or partner must sign the cancellation of your preretirement election of an option or you must complete and return the Justification for Non-Signature of Spouse or Registered Domestic Partner form with the request for cancellation. If your spouse or partner’s signature is not provided or if we do not receive the Justification for Non-Signature of Spouse or Registered Domestic Partner form, the cancellation will not be accepted, and it will not be effective until the requirements are met.

You can elect a new beneficiary if you cancel your previous election or your beneficiary dies before you retire. Your benefit amount would be reduced based on your new beneficiary’s age, your age and the option you elect.

Social Security Offsets
CalSTRS members do not pay into Social Security, so you will not receive Social Security benefits for your CalSTRS-covered position.

If you or your spouse qualifies for Social Security from other employment, your monthly Social Security check may be smaller or you may not receive a Social Security check at all because of two federal rules: the Windfall Elimination Provision and the Government Pension Offset.

In addition, your benefit estimate from Social Security may be overstated because non-Social Security pensions such as CalSTRS aren’t considered in the estimate.

Your CalSTRS retirement benefit will not be reduced by these rules. In addition, any CalSTRS benefits paid to your beneficiaries will not affect their Social Security benefits.

Your eligibility for Medicare will not be affected.

Windfall Elimination Provision
The Windfall Elimination Provision affects your Social Security benefit that is based on your earnings from other employment. The rule may reduce your Social Security benefit, but it will not eliminate it.

Your Social Security benefit is based on your average monthly covered earnings over a 35-year period, adjusted for inflation. When Social Security determines your benefits, it separates your average earnings into three amounts and multiplies the amounts using three different factors. For example, if you turned 62 in 2016, the first $856 of your average monthly earnings would be multiplied by 90 percent, the next $4,301 would be multiplied by 32 percent, and any remainder by 15 percent.

If you’re also eligible for a CalSTRS retirement benefit, the 90 percent factor could be reduced to 40 percent. The exact amount of the reduction is based on your years of substantial earnings covered under Social Security and adjusted every year. The maximum reduction in Social Security benefits under the Windfall Elimination Provision is $428 per month for 2016.

Social Security is a federal program and neither CalSTRS nor the State of California has control over eligibility requirements or benefit calculations.
You’re exempt from the Windfall Elimination Provision if you were eligible to retire from CalSTRS before January 1, 1986, or if you have 30 or more years of substantial earnings under employment covered by Social Security. In 2016, substantial earnings are $22,050 annually. With 21 to 29 years of substantial earnings, the 90 percent factor is reduced on a sliding scale beginning at 45 percent for 21 years up to 85 percent for 29 years.

**Government Pension Offset**

The Government Pension Offset affects your spousal, widow or widower Social Security benefit that is based on your spouse’s earnings. The spousal Social Security benefit was introduced to provide spouses who have no formal employment history with a benefit upon the retirement or death of their spouse. This offset was introduced so that government employees, including California public educators, who don’t pay into Social Security would be treated similarly to spouses who earn a Social Security benefit from their own employment, as the law reduces and may eliminate their spousal benefit based on the amount of their Social Security benefit.

Under this rule, your Social Security spousal benefit will be reduced by two-thirds of your CalSTRS retirement benefit. If two-thirds of your CalSTRS benefit exceeds the amount of your spousal benefit from Social Security, you will not receive a Social Security spousal benefit. If your Social Security spousal benefit is higher than two-thirds of your CalSTRS benefit, you’ll receive the difference. There are limited exemptions to the Government Pension Offset.

Due to the complexity of Social Security law and the formulas used in determining Social Security benefits, contact a Social Security representative to determine if these provisions or exceptions apply to your individual situation.

- See the online calculators at ssa.gov/planners/benefitcalculators.html. Or contact the Social Security Administration at socialsecurity.gov or 800-772-1213.

- Also see "Social Security, CalSTRS and You," page 10.

**Health Insurance**

CalSTRS does not provide health or dental insurance coverage. Under California Education Code sections 7000–7008, school districts, community colleges and county offices of education must offer retiring CalSTRS members and their spouses or registered domestic partners the opportunity to continue their medical and dental insurance at their own cost.

Each district has its own policies. Coverage may also be part of your union contract, so your benefits may differ from others in your district. Contact your employer to learn if you will have any health benefits in retirement. Consider setting aside extra money now for your future health care coverage.

You and your employer each pay 1.45 percent of your wages toward earning coverage under Medicare, the federal insurance program for people age 65 and older.
Health Insurance Premium Deductions
CalSTRS can deduct health insurance premiums from your monthly retirement benefit and forward the premium to your insurance carrier, if your carrier has an agreement with us and your carrier submits the appropriate paperwork. Contact your employer's Human Resources to learn more.

Medicare Eligibility
While you do not pay into Social Security, you do pay the Medicare tax of 1.45 percent of gross earnings if you were hired after April 1986, or if you elected to participate in Medicare under your employer’s Medicare division election. Therefore, you may be eligible for premium-free Medicare Part A coverage on your own or through your spouse’s employment.

Contact Social Security at 800-772-1213 to determine if you're eligible for premium-free Medicare Part A.

Visit medicare.gov.

CalSTRS Medicare Premium Payment Program
The CalSTRS Medicare Premium Payment Program, which pays Medicare Part A hospital insurance premiums for certain eligible retired members, is not being offered to members with a retirement effective date on or after July 1, 2012. Your most recent retirement date is used to determine eligibility.

If you started CalSTRS-covered employment before April 1, 1986, you were not initially subject to the Medicare tax. If you switched employers after that date, or if your employer held a Medicare Division election and you voted “yes,” you began paying the Medicare tax. If you or your spouse paid the Medicare tax for 10 or more years, you most likely qualify for premium-free Medicare Part A on your own.

Under the program, if you don’t qualify for premium-free Medicare Part A, CalSTRS will pay your Part A premium directly to Medicare if you meet all of the following requirements:

- Are retired and receiving a monthly CalSTRS benefit (or receiving a CalSTRS disability benefit) from which Medicare premiums can be deducted.
- Have a retirement effective date on or before June 30, 2012.
- Are age 65 or older.
- Are enrolled in both Medicare Part A and Part B.

Your eligibility also depends on when your district held a Medicare division election. If your district completed a Medicare division election before January 1, 2001, your voting results will not be used to determine your eligibility. If your district completed or conducted a Medicare election after January 1, 2001, and before June 30, 2012, you must have retired during or after the 10-day Medicare election period. In addition, if you were less than 58 years of age at the time of the election, you must have elected to be covered by Medicare. Check with your employer to determine if and when it conducted a Medicare election.
Under federal law, you must also enroll in Medicare Part B when you turn age 65 to participate in the CalSTRS program. You will have to pay the Medicare Part B premium. At your request, CalSTRS can deduct Medicare Part B premiums from your monthly retirement benefit and forward the payment to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, the federal agency that administers Medicare. You have this option even if CalSTRS does not pay your Medicare Part A premiums. CalSTRS does not have a program for Medicare Part D.

**CalPERS Long-Term Care Program**

As a CalSTRS member, you and certain family members may be eligible for the CalPERS Long-Term Care Program. Long-term care plans are offered by a number of entities. Be sure to consult a trusted financial adviser and talk with your family to help you decide if a long-term care plan is right for you and which long-term care insurance might be most suitable for you. To learn more about the CalPERS program, visit www.calperslongtermcare.com or call 800-908-9119.

**Benefits Planning Services**

CalSTRS offers various services to help you learn about your CalSTRS benefits and plan for retirement.

**Attend a Workshop**

Our CalSTRS workshops are designed to meet your needs at your different career stages.

- **CalSTRS New Beginnings**—For members hired on or after January 1, 2013, this workshop covers your benefits under the CalSTRS 2% at 62 benefit structure, including steps you can take now to increase both your retirement benefit and income in retirement.

- **Demystifying CalSTRS**—For members early in their career, this workshop serves as an introduction to your CalSTRS membership and your retirement, survivor and disability benefits. It’s also a prime learning opportunity for those who have never attended a CalSTRS workshop.

- **CalSTRS Basics**—For mid-career members, this workshop covers the details of the CalSTRS hybrid retirement system and how it fits into your overall retirement planning. Additionally, you’ll receive tools for determining your gap—the difference between your retirement goal and your retirement resources—as well as ways for closing it.

- **CalSTRS Fundamentals**—For mid-career members looking to start planning for their future in earnest, this workshop covers the essentials of CalSTRS membership and benefits that are the foundation of your financial plan.

- **CalSTRS Retirement Check-Up**—For members near retirement, this workshop covers the steps necessary for a successful CalSTRS retirement. In addition to explaining how your retirement benefit is calculated, it details the retirement application process.

We also offer a financial awareness series that focuses on financial literacy and money-management skills.

- **Save for Your Future**—Discover ways to create and evaluate a budget, tips for managing credit and debt, and the questions to ask before investing.

- **Plan for Your Future**—Explore retirement income sources and expenses, prepare for potential obstacles and gain a better perspective for what your future may hold.

- **Protect Your Future**—Learn more about benefit adjustments and distributions, maximizing income in retirement and ways to protect the retirement lifestyle you’ve built.
Questions You’ll Need to Answer
Before making your retirement decisions, you’ll need to answer these questions:

- Am I eligible to retire?
- How much will my benefit be each month?
- Do I want to provide a monthly benefit to someone after I die?
- How do I want my Defined Benefit Supplement distribution paid?

Schedule a Benefits Planning Session
Learn with fellow educators in a confidential, yet interactive, small-group setting. Contact your local office or visit myCalSTRS to schedule a session near you. Sessions are typically scheduled six weeks in advance.

- **CalSTRS and You**—Are you an early or mid-career educator or otherwise not yet eligible to retire? It’s never too early to start planning! CalSTRS and You covers:
  - The CalSTRS hybrid system and your different accounts.
  - Your retirement, survivor and disability benefits.
  - Retirement eligibility and how to estimate your benefit.
  - What you can do now to increase your income in retirement.

- **CalSTRS and Your Retirement**—Are you currently eligible to retire or considering retirement within the next five years? Learn about your retirement decisions and review personalized estimates prepared by a CalSTRS benefits specialist. CalSTRS and Your Retirement covers:
  - Your CalSTRS accounts and personalized benefit estimates.
  - Beneficiary options and how to leave a lifetime benefit to a loved one.
  - How to purchase service credit and what happens to your unused sick leave.
  - Concurrent service retirement for those retiring from more than one California public retirement system.
  - Considerations regarding health benefits, Medicare and Social Security.
  - How to apply for retirement and when to expect your benefit.
  - Your relationship with CalSTRS in retirement.

- **Retirement Application Roundtable**—Complete your Service Retirement Application with the help of a CalSTRS benefits specialist. This session is typically available in winter and spring.

Other sessions include topics such as disability benefits, community property, the Cash Balance Benefit Program and reinstatement. Contact your local office for more information.

Connections Newsletter
Keep up to date by reading Connections, published twice a year. Sign up on myCalSTRS to receive your newsletter electronically to help us conserve natural resources.
Your Retirement Formula: How It Works

CalSTRS 2% at 60

Faye is a first-grade teacher with 29 years of service credit. She just turned 58 and though not in a hurry to retire, she’s been thinking more about retirement lately. Her monthly pay is $4,708.

Here are three examples for her retirement benefit calculation, not including any sick leave she may have that will be converted to service credit at retirement, and assuming her pay stays the same.

If Faye retires with at least 30 years of service credit, a 0.2 percent career factor will be added to her age factor, up to a maximum age factor of 2.40 percent.

EXAMPLE 1
If Faye were to retire today, her monthly retirement benefit would be:

\[
29 \times 1.76\% \times \$4,708 = \$2,403
\]

EXAMPLE 2
If she continued working until her 60th birthday, she would qualify for the career factor. Her monthly retirement benefit would be:

\[
31 \times 2.20\% \times \$4,708 = \$3,211
\]

EXAMPLE 3
If she continued working until her 62nd birthday, she would be eligible for the maximum combined age factor and career factor of 2.40 percent, giving her a monthly retirement benefit of:

\[
33 \times 2.40\% \times \$4,708 = \$3,729
\]

CalSTRS 2% at 62

Bill was first hired to teach high school chemistry in March 2013, so he falls under the CalSTRS 2% at 62 benefit structure. He is 30 years old and would like to retire at age 62 or later. Under CalSTRS 2% at 62, there is no career factor or one-year final compensation benefit enhancement.

EXAMPLE 1
If Bill continues working until his 62nd birthday, he would be eligible for the age factor of 2 percent. If his final compensation is $5,100, his monthly retirement benefit would be:

\[
32 \times 2\% \times \$5,100 = \$3,264
\]

EXAMPLE 2
If Bill continues working until he turns 65, he would be eligible for the maximum age factor of 2.4 percent. If his final compensation was still $5,100, his monthly retirement benefit would be:

\[
35 \times 2.4\% \times \$5,100 = \$4,284
\]
Your Retirement Benefit

As a Defined Benefit member, your retirement benefit is based on the following formula set by law:

\[ \text{service credit} \times \text{age factor} \times \text{final compensation} \]

Ways to Increase Your Benefit
You can increase your retirement benefit by increasing one or more of the elements in the retirement benefit calculation formula. For instance, you can increase your service credit by working longer, purchasing permissive service credit or redepositing a service credit refund. In addition, by working longer and retiring later, you could increase your age factor up to a maximum of 2.4 percent.

See “Benefit Enhancements,” page 60.

Service Credit
Service credit is the accumulated period of time, in years and partial years, during which you receive creditable compensation and make contributions to the Defined Benefit Program. You may also receive service credit for creditable compensation for certain employer-approved leaves of absence. Permissive service credit may be purchased under certain circumstances.

See “Purchasing Service Credit,” page 57.

How Service Credit Is Calculated
Full-time educators typically earn one year of service credit for working one school year. For part-time educators, service credit for one school year is earned proportionally, based on the creditable compensation you earn divided by the compensation that is payable for full-time service in that position.


Extra-Pay Assignments
If you perform extra-pay assignments for school activities related to—and an outgrowth of—your school’s instructional or guidance program, you will earn service credit in addition to the service credit you earn for your normal position. These extra-pay assignments may include yearbook or science club adviser, soccer coach, or band director. Sixteen percent—you and your employer each contribute 8 percent—of your earnings for service that exceeds one full year, up to the compensation cap, will be credited to your Defined Benefit Supplement account at the end of the fiscal year. Your employer is responsible for returning any contributions that you make in excess of 8 percent.

See “Return of Excess Contributions,” page 25.

One-Time Death Benefit
Designate a recipient for the one-time death benefit using your myCalSTRS account or the Recipient Designation form. The amount of this benefit depends on your coverage, and if you die before or after you retire. See “Your Survivor Benefits,” page 87, to learn more.
Multiple Positions
If you’re employed in multiple positions for one or more CalSTRS employers during the school year, you may perform more than one year of service in a school year. If you do, you’ll receive one year of service credit under the Defined Benefit Program for service performed at the highest pay rates. Contributions made on service performed in excess of one year—you and your employer each contribute 8 percent—will be credited to your Defined Benefit Supplement account, up to any compensation cap.

CalSTRS determines if you performed service in excess of one year at the end of the school year. Any excess member contributions you made during the school year are reported on your Retirement Progress Report. Your myCalSTRS account provides a breakdown of excess contributions by employer. CalSTRS will return excess contributions to employers in late September. Your employer is responsible for returning any excess member contributions to you.


Compensation for Excess Service
The compensation for service in excess of one year is not used to determine your highest average annual compensation earnable when calculating final compensation. This is because final compensation is not based on total earnings but on compensation credited to the Defined Benefit Program. If your employer adjusts your reported earnings after the school year ends, your Defined Benefit and Defined Benefit Supplement account balances may be adjusted resulting in a change to your retirement benefit calculation.

Converting Unused Sick Leave to Service Credit
At service retirement, CalSTRS will process and convert your unused sick leave to additional service credit using the information your employer provided on the Express Benefit Report form. As soon as you change employers during your career, coordinate with your former employer to arrange for the transfer of your accumulated unused sick leave to your new employer.

For retirements effective on or after January 1, 2013, each of your employers during the last school year in which you earned creditable compensation can submit the Express Benefit Report form if your unused sick leave was not already transferred between districts. Employers are required to submit the Express Benefit Report within 30 days of your benefit effective date or the date we receive your Service Retirement Application, whichever is later. For retirements effective before January 1, 2013, only your last employer can report unused sick leave by submitting the Express Benefit Report form.

You cannot cash out your accumulated unused sick leave days.

If you’re employed full time as an educator, sick leave credit is calculated by dividing the number of accumulated unused sick leave days, as certified by your employer, by the number of base service days required to complete the last school year:

\[
\frac{\text{accumulated days of unused sick leave}}{\text{number of base days for full-time service}} = \text{service credit granted}
\]

Base service days equal the number of days of service your employer requires your class of employees to perform in a school year during your final year of creditable service. The base service days cannot be fewer than 175 days. If you’re employed part time, the base service days are calculated based on the full-time equivalent.
Sick leave service credit cannot be used to meet eligibility requirements for service retirement. However, under CalSTRS 2% at 60, up to two-tenths of one year of unused sick leave may be used to qualify for the career factor, which is given for 30 or more years of service, as well as the 25-year threshold for one-year final compensation and an increased longevity bonus, if you qualified for the longevity bonus on or before December 31, 2010.

**Purchasing Service Credit**

There are two main types of service credit you may be eligible to purchase: redeposit and permissive service.

**Redeposit**

You can restore service credit you lost when you left CalSTRS-covered employment, took a refund of your contributions and interest, then returned to a CalSTRS-covered position—or are a member of certain other public retirement systems—by redepositing the funds with interest. You cannot redeposit Defined Benefit Supplement distributions.

See “Redepositing to Restore Service Credit,” page 28.

**Permissive Service**

You may be eligible to purchase permissive service credit for:

- Creditable service performed after a Defined Benefit refund and before reinstating as a CalSTRS member. Typically this is part-time or substitute teaching service in the California public school system for which you did not earn service credit.
- Prior service covered under the CalSTRS Cash Balance Benefit Program.
- Time spent on a qualifying employer-approved leave of absence or sabbatical for which you did not make retirement contributions to CalSTRS.
- Certain active military leave.
- University of California or California State University teaching service not credited or purchasable under another retirement system.
- Employer-approved maternity or paternity leave, up to 24 months.
- Out-of-state or foreign school service performed in a public education institution.
- Employer-approved leave under the federal Family and Medical Leave Act or the California Family Rights Act.
- Fulbright Teacher Exchange Program.
- Certificated teaching in a child care center, or teaching in a school for the blind or deaf, or Native American school in California.

You may purchase a portion, rather than all, of the permissive service you have available. However, you cannot purchase service credit if you have received, or are eligible to receive, credit for the service in another public retirement system. You must complete payment for the service credit before your retirement date.

See the *Purchase Additional Service Credit* brochure for additional information at CalSTRS.com.
Estimating the Cost of Permissive Service Credit

The cost to purchase permissive service credit depends on your age and your highest annual compensation earnable during your last three years of employment. As of January 1, 2014, the contribution rates for purchasing service credit are assigned to each age, instead of by age group. You can estimate the cost to purchase permissive service credit online at CalSTRS.com/calculators. If you’re an inactive member, the online estimates may not be accurate, so please call us for assistance.

To manually calculate your cost, you’ll find the contribution rates by age on the right.

To manually estimate your cost to purchase service credit:

1. Multiply the amount of service credit (years) you want to purchase by the contribution rate for your age.

2. Multiply the result by your highest compensation earnable during the last three years.

*Rates may be adjusted each July 1. The new rates are available in spring by contacting CalSTRS.

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### Permissive Service Contribution Rates*

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>CalSTRS 2% at 60</th>
<th>CalSTRS 2% at 62</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Below 28</td>
<td>15.3%</td>
<td>12.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>16.0%</td>
<td>13.4%</td>
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<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>16.2%</td>
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<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>16.3%</td>
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<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>16.4%</td>
<td>13.9%</td>
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<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
<td>14.0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>16.8%</td>
<td>14.1%</td>
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<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>16.9%</td>
<td>14.1%</td>
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<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>17.0%</td>
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<td>64</td>
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<tr>
<td>65</td>
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<td>66</td>
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<tr>
<td>68</td>
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<td>69</td>
<td>26.6%</td>
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<td>25.7%</td>
<td>25.4%</td>
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<td>71</td>
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<td>24.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>72</td>
<td>24.2%</td>
<td>23.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>73 and above</td>
<td>22.3%</td>
<td>22.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*These rates are effective July 1, 2015. Rates may be adjusted each July 1. The new rates are available in spring at CalSTRS.com.
**Age Factor**

The age factor is the percentage of your final compensation you’ll receive as a retirement benefit for every year of service credit. The percentage is determined by your age on the last day of the month in which your retirement is effective.

If you’re a CalSTRS 2% at 60 member, the basic age factor is set at 2 percent at age 60. If you retire before age 60, the age factor gradually decreases to 1.1 percent at age 50. If you retire after age 60, it increases to a maximum of 2.4 percent at age 63. If you qualify for the 0.2 percent career factor by having at least 30 years of service credit, you reach the maximum age factor of 2.4 percent at age 61 and six months.

- **CalSTRS 2% at 62**: The basic age factor is set at 2 percent at age 62. If you retire before age 62, it gradually decreases to 1.16 percent at age 55, and increases to a maximum of 2.40 percent at age 65. There is no career factor benefit enhancement.

- See the Age Factor Tables, pages 69–70.

**Final Compensation**

If you’re a CalSTRS 2% at 60 member and have fewer than 25 years of service credit—and you’re not an eligible classroom teacher with collectively bargained 12-consecutive-month final compensation—your final compensation is based on your highest average annual compensation earnable during any period of 36 consecutive months of paid employment covered by CalSTRS.

If you’re an eligible classroom teacher under the CalSTRS 2% at 60 benefit structure with fewer than 25 years of service credit, you may use 12 consecutive months of compensation earnable to determine your final compensation if your written collective bargaining agreement specifically provides for it and all costs are paid by your employer or you, or both. The 12-consecutive-month final compensation calculation cannot be bargained for members with fewer than 25 years of service credit beginning with any collective bargaining agreement that is entered into, renewed, amended or extended on or after January 1, 2014.

If you retire with 25 or more years of service credit, CalSTRS uses your highest average annual compensation earnable during any 12 consecutive months as the final compensation component in your retirement calculation, which for most people is one school year. Unused sick leave in excess of two-tenths of one year, nonqualified service credit and retirement incentive credit cannot be used to qualify for the 25 years.

Nonconsecutive final compensation is available if you received a salary reduction due to a reduction in school funds. Upon certification from your employer, we can use nonconsecutive periods of time to determine your final compensation over 36 months.

If you work part time at more than one pay rate, your final compensation is equal to the sum of your earnings for which contributions were credited to your Defined Benefit account, divided by the sum of your service credit earned during the final compensation period.

We will automatically determine your final compensation by searching your past 15 years of records. In some cases, it may be to your benefit to designate an earlier period of time as your final compensation period if your compensation was higher more than 15 years ago.
If you have earned creditable compensation at multiple pay rates during a school year and your service credit at the highest pay rate is equal to at least 90 percent of a school year, then your final compensation will be determined as if all service for that school year had been earned at that pay rate.

- **CalSTRS 2% at 62**: Your final compensation is based on your highest average annual compensation earnable during any 36 consecutive months, and you’re not eligible for the one-year final compensation benefit enhancement.

## Compensation Earnable

For CalSTRS 2% at 60 members, your annual compensation earnable for a school year is based on the gross monthly pay you could have earned for creditable service performed full time. If you plan to retire before the end of the school year, your compensation earnable for the year will be prorated to your retirement date.

- **CalSTRS 2% at 62**: There is a cap on compensation that counts toward your CalSTRS retirement benefit. The cap is adjusted annually for changes in the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers: U.S. City Average. The 2015–16 cap is $137,941.

## Mid-Year Retirement

If you retire in the middle of the school year, your final compensation may be lower than expected if you received a salary increase toward the end of your career. This is because for a mid-year retirement, CalSTRS may have to include the monthly average of your prior year’s compensation earnable as part of your final compensation calculation. The calculation will have more of an effect if you’re under the CalSTRS 2% at 60 benefit structure and have at least 25 years of service, since your final compensation would be based on a 12-month period.

### Example

If you earned $57,000 last school year and would have earned $60,000 this school year, and you have more than 25 years of service credit under CalSTRS 2% at 60, your one-year final compensation for a retirement date in January would be:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{$57,000} & \div 12 = \$4,750 \times 6 \text{ months} = \$28,500 \\
\text{$60,000} & \div 12 = \$5,000 \times 6 \text{ months} = \$30,000 \\
\text{Total} & = \$58,500 \\
\text{Total} & \div 12 = \$\ 4,875
\end{align*}
\]

Your final compensation for your last 12 months would be $4,875 per month.

A mid-year retirement while working under the Reduced Workload Program will result in ineligibility for the program and may negatively affect your service credit and final compensation.

## Benefit Enhancements

You may qualify for one or more benefit enhancements that will increase your monthly retirement benefit. You may use up to two-tenths of one year of unused sick leave credit at retirement to qualify for benefit enhancements.
Career Factor
For CalSTRS 2% at 60 members, 0.2 percent career factor will be added to your age factor if you retire with at least 30 years of earned service credit, up to the maximum combined age and career factor of 2.4 percent (at age 61 and six months).

KalSTRS 2% at 62: You’re not eligible for the career factor enhancement.

One-Year Final Compensation
For 2% at 60 members, if you have at least 25 years of service credit, the calculation for your final compensation is based on your highest average annual compensation earnable for 12 consecutive months.

KalSTRS 2% at 62: Your final compensation is based on your highest average annual compensation earnable for 36 consecutive months, and you are not eligible for the one-year final compensation benefit enhancement.

Longevity Bonus
For 2% at 60 members, the longevity bonus is a set dollar amount that is permanently added to your monthly retirement benefit if you earned at least 30 years of qualified service credit on or before December 31, 2010. The amount of the longevity bonus for the Member-Only Benefit depends on your years of service credit at retirement, even if that additional service was performed after 2010:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>If you earned:</th>
<th>You will receive monthly:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30 years</td>
<td>$200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 years</td>
<td>$300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32 or more years</td>
<td>$400</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The longevity bonus is:

- Included in the 2 percent annual benefit adjustment but not in the quarterly supplemental purchasing power protection benefit.
- Partially reduced if you elect an option.
- Partially reduced if you cancel a preretirement election of an option.

Up to 0.2 of a year of unused sick leave can be used to increase your monthly longevity bonus amount.

Member-Only Benefit
The Member-Only Benefit is usually the highest monthly benefit available when you retire. It provides a monthly benefit for your lifetime, but the benefit stops when you die. Any contributions and interest remaining in your account at the time of your death, minus the total amount already paid to you, will be paid to your designated one-time death benefit recipients.

To provide a monthly CalSTRS benefit to your loved ones after your death, you must elect a retirement option. The option is different from the one-time death benefit and the ongoing monthly survivor benefits.

Protecting Your Survivors With a Lifetime Benefit (Modified Benefit)

To provide a lifetime monthly benefit to someone when you die, you can elect an option at retirement (this is different from the one-time death benefit). An option allows you to distribute your retirement benefit over your life and the life of your option beneficiaries. If you did not make a preretirement election of an option, your option election is effective as of your retirement date. The deadline to change or cancel your option election on your Service Retirement Application is 30 days from the date your first benefit payment is issued. Once the deadline to change or cancel your retirement application passes, your option election is irrevocable, except under certain limited circumstances (see pages 63–65).

You can elect an option if you’re eligible, but not yet ready, to retire or a concurrent member of certain other California public retirement systems and are age 55 or older. Making a preretirement election of an option provides a lifetime monthly benefit to your beneficiaries if you should die before retirement (see pages 46–49).

Note: If you’re a concurrent member, age 55 or older with less than five years of CalSTRS service credit, we will verify your retirement eligibility as of the date of your death. If you’re ineligible for concurrent service retirement, your preretirement election will be void.

Option Choices

You can provide a monthly benefit for someone after your death by electing the 100% Beneficiary Option, the 75% Beneficiary Option or the 50% Beneficiary Option. You may also elect the Compound Option to provide for one or more option beneficiaries and/or retain a portion of your benefit as Member-Only.

100% Beneficiary Option: Provides your option beneficiary with 100 percent of the amount you were receiving upon your death. If your option beneficiary dies before you, your benefit will rise to the Member-Only Benefit.

75% Beneficiary Option: Provides your option beneficiary with 75 percent of the amount you were receiving upon your death. If your option beneficiary dies before you, your benefit will rise to the Member-Only Benefit.

50% Beneficiary Option: Provides your option beneficiary with 50 percent of the amount you were receiving upon your death. If your option beneficiary dies before you, your benefit will rise to the Member-Only Benefit.

Compound Option: Allows various choices. You may:

- Name one option beneficiary and retain a portion of your benefit as a Member-Only Benefit.
- Name two or more option beneficiaries, with an option choice for each, and retain a portion of your benefit as a Member-Only Benefit.
- Name two or more option beneficiaries, with an option choice for each, and not retain any of your benefit as a Member-Only Benefit.


Note: If you keep all of your benefit as Member-Only, any contributions and interest remaining in your account at the time of your death, less the total amount already paid to you, will be paid to your one-time death benefit recipients. However, if you elect a Compound Option, no contributions are interest will be distributed, even if you retain a portion of your benefit as Member-Only.
How Choosing an Option Changes Your Benefit

An option provides you with a reduced retirement benefit, or Modified Benefit, based on a percentage of your Member-Only Benefit. That percentage, called an option factor, is based on your age and the age of your option beneficiary on the effective date of your retirement or when you make a preretirement election of an option, and the option you elect.

If you elect an option before retirement, the option factor when you retire will be the higher of the option factor in effect when the option was chosen or on the date of retirement. In most cases, this will result in a higher Modified Benefit than if you elected an option at retirement.

Options Comparison Example

The percentages shown here are for a member, age 60, who designates an option beneficiary, age 57.

To find out how each option would affect your retirement benefit, use the Retirement Benefit Calculator at CalSTRS.com/calculators.

ELECTING A NONSPOUSE OPTION BENEFICIARY

Under federal law, if you name someone other than your spouse or a former spouse as your option beneficiary, the type of option you may elect depends on your age and the age of your option beneficiary:

- Under the 75% Beneficiary Option, your nonspouse option beneficiary cannot be more than exactly 19 years younger than you.
- Under the Compound Option, your nonspouse option beneficiary cannot be either more than exactly 19 years younger than you under the 75% Beneficiary Option, or more than exactly 10 years younger than you under the 100% Beneficiary Option.

Federal age restrictions also apply to registered domestic partners.

ADDING, CHANGING OR CANCELING YOUR OPTION ELECTIO

When the deadline to make changes to or cancel your retirement application—30 days from the date your first benefit payment is issued—has passed, you can change your option beneficiary after retirement only under the specific circumstances listed on page 64. Contact CalSTRS for the appropriate Cancellation of Option After Retirement form.
When you choose a new option or a new option beneficiary, an adjustment to your benefit will be made. Before changing your option or choosing a new option beneficiary, contact CalSTRS to get an estimate of your benefit based on your new election. Your new election will be irrevocable except under very limited circumstances.

If you cancel your option election, the amount your benefit was previously reduced will not be reimbursed to you.

**Death of Beneficiary:** If your original option beneficiary dies after the effective date of your retirement, you may elect a new option beneficiary. To elect a new option beneficiary, complete the required form and submit a copy of the certified death certificate to CalSTRS. The appropriate reduction to your benefit will be made. Even if you choose not to elect a new beneficiary, you must notify CalSTRS if your beneficiary dies after your retirement effective date and send us a copy of the death certificate.

If you elect a new option beneficiary, the election will not be effective until six months after CalSTRS receives your new designation, provided you and your new option beneficiary are living at that time. While you can name a new beneficiary, you cannot change the original option you elected unless you elected an option no longer available: Option 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 or 8.

**Divorce:** You may cancel your option election if your option beneficiary is your current or former spouse or registered domestic partner, and a final decree of dissolution of marriage or a judgment of nullity has been entered, or an order of separate maintenance has been made on or after January 1, 1978—and you are not required to keep your former spouse or partner as your option beneficiary. The notification to cancel the option must include a certified copy of the final judgment, court order or any property settlement agreement confirming you are no longer required to maintain the former spouse or partner as an option beneficiary.

As of the date of the notification, you may elect to receive the Member-Only Benefit. Or you may choose to elect a new option and one or more new option beneficiaries, which will result in a modification to your retirement benefit based on your age and the ages of your new option beneficiaries.

If the court order requires you to keep your former spouse or partner as an option beneficiary for his or her community property percentage share only, you may either elect additional option beneficiaries or keep the remaining portion of your retirement benefit as the Member-Only Benefit. Even if you choose to retain your share as Member-Only, your one-time death benefit recipient will not receive any remaining contributions or interest because there is still an option election in place with your former spouse or registered domestic partner as beneficiary. Your choice must be consistent with the court order or judgment and must not result in any liability to CalSTRS.

**Spouse or Partner:** If you had previously designated a person other than your current or former spouse or partner as your option beneficiary, you may cancel your option beneficiary election and designate your spouse or partner as your new option beneficiary. You may elect a new option but may not name additional beneficiaries other than your spouse or partner.

If you elect a new option beneficiary, the election will not be effective until six months after CalSTRS receives the new designation, provided you and your new option beneficiary are living at that time. Your benefit will be subject to an actuarial reduction based on your age and the age of your spouse or partner.

**Newly Married or Registered in Domestic Partnership:** If you were unmarried or unregistered at retirement and receiving a Member-Only Benefit, you can choose an option and name your
You can name a new beneficiary if your original beneficiary dies, you divorce or terminate a registered domestic partnership, get married or register in a domestic partnership, or your previous beneficiary was someone other than your current or former spouse or partner.

Your Defined Benefit Supplement Account Distribution

Your most recent Retirement Progress Report shows the total balance in your Defined Benefit Supplement account at the end of the last school year.

If you have less than $3,500 in your account at the time you retire, you must elect to receive the account balance as a lump-sum payment. Your lump-sum distribution may be paid directly to you or rolled over to a qualified plan such as CalSTRS Pension2.

If your account balance is $3,500 or more, you have choices for electing how to receive your distribution, depending on whether you elect the Member-Only Benefit or the Modified Benefit.

Choices for a Member-Only Benefit

If you elect a Member-Only Benefit and have $3,500 or more in your Defined Benefit Supplement account, you have the following payment choices:

Lump-Sum Payment: A one-time payment of the total balance of your Defined Benefit Supplement account, either as a direct payment or as a rollover to a qualified plan.

Member-Only Annuity: A monthly payment equal to the total balance of your Defined Benefit Supplement account spread over your lifetime. Any balance remaining upon your death will be paid to your one-time death benefit recipient.

Period-Certain Annuity: A monthly payment equal to the total balance of your Defined Benefit Supplement account spread over any number of whole years from three to 10. The monthly amount you receive is based on the number of years over which the annuity is paid—the fewer the years, the higher the amount payable. If you die before the annuity period ends, the remaining payments will be paid to your one-time death benefit recipients. A period-certain annuity of three to nine years is eligible for direct payment or a rollover.

Combination of Lump-Sum Payment and Annuity: A lump-sum payment and one of the annuities. To elect this choice, you must have $3,500 or more remaining in your Defined Benefit Supplement account after your lump-sum payment.

Choices for a Modified Benefit

If you elect a Modified Benefit and have $3,500 or more in your Defined Benefit Supplement account, you have the following payment choices:

Lump-Sum Payment: A one-time payment of the total balance of your Defined Benefit Supplement account as a direct payment or a rollover to a qualified plan.

100% Beneficiary Annuity: A monthly payment equal to the total balance of your Defined Benefit Supplement account spread over your lifetime and the lifetime of your annuity beneficiary. One hundred percent of your monthly annuity amount will be paid to your annuity beneficiary upon your death. If your beneficiary dies before you, your payment will rise to the Member-Only Annuity amount.

new spouse or partner as an option beneficiary if you later marry or register in a domestic partnership. You must be married or registered at least one year before electing the option and naming the option beneficiary. Your benefit will be subject to an actuarial reduction based on your age and the age of your spouse or partner. Your new option election and beneficiary addition will not be effective until six months after CalSTRS receives your new designation, provided you and your new option beneficiary are living at that time.
75% Beneficiary Annuity: A monthly payment equal to the total balance of your Defined Benefit Supplement account spread over your lifetime and the lifetime of your annuity beneficiary. Seventy-five percent of your monthly annuity amount will be paid to your annuity beneficiary upon your death. If your beneficiary dies before you, your payment will rise to the Member-Only Annuity amount.

50% Beneficiary Annuity: A monthly payment equal to the total balance of your Defined Benefit Supplement account spread over your lifetime and the lifetime of your annuity beneficiary. Fifty percent of your monthly annuity amount will be paid to your annuity beneficiary upon your death. If your beneficiary dies before you, your payment will rise to the Member-Only Annuity amount.

Period-Certain Annuity: A monthly payment equal to the total balance of your Defined Benefit Supplement account spread over any number of whole years from three to 10. The monthly amount you receive is based on the number of years over which the annuity is paid—the fewer the years, the higher the amount payable. If you die before the annuity period ends, the remaining payments will be paid to your one-time death benefit recipients. A period-certain annuity of three to nine years is eligible for direct payment or a rollover.

Combination of Lump-Sum Payment and Annuity: A lump-sum payment and one of the annuities. To elect this choice, you must have $3,500 or more remaining in your Defined Benefit Supplement account after your lump-sum payment. A period-certain annuity of three to nine years is eligible for direct payment or a rollover.

Note: If you elect the Compound Option for your Defined Benefit retirement benefit, you may elect to receive your Defined Benefit Supplement benefit as one of the annuities. However, the annuity you elect will be the same for each of your annuity beneficiaries, and the apportionment of your benefit will remain the same as it is for your Defined Benefit election.

Nonspouse Lifetime Annuity Beneficiary

Under federal law, if you name someone other than your current or former spouse to be your annuity beneficiary, the type of option you may elect depends on your age and the age of your option beneficiary:

- Under the 75% Beneficiary Annuity, your nonspouse annuity beneficiary cannot be more than exactly 19 years younger than you.

- If you elect the Compound Option, your nonspouse annuity beneficiaries cannot be either more than exactly 19 years younger than you under the 75% Beneficiary Annuity, or more than exactly 10 years younger than you under the 100% Beneficiary Annuity.

These federal age restrictions also apply to registered domestic partners.
## Worksheets and Tables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Benefit Estimate Worksheet</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age Factor Tables</td>
<td>69–70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defined Benefit Supplement Period-Certain Annuity Estimates</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Option Worksheets</td>
<td>72–73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defined Benefit Supplement Annuity Estimates</td>
<td>74–75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service Retirement Option Factors</td>
<td>76–77</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Benefit Estimate Worksheet

Learn more about your benefits by attending a workshop to prepare for your retirement. If you still have questions, make an appointment to talk to a CalSTRS benefits specialist.

### Your Member-Only Benefit Estimate

You plan to retire at age _________

#### Step 1: Determine Service Credit and Age Factor

Service Credit  
(years of service) = _________

Age Factor  
(See Age Factor Table, next page. If applicable, include career factor.) = _________

#### Step 2: Determine Final Compensation

Enter your highest average annual compensation earnable for 36 consecutive months (or 12 consecutive months, if eligible for one-year final compensation). See “Final Compensation” on page 57.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Compensation Earnable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2012-2013</td>
<td>$48,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011-2012</td>
<td>$47,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010-2011</td>
<td>$45,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Compensation Earnable = $ _________

(if eligible, use one-year final compensation ÷ 36 months)

Monthly Final Compensation = $ _________

#### Step 3: Calculate Benefit

Service Credit = _________

x Age Factor  x _________

x Final Compensation  x _________

+ Longevity Bonus (if eligible)  + _________

Your Member-Only Monthly Benefit = $ _________

---

### Example

Mary is retiring at age 60 with 24.250 years of service.

#### Step 1: Determine Service Credit and Age Factor

Service Credit  
(years of service) = 24.250

Age Factor  
(based on Mary’s age at retirement, see Age Factor Table, next page) = 2%

#### Step 2: Determine Final Compensation

Mary’s highest 36 consecutive months of compensation earnable

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Compensation Earnable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2012-2013</td>
<td>$48,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011-2012</td>
<td>$47,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010-2011</td>
<td>$45,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Compensation Earnable = $140,000

Monthly Final Compensation = $3,888.89

#### Step 3: Calculate Benefit

Service Credit = 24.250

x Age Factor  x .02

x Final Compensation  x $3,888.89

+ Longevity Bonus (if eligible)  + 0

Mary’s Member-Only Monthly Benefit = $1,886.11
Age Factor Tables

The age factor is a percentage determined by your age in years and months on the last day of the month in which your retirement is effective.

For CalSTRS 2% at 60 members, the age factor equals 2 percent at age 60. From age 55 to 60, the factor is reduced by 0.01 (one one-hundredth) of a percent for each month or fraction of a month you’re under age 60. For example, if you’re age 55 and six months when you retire, your age factor is 1.46 percent. Between ages 60 and 63, the 2 percent age factor is increased by 0.033 of a percent for each quarter year of age you’re over age 60, up to a maximum age factor of 2.4 percent.

Career Factor

For 2% at 60 members, the age factor is increased by a career factor of 0.2 percent if you have 30 or more years of earned service credit on the day you retire. If you qualify for the 0.2 percent career factor, you reach the maximum age factor of 2.4 percent at age 61 and six months.

CalSTRS 2% at 62: There is no career factor benefit enhancement to the age factor.

Career Factor CalSTRS 2% at 60 Example

If you have 30 or more years of service credit, add 0.2 percent to the age factor on the table below. The maximum age factor with the career factor is 2.4 percent.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Without Career Factor</th>
<th>With Career Factor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>61 – 3 mos.</td>
<td>2.167%</td>
<td>2.367%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61 – 6 mos.</td>
<td>2.23%</td>
<td>2.400%*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Maximum age factor

Age Factor Table CalSTRS 2% at 60 (expressed as percentages)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Months</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>11</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>63</td>
<td>2.400</td>
<td>2.400</td>
<td>2.400</td>
<td>2.400</td>
<td>2.400</td>
<td>2.400</td>
<td>2.400</td>
<td>2.400</td>
<td>2.400</td>
<td>2.400</td>
<td>2.400</td>
<td>2.400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>62</td>
<td>2.267</td>
<td>2.267</td>
<td>2.267</td>
<td>2.300</td>
<td>2.300</td>
<td>2.300</td>
<td>2.333</td>
<td>2.333</td>
<td>2.333</td>
<td>2.367</td>
<td>2.367</td>
<td>2.367</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61</td>
<td>2.133</td>
<td>2.133</td>
<td>2.133</td>
<td>2.167</td>
<td>2.167</td>
<td>2.167</td>
<td>2.200</td>
<td>2.200</td>
<td>2.200</td>
<td>2.233</td>
<td>2.233</td>
<td>2.233</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60</td>
<td>2.000</td>
<td>2.000</td>
<td>2.000</td>
<td>2.033</td>
<td>2.033</td>
<td>2.033</td>
<td>2.067</td>
<td>2.067</td>
<td>2.067</td>
<td>2.100</td>
<td>2.100</td>
<td>2.100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>59</td>
<td>1.880</td>
<td>1.890</td>
<td>1.900</td>
<td>1.910</td>
<td>1.920</td>
<td>1.930</td>
<td>1.940</td>
<td>1.950</td>
<td>1.960</td>
<td>1.970</td>
<td>1.980</td>
<td>1.990</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>58</td>
<td>1.760</td>
<td>1.770</td>
<td>1.780</td>
<td>1.790</td>
<td>1.800</td>
<td>1.810</td>
<td>1.820</td>
<td>1.830</td>
<td>1.840</td>
<td>1.850</td>
<td>1.860</td>
<td>1.870</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>57</td>
<td>1.640</td>
<td>1.650</td>
<td>1.660</td>
<td>1.670</td>
<td>1.680</td>
<td>1.690</td>
<td>1.700</td>
<td>1.710</td>
<td>1.720</td>
<td>1.730</td>
<td>1.740</td>
<td>1.750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56</td>
<td>1.520</td>
<td>1.530</td>
<td>1.540</td>
<td>1.550</td>
<td>1.560</td>
<td>1.570</td>
<td>1.580</td>
<td>1.590</td>
<td>1.600</td>
<td>1.610</td>
<td>1.620</td>
<td>1.630</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55</td>
<td>1.400</td>
<td>1.410</td>
<td>1.420</td>
<td>1.430</td>
<td>1.440</td>
<td>1.450</td>
<td>1.460</td>
<td>1.470</td>
<td>1.480</td>
<td>1.490</td>
<td>1.500</td>
<td>1.510</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54</td>
<td>1.340</td>
<td>1.345</td>
<td>1.350</td>
<td>1.355</td>
<td>1.360</td>
<td>1.365</td>
<td>1.370</td>
<td>1.375</td>
<td>1.380</td>
<td>1.385</td>
<td>1.390</td>
<td>1.395</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53</td>
<td>1.280</td>
<td>1.285</td>
<td>1.290</td>
<td>1.295</td>
<td>1.300</td>
<td>1.305</td>
<td>1.310</td>
<td>1.315</td>
<td>1.320</td>
<td>1.325</td>
<td>1.330</td>
<td>1.335</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td>1.100</td>
<td>1.105</td>
<td>1.110</td>
<td>1.115</td>
<td>1.120</td>
<td>1.125</td>
<td>1.130</td>
<td>1.135</td>
<td>1.140</td>
<td>1.145</td>
<td>1.150</td>
<td>1.155</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: You must have 30 years of service credit to retire between the ages of 50 and 55.
**Age Factor Table CalSTRS 2% at 62 (expressed as percentages)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Months</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>11</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>65</td>
<td>2.400</td>
<td>2.400</td>
<td>2.400</td>
<td>2.400</td>
<td>2.400</td>
<td>2.400</td>
<td>2.400</td>
<td>2.400</td>
<td>2.400</td>
<td>2.400</td>
<td>2.400</td>
<td>2.400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>64</td>
<td>2.267</td>
<td>2.267</td>
<td>2.267</td>
<td>2.300</td>
<td>2.300</td>
<td>2.333</td>
<td>2.333</td>
<td>2.333</td>
<td>2.367</td>
<td>2.367</td>
<td>2.367</td>
<td>2.367</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>63</td>
<td>2.133</td>
<td>2.133</td>
<td>2.133</td>
<td>2.167</td>
<td>2.167</td>
<td>2.167</td>
<td>2.200</td>
<td>2.200</td>
<td>2.200</td>
<td>2.233</td>
<td>2.233</td>
<td>2.233</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>62</td>
<td>2.000</td>
<td>2.000</td>
<td>2.000</td>
<td>2.033</td>
<td>2.033</td>
<td>2.033</td>
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<td>2.067</td>
<td>2.067</td>
<td>2.100</td>
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<td>1.960</td>
<td>1.970</td>
<td>1.980</td>
<td>1.990</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60</td>
<td>1.760</td>
<td>1.770</td>
<td>1.780</td>
<td>1.790</td>
<td>1.800</td>
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<td>1.870</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>59</td>
<td>1.640</td>
<td>1.650</td>
<td>1.660</td>
<td>1.670</td>
<td>1.680</td>
<td>1.690</td>
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<td>1.710</td>
<td>1.720</td>
<td>1.730</td>
<td>1.740</td>
<td>1.750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>58</td>
<td>1.520</td>
<td>1.530</td>
<td>1.540</td>
<td>1.550</td>
<td>1.560</td>
<td>1.570</td>
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<td>1.590</td>
<td>1.600</td>
<td>1.610</td>
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<td>1.420</td>
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<td>1.440</td>
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<td>1.470</td>
<td>1.480</td>
<td>1.490</td>
<td>1.500</td>
<td>1.510</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56</td>
<td>1.280</td>
<td>1.290</td>
<td>1.300</td>
<td>1.310</td>
<td>1.320</td>
<td>1.330</td>
<td>1.340</td>
<td>1.350</td>
<td>1.360</td>
<td>1.370</td>
<td>1.380</td>
<td>1.390</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **CalSTRS 2% at 62**: The age factor is 2 percent at age 62. The maximum age factor is 2.4 percent at age 65. The age factor for early retirement at age 55 with five years of service credit is 1.16 percent.
**Defined Benefit Supplement Period-Certain Annuity Estimate**

This annuity provides a monthly annuity payable from three to 10 years. A Period-Certain Annuity of 3 to 9 years may be rolled over to another qualified plan each month.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Defined Benefit Supplement Account Balance</th>
<th>3 Year</th>
<th>4 Year</th>
<th>5 Year</th>
<th>6 Year</th>
<th>7 Year</th>
<th>8 Year</th>
<th>9 Year</th>
<th>10 Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$3,500</td>
<td>$108</td>
<td>$84</td>
<td>$69</td>
<td>$60</td>
<td>$53</td>
<td>$48</td>
<td>$44</td>
<td>$41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$5,000</td>
<td>$154</td>
<td>$120</td>
<td>$99</td>
<td>$85</td>
<td>$76</td>
<td>$68</td>
<td>$63</td>
<td>$58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$15,000</td>
<td>$462</td>
<td>$359</td>
<td>$297</td>
<td>$256</td>
<td>$227</td>
<td>$205</td>
<td>$188</td>
<td>$175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$25,000</td>
<td>$770</td>
<td>$598</td>
<td>$495</td>
<td>$427</td>
<td>$378</td>
<td>$342</td>
<td>$314</td>
<td>$292</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$40,000</td>
<td>$1,232</td>
<td>$957</td>
<td>$792</td>
<td>$683</td>
<td>$605</td>
<td>$547</td>
<td>$502</td>
<td>$467</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$45,000</td>
<td>$1,386</td>
<td>$1,076</td>
<td>$891</td>
<td>$768</td>
<td>$681</td>
<td>$615</td>
<td>$565</td>
<td>$525</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$50,000</td>
<td>$1,540</td>
<td>$1,196</td>
<td>$990</td>
<td>$853</td>
<td>$756</td>
<td>$684</td>
<td>$628</td>
<td>$584</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To estimate your monthly Period-Certain Annuity amount, divide your Defined Benefit Supplement account balance by the Period-Certain Annuity factor that corresponds to your elected time period:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Factor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3 years</td>
<td>32.4601</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 years</td>
<td>41.8067</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 years</td>
<td>50.5012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 years</td>
<td>58.5891</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 years</td>
<td>66.1128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 years</td>
<td>73.1115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 years</td>
<td>79.6220</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 years</td>
<td>85.6782</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Combination 3-Year Period-Certain Annuity and Lump-Sum Payment**

- Defined Benefit Supplement account balance: $30,000
- Lump-sum payment: ~$10,000
- Remaining balance: $20,000
- Period-Certain Annuity factor = 32.4601

**Calculation for annuity:**

\[ \text{Monthly annuity} = \frac{20,000 \times 32.4601}{6} = 616.14 \]
Option Worksheets
If you are considering an option, use these worksheets to estimate your own reduced retirement benefit, or Modified Benefit, using the Age Factor and Option Factor tables. You can also get a benefit estimate at CalSTRS.com/calculators.

These examples are based on factors taken from the Option Factor Tables later in this section and applied to the Member-Only Benefit calculated on page 66. Minor differences may occur when actual calculations are performed as your age and the age of your option beneficiary are based on the nearest quarter year of age.

100% Beneficiary Option
Under the 100% Beneficiary Option, upon your death, your option beneficiary will continue to receive the same reduced benefit you were receiving for your lifetime. If your option beneficiary predeceases you, your benefit will rise to the Member-Only amount.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Your Estimate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$1,886.11 (payable to you upon the death of your option beneficiary)</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>x Option Factor* .8937</td>
<td>$1,685 x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>= 100% Beneficiary Option Benefit to you or your option beneficiary</td>
<td>$1,685 $</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

75% Beneficiary Option
Under the 75% Beneficiary Option, upon your death, your option beneficiary will receive 75 percent of the reduced benefit you were receiving for your lifetime. If your option beneficiary predeceases you, your benefit will rise to the Member-Only amount.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Your Estimate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$1,886.11 (payable to you upon the death of your option beneficiary)</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>x Option Factor* .9258</td>
<td>$1,746.16 $</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75% to your option beneficiary</td>
<td>$1,309.62 $</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

50% Beneficiary Option
Under the 50% Beneficiary Option, upon your death, your option beneficiary will receive 50 percent of the reduced benefit you were receiving for your lifetime. If your option beneficiary predeceases you, your benefit will rise to the Member-Only amount.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Your Estimate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$1,886.11 (payable to you upon the death of your option beneficiary)</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>x Option Factor* .9517</td>
<td>$1,795.01 $</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50% to your option beneficiary</td>
<td>$897.50 $</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* To find the option factor, find your age, your option beneficiary’s age and option starting on page 74. Option factors are adjusted periodically.

Note: After retirement you may elect a new option and option beneficiary only under very limited circumstances. See pages 62–65.
### Compound Option Worksheet

Under the Compound Option, you will receive a reduced retirement benefit. When you die, your option beneficiaries will each receive a benefit as provided by the formula used depending on the option elected. You designate the percentage of your Member-Only Benefit to allot to each option beneficiary. You may elect two or more beneficiaries under the Compound Option, or you may elect one beneficiary and retain a portion as a Member-Only Benefit.

Following the example below, use the worksheet to estimate how much you and your option beneficiaries will receive if you elect this option.

Use additional worksheets if electing more than two option beneficiaries.

#### Compound Option Example

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Member</th>
<th>Beneficiary 1</th>
<th>Beneficiary 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Your Member-Only Benefit</td>
<td>$1,886.11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Percentages of Member-Only Benefit allotted as Member-Only to you (if any) and to each beneficiary</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Amount of Member-Only Benefit allotted to you and each beneficiary (multiply #1 by #2)</td>
<td>$754.44</td>
<td>$754.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Option selected for each beneficiary</td>
<td>50% Beneficiary Option</td>
<td>75% Beneficiary Option</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Age</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Option factor (using the Option Factor Tables, locate factor based on your age, your beneficiary's age and option)</td>
<td>.9517</td>
<td>.8726</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Reduced benefit to member (multiply amounts in #3, columns 2 and 3, by #6, columns 2 and 3, respectively)</td>
<td>$718</td>
<td>$329.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Benefit to each option beneficiary upon your death (multiply #7 by #4)</td>
<td>$359</td>
<td>$246.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Your reduced benefit (add amounts in #7 to column 1 of #3)</td>
<td>$754.44 + $718 + $329.16 = $1,801.60</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Compound Option Worksheet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Your Estimate</th>
<th>Member</th>
<th>Beneficiary 1</th>
<th>Beneficiary 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Your Member-Only Benefit</td>
<td>$</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Percentages of Member-Only Benefit allotted as Member-Only to you (if any) and to each beneficiary*</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Amount of Member-Only Benefit allotted to you and each beneficiary (multiply #1 by #2)</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Option selected for each beneficiary</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Age**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Option factor (using the Option Factor Tables, locate factor based on your age, your beneficiary's age and option)†</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Reduced benefit to member (multiply amounts in #3, columns 2 and 3, by #6, columns 2 and 3, respectively)</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Benefit to each option beneficiary upon your death (multiply #7 by #4)</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Your reduced benefit (add amounts in #7 to column 1 of #3)</td>
<td>$</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Percentages assigned to all option beneficiaries and the percentage, if any, retained as Member-Only must equal 100 percent.

**See page 62 for age restrictions for nonspouse option beneficiaries.

†To find the option factor, find your age, your option beneficiary's age and option election on pages 76–77.
### Defined Benefit Supplement Annuity Calculation Estimates

#### Member-Only Annuity

This provides a lifetime monthly payment. Any balance remaining upon your death will be paid to your one-time death benefit recipients.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Defined Benefit Supplement Account Balance</th>
<th>50</th>
<th>55</th>
<th>60</th>
<th>65</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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#### Defined Benefit Supplement 100% Beneficiary Annuity Estimate

This choice provides a monthly annuity payment for your lifetime and the lifetime of your annuity beneficiary. One hundred percent of your monthly annuity payment will be paid to your annuity beneficiary upon your death. If your beneficiary dies first, your payment will rise to the Member-Only annuity amount.

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*Note: The Defined Benefit Supplement annuity estimates above are not valid for CalSTRS disability benefit recipients. Option factors are adjusted periodically.*
### Defined Benefit Supplement 75% Beneficiary Annuity Estimate

This choice provides a monthly annuity payment for your lifetime and the lifetime of your annuity beneficiary. Seventy-five percent of your monthly annuity payment will be paid to your annuity beneficiary upon your death. If your beneficiary dies first, your payment will rise to the Member-Only annuity amount.

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### Defined Benefit Supplement 50% Beneficiary Annuity Estimate

This choice provides a monthly annuity payment for your lifetime and the lifetime of your annuity beneficiary. Fifty percent of your monthly annuity payment will be paid to your annuity beneficiary upon your death. If your beneficiary dies first, your payment will rise to the Member-Only annuity amount.

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Note: The Defined Benefit Supplement annuity estimates above are not valid for CalSTRS disability benefit recipients. Option factors are adjusted periodically.
### Service Retirement Option Factor Tables

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*Option factors are adjusted periodically.*
### Service Retirement Option Factor Tables

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*Option factors are adjusted periodically.*
Your CalSTRS Retirement Timeline

This timeline of events from the year before your retirement up to your first benefit payment will give you an idea of what to do and when. Your specific timeline, however, may differ.

- Activate your myCalSTRS account, if you haven’t already done so. Start at myCalSTRS.com and follow the five-step process. You can complete and submit your Service Retirement Application, sign up for direct deposit, update your address and more using myCalSTRS.

- Prepare for retirement early to avoid delays that may occur during the peak months of April–July.

- Register for a workshop or benefits planning session. Go to CalSTRS.com.

**Step 1**

**What to Do**
Activate your myCalSTRS account, if you haven’t already.

Plan and research your retirement decisions. Read the Your Retirement Guide booklet, available at CalSTRS.com.

Attend a CalSTRS retirement planning workshop or benefits planning session conducted by CalSTRS benefits specialists.

Check to see if pending or new legislation may affect your benefits or influence the timing of your retirement.

**When**
10–12 months before your retirement date.

**Step 2**

**What to Do**
Complete and submit your Service Retirement Application and other forms online using myCalSTRS. Step-by-step guidance helps you fill out the application accurately, resulting in faster processing.

Or complete the paper version, available at CalSTRS.com/forms.

**When**
No earlier than six months before your requested retirement date.

**Step 3**

**What to Do**
Check your email if you submitted your application on myCalSTRS. You’ll receive immediate email confirmation and emails if we need more information to process your application.

Review your award letter, which includes the amount of your monthly benefit, how your monthly benefit was calculated and the total amount of your contributions and interest.

Look for your first benefit payment.

**When**
Within 45 days of your retirement or the date your application is processed, whichever is later. Or sooner, if you apply using myCalSTRS.

The deadline to change or cancel your retirement application is 30 days after your first benefit payment is issued.

There could be changes in your monthly payment for several months beyond your retirement date as we receive and process additional information from your employer.
**Applying for Service Retirement**

Ready to retire? Complete and submit your *Service Retirement Application* and other forms online using *myCalSTRS*.

Get prepared ahead of time by reading the *Your Retirement Guide* booklet. When you sign your *Service Retirement Application*, you acknowledge that you have read the booklet.

**Complete and Submit Your Forms Online**

You must submit your *Service Retirement Application* to CalSTRS before you’ll receive a CalSTRS retirement benefit. You’re responsible for submitting the application to CalSTRS—not your employer. Complete and submit your *Service Retirement Application* online using *myCalSTRS*. It’s easy, fast and secure.

When you complete your application online using *myCalSTRS*:

- You’ll receive step-by-step guidance to complete your application correctly. Your member-specific information is auto-filled, saving you time.
- Your application is processed automatically, for a faster turnaround.
- You’ll receive immediate email confirmation when CalSTRS receives your application and after it has been processed.
- You’ll receive your award letter sooner.
- You’ll receive prompt emails if we need additional information to process your application.

Do not submit your *Service Retirement Application* to your employer. Your employer is not responsible for submitting your retirement application to CalSTRS—you are. You’ll need to notify your employer that you intend to retire from CalSTRS. You’ll also need to resign from your position. Be sure to complete any forms your employer requires. CalSTRS will not notify your employer of your retirement.

Also be sure to give your employer the *Express Benefit Report* form to complete and submit to CalSTRS after you complete section 1.

**Deadline for Service Retirement Application Changes**

You have 30 days from the date your first benefit payment was issued to make changes to or cancel your *Service Retirement Application*. This includes options elected at retirement and preretirement option elections. If you cancel your service retirement, you must return all benefit payments within 45 days of receiving your first benefit payment. Use the *Service Retirement Application Change Request* form (SR 1328), available at CalSTRS.com/forms, to make changes.
Applying for Service Retirement  
Member Handbook 2016

Planning Checklist
To help you plan for your CalSTRS retirement.

☐ Read the Your Retirement Guide and the retirement planning sections of the Member Handbook.

☐ Go online to myCalSTRS.com to activate your myCalSTRS account if you haven’t already, so you can complete and submit your application online for faster processing.

☐ Check to see if pending or new legislation may affect your benefits or influence the timing of your retirement. Sources include your legislative representative, your union representative and CalSTRS.com/legislation.

☐ Estimate your monthly benefit using the online calculator at CalSTRS.com/calculators or the benefit estimate worksheet in the Member Handbook.

☐ Attend a CalSTRS and Your Retirement benefits planning session. Go to CalSTRS.com/benefits-planning to learn more.

☐ Consider purchasing permissive service credit or redepositing service credit to increase your benefit if you did not do so earlier in your career. See the booklet, Purchase Additional Service Credit, at CalSTRS.com. If you’re in the process of purchasing service credit, call us at least 90 days before you plan to retire. You must complete your service credit purchase before your retirement date.

☐ Consider making a preretirement election of an option to provide a lifetime monthly benefit to someone if you should die before retirement. The Preretirement Election of an Option form is on myCalSTRS and at CalSTRS.com.

☐ Consider rolling over your Defined Benefit Supplement funds to CalSTRS Pension2. See page 39.

☐ Gather clear, unaltered photocopies of the following documents:

If you are electing an option beneficiary:

• Birth certificate or other acceptable verification of birth date, such as a birth record, state-issued ID, passport photo ID page or certain military IDs, for your option beneficiary.

• A copy of a marriage certificate or declaration of domestic partnership from the Secretary of State if you’re naming a spouse or partner.

• Marriage certificate or other proof of a name change, if your option beneficiary’s name is different from the name on his or her birth certificate.

If you elected an option beneficiary before retirement, you may need to submit the items in the first three bullets.

If a portion of your CalSTRS benefit was awarded to another party:

• A complete court-filed copy of your community property settlement documents. For more information, see the Community Property Guide at CalSTRS.com/publications.

☐ Notify your employer that you intend to retire and ask about forms your employer may require to resign from your position. Also let your employer know if you plan to set up a health insurance deduction from your benefit payments.

Give your employer the Express Benefit Report form after you complete section 1 to confirm your last day of employment and any unused sick leave.

☐ Submit your Service Retirement Application using myCalSTRS or the paper application at CalSTRS.com. You must submit the application to CalSTRS to receive a retirement benefit.
What to Expect From CalSTRS

After you submit your Service Retirement Application, you’ll receive:

- **Acknowledgment letter** We will typically process your application within three weeks and send you an acknowledgment letter. It may take longer during peak times, typically spring and summer, when we receive a large number of applications. Submit your application online for faster processing.

- **Initial award letter** We will send you a letter with your estimated monthly benefit.

- **Your retirement benefit** We will issue your first monthly benefit within 45 days after the effective date of retirement or the date your application is processed—whichever is later. You will receive your Defined Benefit Supplement distribution as a separate payment, whether you request a lump sum or a monthly annuity.

- **Adjustment letters** After your retirement date, your employer may send us information that could affect the amount of your benefit, including unused sick leave, a retirement incentive or additional salary information. These adjustments will be made effective as of your retirement date. When these changes occur, we will send you a letter detailing any changes. It takes approximately six months after your effective retirement date for us to receive and process all updates from your employer. If a retroactive amount is due, it will be paid shortly after an adjustment letter is mailed. If you were overpaid, we will deduct 5 percent from your monthly benefits until the overpayment is recovered.

  Adjustment letters also show the total amount of your contributions as a Defined Benefit member. Save the last letter to help determine your income tax liability.

Direct Deposit

Direct deposit gives you the quickest access to your benefit payment. For faster processing, sign up for direct deposit using your myCalSTRS account. Or complete the Direct Deposit Authorization form, available on CalSTRS.com. If you later change your bank or want to cancel your direct deposit authorization, you can update your instructions using myCalSTRS or by submitting a new form. To avoid delay in processing your payments, do not close your old account until your first payment is deposited into your new account.

When you sign up for direct deposit, you:

- Authorize CalSTRS to transmit any benefits by electronic funds transfer to your account in a U.S. financial institution.

- Certify that the entire payment amount is not ultimately deposited into a financial institution outside the U.S.

- Agree to receive benefit payment statements online using your myCalSTRS account.

You may view current and past benefit payment information using your myCalSTRS account. Online benefit payment information is convenient, secure and environmentally responsible. (Cash Balance Benefit annuity payment statements are only available by mail from the State Controller’s Office—they are not available on myCalSTRS.)

If you want to receive statements by mail, you can choose to receive them twice a year—in February, with tax table changes, and in October, with the annual benefit adjustment—or every month. Submit your request using myCalSTRS or the Direct Deposit Authorization form.

If your retirement date is not the first of the month, your first benefit payment will be prorated. In addition, if you are backdating your retirement, you’ll receive your prior months’ benefits in one payment.
How the Separation-from-Service Requirement and Annual Earnings Limit Work Together

If you return to CalSTRS-covered employment, including substitute teaching, in the California public school system as an employee, an independent contractor or an employee of a third party during the first 180 calendar days after your most recent retirement date, your retirement benefit will be reduced dollar for dollar by the amount you earn up to your benefit amount payable during that period. All Cash Balance Benefit annuitants also have the 180-day separation-from-service requirement.

Any amount you earn in a CalSTRS-covered position during the first 180 calendar days of retirement will also count against the annual postretirement earnings limit for the fiscal year.

Example

If you retired on June 30, 2015, with an annual benefit of $34,000 and returned to CalSTRS-covered work earning a total of $26,000 in the first 180 calendar days following your retirement date, your benefit would be reduced dollar for dollar up to your retirement benefit amount payable during that same period, which was approximately $17,000. CalSTRS collects the excess earnings by withholding all of your gross monthly retirement benefit until the entire amount owed is collected in full. If you continued to work in a CalSTRS-covered position for the remainder of the school year, and earned an additional $26,000 in compensation for a total of $52,000, your total earnings for the year also exceeded the 2015–16 annual postretirement earnings limit of $40,321 by $11,679. We will collect these excess earnings from you up to the amount of your annual retirement benefit of $34,000 minus the previous $17,000 reduction due to the separation-from-service requirement. In this case, all $11,679 would be collected in full.
After You Retire

In this section, you’ll learn what to expect after you retire from CalSTRS.

Annual Benefit Adjustment
Under state law, you’ll receive an automatic benefit increase equal to 2 percent of your initial benefit beginning September 1 after the first anniversary of your retirement. Your retirement date must be before September 1 to receive the annual benefit adjustment on September 1 of the next year.

The amount of your adjustment will appear in your October 1 payment. Adjustments are not compounded or tied to changes in the cost of living.

Purchasing Power Protection
Your retirement benefit has additional purchasing power protection. Purchasing power is a measurement of how your retirement benefit keeps pace with inflation. For example, if your benefit stays the same but prices double, your purchasing power is only 50 percent of what it originally was.

In addition to the annual benefit adjustment, one-year supplemental benefit payments, paid in quarterly installments, support your retirement benefit’s purchasing power. CalSTRS makes these payments to retired members and beneficiaries whose benefits have fallen below a certain level of purchasing power. Purchasing power protection level is currently set at 85 percent of your initial benefit (base allowance).

Working After Retirement Restrictions
If you return to work after service retirement in a CalSTRS-covered position, including substitute teaching, as an employee of a public school system, an independent contractor or an employee of a third party, there are restrictions under state and federal law that apply to you. You cannot:

- Work in a classified position except, under certain circumstances, as a teacher’s aide.
- Earn any pay without affecting your retirement benefit if you return to work before the 180-calendar day separation-from-service requirement.
- Earn more than the annual postretirement earnings limit without affecting your CalSTRS retirement benefit.

In addition, you cannot keep the additional service credit you received under the CalSTRS Retirement Incentive Program, if you take any job within five years of retirement with the employer that offered the incentive.
When you retire, you will be subject to the annual postretirement earnings limit as well as the separation-from-service requirement.

Retired Defined Benefit members cannot contribute to the Cash Balance Benefit Program. All earnings are subject to the postretirement earnings limit.

Separation-From-Service Requirement
The separation-from-service requirement, also known as the zero-dollar earnings limit, applies to all members who retire and return to work in a CalSTRS-covered position within the public school system as an employee, an independent contractor or an employee of a third party. Your retirement benefit will be reduced dollar for dollar by the amount that you earn in CalSTRS-covered employment, including employer contributions to tax-sheltered annuities and other tax-favored products, during the first 180 calendar days following your most recent retirement effective date, up to your benefit amount payable during that period.

There is a very narrow exemption from the separation-from-service requirement if you have reached normal retirement age, your appointment is required to fill a critically needed position, the governing body of your employer approved your appointment by resolution at a public meeting, you did not receive any financial inducement to retire, and your termination of service was not the cause of the need to acquire your services. Your employer must submit the required documentation to CalSTRS substantiating your eligibility for the exemption. CalSTRS must receive an exemption request and required documentation before you can begin working.

This requirement and narrow exemption also apply to Cash Balance Benefit participants who receive their retirement benefit as an annuity benefit. For Cash Balance Benefit participants who receive their retirement benefit as a lump-sum payment, their benefit payment will not be payable until 180 calendar days after the date they terminated employment (see page 36).

Postretirement Earnings Limit
If you return to work after meeting the separation-from-service requirement in a CalSTRS-covered position as an employee of a public school system, an independent contractor, or an employee of a third party, you can earn up to the annual postretirement earnings limit without affecting your benefit unless you qualify for a very narrow exemption or work for certain third-party employers under two conditions.

The earnings limit for 2015–16 is $40,321. The Teachers’ Retirement Board adjusts the earnings limit annually. If your earnings from CalSTRS-covered employment, including employer contributions to tax-sheltered annuities and other tax-favored products, exceed the postretirement earnings limit, CalSTRS will withhold all of your gross monthly retirement benefits—both your monthly retirement and Defined Benefit Supplement benefits—until we collect your excess earnings in full, up to the amount of your annual retirement benefit minus any previous reduction due to the zero-dollar earnings limit. For example, if you return to CalSTRS-covered work in the 2015–16 fiscal year and earn $50,000, you will have exceeded the earnings limit of $40,321 by $9,679. CalSTRS will withhold $9,679 from your benefit payments that year, if your annual retirement benefit is $9,679 or more.

Postretirement Earnings Limit Exemption
Under a narrow exemption, if you return to work as a trustee, fiscal expert, fiscal adviser, receiver or special trustee in a position appointed by the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, county superintendent of schools, State Board of Education or Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges to assist schools in financial or academic distress, you may be exempt from the postretirement earnings limit through June 30, 2017. You’re not eligible for an exemption if you received a retirement incentive in the previous six months.

The appointing authority must submit the required documentation to CalSTRS substantiating your eligibility for the exemption. CalSTRS must receive the exemption request and required documentation before you can begin working. It is your responsibility to contact your employer to verify the required documentation was submitted to CalSTRS. CalSTRS will inform you if you have been approved for an exemption.
Certain Third-Party Employees Exclusion
If you work for a third-party employer that does not participate in a California public pension system, you may be excluded from both earnings limits and other postretirement employment requirements if the activities performed are not normally performed by employees of a CalSTRS employer, and the activities are performed for 24 months or less.

Reinstating to Active Member Status
If you re-retire within one year of reinstating, you may not make changes to your retirement option or beneficiaries. If you re-retire after one year of reinstating, you may change or cancel your election before or at retirement, but your benefit will be subject to an assessment that may reduce your benefit for your lifetime. You may re-retire as early as one day after your reinstatement date.

You may choose to terminate retirement and reinstate to active membership at any time.

Reinstatement Process
If you plan to reinstate to active member status, make an appointment with a CalSTRS benefits specialist to discuss important considerations, including how your future benefits may be affected. You may also request an estimate of your future benefits by sending us a secure email using your myCalSTRS account or at CalSTRS.com/contact, or by writing to us (in your letter, include your full name, Client ID, address and telephone number). Tell us if you currently have an option or intend to elect an option before your subsequent retirement, how long you plan to be an active member again, and provide your estimated salary.

To reinstate to active membership, submit the Reinstatement After Retirement form, available at CalSTRS.com/forms. Your reinstatement date can be no earlier than the first day of the month in which CalSTRS receives your form. We must receive your Reinstatement After Retirement form no earlier than six months before your requested reinstatement date and no later than the last day of the month in which your reinstatement becomes effective. After we receive your request, your retirement and monthly benefit will end as of the effective date of your reinstatement. The deadline to cancel a reinstatement is the last day of the month in which the reinstatement is effective.

Other Important Considerations
If you’re thinking about reinstatement, consider:

- **Disability and survivor benefits:** You must earn at least one year of service credit after the date of your reinstatement from service retirement before you qualify for disability or survivor benefits.

- **Retirement incentive:** If you retired on or after January 1, 1985, and reinstate, you’ll lose any additional service credit you may have acquired by participating in the Retirement Incentive Program.

- **Preretirement election of an option:** You are not eligible to file a preretirement election of an option until one year has elapsed after the date of reinstatement from service retirement. However, if you retired with an option, that option will automatically become a preretirement election when you reinstate.
• **Coverage A or B:** For most members, if you retire and then reinstate, you will maintain the coverage you had prior to your retirement. Under certain circumstances, if you retired under Coverage A, your coverage may change to Coverage B for survivor and disability benefits: If you retired before January 1, 1996, you’ll be under Coverage B when you reinstate; if you retired on or after January 1, 1996, you’ll be under Coverage A. You must earn at least one year of service credit after reinstatement before you qualify for disability and survivor benefits. Contact CalSTRS for further information regarding your specific situation.

• **Separation-from-service requirement:** You’ll be subject to the separation-from-service requirement during the first 180 calendar days of your most recent retirement.

• **Discontinuing deductions for health insurance premiums:** If CalSTRS is deducting health insurance premiums from your benefit and you decide to reinstate, you’ll need to make premium payment arrangements with your health insurance carrier.

• **Discontinuing payment or deduction of Medicare premiums:** If CalSTRS is paying your Medicare Part A premiums or deducting your Medicare Part B premiums, you’ll have to pay these premiums yourself when you reinstate. To arrange payment, contact the Social Security Administration at 800-772-1213. When you retire again, you’ll need to reapply for the CalSTRS Medicare Premium Payment Program. Currently CalSTRS is not offering the program to members with retirement effective dates on or after July 1, 2012. Your most recent retirement date is used to determine eligibility.

See also “CalSTRS Medicare Premium Payment Program,” page 51.

### How Your Benefit Will Be Calculated If You Reinstatement

#### Reinstatement for Fewer Than Two Years
If you service retire with fewer than two years of new service credit since your most recent reinstatement, your new service retirement benefit will be equal to the sum of both the following:

• An amount equal to the monthly benefit you were eligible to receive immediately before reinstatement, increased by the 2 percent annual benefit adjustment that would have been applied to the benefit if you had not reinstated.

• An amount based on service credit earned since your last reinstatement, your age at the subsequent retirement, and your final compensation.

• For CalSTRS 2% at 60 members: If your total service credit is 30 or more years, you may be eligible for the career factor on the service credit earned following reinstatement. If you retired with 30 years of service credit on or before December 31, 2010, and reinstate, you may be eligible for the longevity bonus upon subsequent retirement.

  **CalSTRS 2% at 62:** You’re not eligible for the career factor enhancement.

#### Reinstatement for Two Years or More
If you service retire with two or more years of service credit after your most recent reinstatement, your monthly benefit will be equal to the total of:

• An amount based on the service credit you earned before your last retirement, an adjusted age factor and your highest final compensation.

• An amount based on the service credit you earned since your last reinstatement, your age at subsequent retirement, and your highest final compensation.
Your Survivor Benefits

The Defined Benefit Program may provide benefits to your survivors whether your death occurs before or after retirement. There are two types of coverage: Coverage A (family allowance) and Coverage B (survivor benefit).

If you should die while on military leave, survivor and death benefits will be paid on your behalf as if you had continued accruing CalSTRS service credit.

One-Time Death Benefit

When you die, a one-time death benefit is payable to your designated recipient if eligibility requirements are met. The one-time death benefit amount varies depending on whether you have disability and survivor benefits under Coverage A or B and whether you die while working or after retirement.

The one-time death benefit is a separate designation from the election of an option beneficiary. Your option beneficiary receives a monthly lifetime benefit when you die, while your one-time death benefit recipient receives a one-time, lump-sum payment after your death.

You may name one or more recipients for the one-time death benefit—a person, trust, charity, estate, parochial institution, corporation or public entity. If you do not have a one-time death benefit recipient in effect on the date of your death, the one-time death benefit will be paid to your estate.

The one-time death benefit will be paid to your one-time death benefit recipient if you:

- Were receiving a service retirement benefit at the time of death.
- Were receiving or were eligible to receive a disability benefit at the time of death.
- Had at least one year of service credit and died while performing creditable service or within certain time frames:
  - Within four months of terminating CalSTRS-covered employment.
  - Within other specific timeframes discussed in the following pages, depending upon your survivor benefits under Coverage A or B.
  - Within 12 months of the last day of paid CalSTRS-covered service, if on an approved leave of absence without compensation for reasons other than disability or military service.
- Die while performing military service if you otherwise would have been eligible for benefits had you continued working and accruing service credit under CalSTRS.

If you took a refund, any one-time death benefit recipient you had previously named will be automatically canceled. If you return to CalSTRS membership after taking a refund and name a one-time death benefit recipient, the benefit can be paid only if you have subsequently earned or accumulated one year of service credit.

Coverage A or Coverage B

If you became a CalSTRS member after October 15, 1992, your survivors are protected under the Coverage B. If you were a CalSTRS member on or before that date, you remain under Coverage A unless you elected Coverage B before April 1993.

Check your myCalSTRS account or your Retirement Progress Report for your coverage.

The one-time death benefit and survivor benefit are taxable.
If you die before retirement while performing creditable service or if you are receiving a disability benefit at the time of death, your survivors may be eligible for a monthly benefit. If your survivors are not eligible for a monthly benefit and there is no option election in effect, CalSTRS will distribute any contributions and interest in your account to your estate.

If you have less than one year of service credit, your one-time benefit recipient will receive a refund of your accumulated Defined Benefit member contributions and a distribution of the total balance in your Defined Benefit Supplement account. Your Retirement Progress Report lists your one-time death benefit recipient if you designated one.

Designate your one-time death benefit recipient using your myCalSTRS account or the Recipient Designation form, available at CalSTRS.com.

**Marriage Dissolution or Domestic Partner Termination May Affect Designation**

If the dissolution judgment or termination and your death occur after January 1, 2002, the one-time death benefit recipient designation of your former spouse or partner is invalid. If you choose to have your former spouse or partner as your one-time death benefit recipient, you must submit a new Recipient Designation form.

**Refund of Account Invalidates Your Designation**

If you refund your account and then later reinstate to CalSTRS membership, your previous one-time death benefit recipient designation will be invalid. If you wish to designate someone to receive your death benefit, you must submit a new form.

**Reporting a Death**

Contact CalSTRS as soon as possible to notify us of the death of a member, option beneficiary or benefit recipient so we can update the account. In addition, be sure your survivors know that they must notify us in the event of your death. You can report a death online at CalSTRS.com/contactus (select Notification of Death).

We will need the following information:

- Deceased person’s name and Social Security number or Client ID.
- Date of death.
- Name, address and telephone number of a contact person.

**Survivor Benefit Processing**

After we learn of a member, benefit recipient or option beneficiary’s death, we will assign a caseworker who will contact beneficiaries by letter. The letter includes the caseworker’s name, telephone number and other important information.

To process an application for benefits, CalSTRS must receive a copy of the certified death certificate and any additional information or documentation requested. Any CalSTRS payment issued to the deceased benefit recipient after the date of death must be returned to us.

**Payment of Benefits**

CalSTRS generally pays benefits to beneficiaries or your estate within 45 days of receiving all of the requested information. Payment may be delayed for a variety of reasons, including if we do not:

- Receive required documentation, such as certified marriage or death certificate.
Have a current Recipient Designation form (or the One-Time Death Benefit Recipient form) on file that identifies the name and address of your recipients.

Any payments issued to benefit recipients after their death are due back to CalSTRS and will be deducted from benefits paid to the beneficiaries or estate if they are not returned.

If you have no surviving spouse or partner, eligible dependent children or dependent parents—and you did not elect a beneficiary option—any remaining Defined Benefit contributions and interest in your account will be paid to your one-time death benefit recipient. If you did not name a one-time death benefit recipient, CalSTRS will make the payment to your estate.

Coverage A Survivor Benefits—If You Die Before Retirement

One-Time Death Benefit
Under Coverage A, if you die before retirement and while performing creditable service, CalSTRS pays a one-time death benefit to your designated recipient. The benefit amount through June 30, 2016, is $6,163. This amount is adjusted periodically by the Teachers' Retirement Board. If you name more than one recipient, the payment is divided equally, unless you specify other percentages of distribution. If you do not name a one-time death benefit recipient, CalSTRS will make the payment to your estate.

For CalSTRS to pay this benefit, you must have earned at least one year of service credit and your death must have occurred during one of the following periods:

• While performing creditable service or receiving a disability benefit.
• Within four months after you terminated employment or last earned creditable service.
• Within four months after you terminated a disability benefit if no service was performed after the termination.
• Within 12 months of the last day for which compensation was paid, if you were on an approved leave of absence without compensation for reasons other than disability or military service.

If you worked part time, your death must have occurred within four months after ending employment or earning service credit.

If you took a refund, any one-time death benefit recipient you had previously named will be automatically canceled. If you return to CalSTRS membership after taking a refund and name a one-time death benefit recipient, the benefit can be paid only if you have subsequently earned or accumulated one year of service credit.

Coverage A Survivor Benefit
For your survivors to be eligible for the Coverage A monthly survivor benefit (family allowance), you must have met the same eligibility requirements as those for the one-time death benefit described earlier and you:

• Cannot have a preretirement election of an option in effect.
• Must have earned at least one year of CalSTRS service credit since reinstatement from service retirement, if applicable.
• Must have earned at least one-half year of service credit after a break in service of more than one year, if applicable.
Under Coverage A, a monthly survivor benefit is payable to:

1. **Your surviving spouse or registered domestic partner with eligible dependent children**

   A child is an eligible dependent if he or she is all of the following:
   
   - Your natural child, adopted child or stepchild and not adopted by anyone other than your spouse or partner.
   - Born no later than 10 months after the date of your death.
   - Under age 22.
   - Unmarried or unregistered as a domestic partner at the time of your death.
   - Financially dependent on you on the date of your death or on the effective date of your disability, if you died while receiving a disability benefit.

   Your surviving spouse or registered domestic partner will receive 40 percent of your final compensation and 10 percent of your final compensation for each eligible dependent child up to 50 percent for five or more children. The maximum family benefit is 90 percent of your final compensation. The benefit will be paid as long as your eligible dependent child is under age 22 and is neither married nor a registered domestic partner.

   See the Coverage A survivor benefit example on the next page.

2. **Your eligible dependent children, but no surviving spouse or registered domestic partner**

   If you have eligible dependent children, but no surviving spouse or partner, each child is eligible to receive 10 percent of your final compensation, up to 50 percent. If you have more than five eligible children, they will share equally in the total 50 percent of your final compensation. Benefits to each eligible dependent child end on the day before each child reaches age 22, marries or registers as a domestic partner, or dies.

   When all of your children are no longer eligible for a benefit, any remaining contributions and interest, less all monthly benefits paid, will be paid to your one-time death benefit recipient. If you did not name a recipient, CalSTRS will make the payment to your estate.

3. **Your surviving spouse or partner with no eligible dependent children**

   If you have no eligible dependent children, or when your last child is no longer eligible, your surviving spouse or registered domestic partner may elect to receive either:
   
   - A return of your accumulated Defined Benefit contributions and interest at the time of your death, less all monthly benefits paid.
   
   OR
   
   - A monthly benefit payable for his or her lifetime. The benefit calculation is based on a factor using your and your spouse’s or partner’s birth dates, the projected service credit and final compensation you would have accrued if you had lived to retire at age 60, and the service credit for your unused sick leave. Your spouse or partner is eligible for 50 percent of your benefit based on these factors when he or she reaches age 60. Your spouse or partner may choose to receive the benefit sooner at an actuarially reduced rate. Neither the longevity bonus nor career factor is part of the calculation for monthly coverage at normal retirement age because your death occurred before retirement.

   See also “Your Retirement Benefit,” page 55.
4. Your dependent parents, but no surviving spouse or partner and no eligible dependent children
Your dependent parents may receive a benefit if you have no surviving spouse or registered domestic partner, or eligible children. Your parents, or parent, will be paid a monthly payment for life beginning at normal retirement age. If they are under normal retirement age, they may elect to receive an actuarially reduced benefit for life.

5. No surviving spouse or partner, eligible dependent children or dependent parents
If you have no eligible survivors and no preretirement election of an option, CalSTRS will distribute your accumulated Defined Benefit contributions and interest at the time of your death, less all monthly benefits paid. If we do not have a Recipient Designation form on file, this distribution will be made to your estate.

Coverage A Survivor Benefit Example
Rob dies at age 40. His survivors include his wife, Linda, and three eligible dependent children. His final compensation is $3,220.

Linda will receive a monthly survivor benefit (family allowance) of $1,754 as long as her children are eligible. As each child becomes ineligible, that child’s increment will no longer be included in the basic benefit. In addition, an annual benefit adjustment increase of 2 percent of the basic benefit will be added to the monthly payment each September, beginning a year after Rob’s death.

When her youngest child reaches age 22 or is no longer eligible, Linda can choose one of these three options:

• Take the remaining Defined Benefit contributions and interest in Rob’s account, less all previously paid benefits.
• Receive the surviving spouse/registered domestic partner benefit payable for her lifetime once she reaches age 60. She will receive a monthly payment of $1,353.85, based on Rob’s projected service credit and projected final compensation.
• Receive a reduced surviving spouse/registered domestic partner benefit for her lifetime before normal retirement age, based on her age at that time.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coverage A Survivor Benefit Example</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Member: Rob, age 40</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse: Linda, age 40</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children: Mike, 15; Robert, 10; and Sandy, 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service Credit: 10 years</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Compensation</td>
<td>$3,220</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Spouse’s benefit</td>
<td>40% x $3,220 = $1,288</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Children’s increment</td>
<td>3 x 10% x $3,220 + $966</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coverage A survivor benefit with eligible children</td>
<td>(a+b) = $2,254</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less Social Security offset</td>
<td>- $500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monthly CalSTRS survivor benefit to Linda</td>
<td>= $1,754</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A survivor benefit is not an option beneficiary payment. Only a member can elect an option.
Coverage B Survivor Benefits—If You Die Before Retirement

One-Time Death Benefit

Under Coverage B, if you die before retirement and while performing creditable service, CalSTRS pays a one-time death benefit to your designated recipient. The one-time death benefit is $24,652. This amount is adjusted periodically by the Teachers’ Retirement Board. If you name more than one recipient, the payment is divided equally, unless you specified other percentages of distribution. If you do not name a one-time death benefit recipient, CalSTRS will make the payment to your estate.

For CalSTRS to pay this benefit, you must have earned at least one year of service credit, and your death must have occurred during one of the following periods:

- While performing creditable service.
- Within four months after you terminated employment or last earned creditable service.
- Within 12 months of the last day for which creditable compensation was paid, if you were on an approved leave of absence without compensation for reasons other than disability or military service.

If you worked part time, your death must have occurred within four months after you ended employment or earned service credit.

In addition, if you had taken a refund of contributions or had reinstated after retirement:

- You must have earned at least one year of service credit after your refund or reinstatement.

OR

- Six months must have elapsed since your reinstatement from disability retirement.

Coverage B Survivor Benefit

For your survivors to be eligible for a monthly survivor benefit, you must have met the same eligibility requirements as those for the one-time death benefit and you:

- Cannot have made a preretirement election of an option.
- Must have earned at least six months of service credit if you had a break in service of more than one year.
- Must have died within four months if you reinstated from a disability retirement.

Under Coverage B, a monthly survivor benefit may be paid to:

1. Your surviving spouse or registered domestic partner

Your surviving spouse or partner has the choice of receiving either a monthly benefit for his or her lifetime or a return of your Defined Benefit contributions and interest, whether or not you have eligible dependent children. Your surviving spouse or registered domestic partner can begin receiving a survivor benefit either:

- Immediately as of the date of your death. The benefit is actuarially reduced if you were under normal retirement age at the time of death.

OR

- When you would have reached normal retirement age.
The monthly benefit is calculated using your actual service credit and actual final compensation at the time of your death. If you die on or before normal retirement age, your age and your spouse’s or partner’s age as of the date you would have reached normal retirement age are used in the calculation. The benefit your spouse or partner would receive would be one-half of the modified survivor benefit.

If you die after reaching normal retirement age, your age and your spouse’s or partner’s age as of the date of death will be used in the calculation. The survivor benefit calculation will also include service credit for your unused sick leave.

Neither the longevity bonus nor the career factor is part of the calculation for a monthly Coverage B survivor benefit because your death occurred before retirement.

See “Your Retirement Benefit,” page 55.

2. Your eligible dependent children

If you have eligible dependent children and your spouse or partner decides to take a monthly survivor benefit, each child will also receive a monthly benefit. The payment goes to the parent until the children are age 18, when they can request the payment be made to them.

If you have no surviving spouse or partner, but have eligible dependent children, each child will be eligible to receive a monthly benefit.

A benefit is not payable to your eligible dependent children if your surviving spouse or partner decides to receive a return of your Defined Benefit contributions and interest.

Your child is eligible if he or she is all of the following:

- Your natural or adopted child or stepchild and not adopted by anyone other than your spouse or partner.
- Born no later than 10 months after the date of your death.
- Under age 21.
- Financially dependent on you at the time of your death.

Each child’s benefit is 10 percent of your final compensation, up to 50 percent for five or more children.

Your child’s monthly survivor benefit begins on the day following the date of your death, even if your spouse elects to wait to receive a monthly survivor benefit until you would have reached normal retirement age. The benefit is payable until the day before your eligible dependent child reaches age 21 or dies, whichever occurs first, even if your spouse elects to wait to receive a monthly survivor benefit until you would have reached normal retirement age.

If your surviving spouse or partner dies before your eligible dependent children become ineligible, each eligible child will still be paid a monthly benefit until the day before he or she is age 21 or dies, whichever occurs first. Once your children are no longer eligible for a benefit, any remaining Defined Benefit contributions and interest, less all monthly benefits paid, will be paid to your one-time death benefit recipient. If you did not name a recipient, CalSTRS must make the payment to your estate.

3. Your eligible dependent children, but no surviving spouse or registered domestic partner

If you have dependent children, but no surviving spouse or registered domestic partner, each child is eligible for 10 percent of your final compensation, up to 50 percent. If you have more than five eligible dependent children, they will share equally in the total 50 percent of final compensation. Benefits end on the day before your child reaches age 21 or dies, whichever occurs first.
Coverage B
Defined Benefit Supplement Distribution

If you die before retirement, your one-time death benefit recipient will receive a benefit based on the balance in your Defined Benefit Supplement account. If you have $3,500 or more for each designated recipient, each will have a choice of a lump-sum payment or a period-certain annuity.

If you die after retirement, you will have already made your Defined Benefit Supplement election. An ongoing monthly annuity might be paid depending on your election at retirement.

When all of your children are no longer eligible for a benefit, any remaining Defined Benefit contributions and interest, less all monthly benefits paid, will be paid to your one-time death benefit recipient. If you did not name a recipient, CalSTRS will make the payment to your estate.

4. If you have no surviving spouse, registered domestic partner or eligible dependent children

No monthly benefit is payable to your survivors if you have no surviving spouse or registered domestic partner, or eligible dependent children. If you don’t have a valid preretirement election of an option, your Defined Benefit contributions and interest will be paid to your one-time death benefit recipient. If you did not name a recipient, CalSTRS will make the payment to your estate.

Coverage B Survivor Benefit Example

Sharon dies at age 40. Her survivors include a spouse, David, and three children eligible for benefits. Her final compensation is $3,220.

David’s choices: David can choose the monthly surviving spouse benefit or he can choose to take a refund of Sharon’s Defined Benefit contributions and interest. However, if he does not elect the monthly survivor benefit, their children are not entitled to a monthly benefit.

If David elects the survivor benefit, he will immediately receive 10 percent of final compensation for each child ($322 each) as of the date of Sharon’s death, until each eligible dependent child reaches age 21. These payments will go to David until his children reach age 18, when the payments will go directly to them.

The surviving spouse benefit is calculated based on the amount of service credit at death, as if Sharon had lived to normal retirement age and had retired naming her spouse as a 50% Option Beneficiary, which provides half of the modified retirement benefit.

David can choose to defer his monthly spouse’s survivor benefit until Sharon would have reached normal retirement age and receive the full benefit, or start the benefit as of the date of her death and receive a reduced benefit.

Defers Survivor Benefit

If David chooses to defer receiving his surviving spouse benefit, their children will receive the following benefit immediately as of the date of Sharon’s death:

\[
\text{10\% of final compensation for each child: } \ 322 \times 3 \text{ children} = 966
\]

David would receive no surviving spouse benefit until Sharon would have reached normal retirement age, which would be in 20 years. He would then receive a spouse benefit of $306.45 for the rest of his life. See the calculation on the next page.
If David elects to take his surviving spouse benefit immediately, the family will receive the following survivor benefit:

- **David’s reduced spouse benefit (see the next calculation)** = $53.48
- **$306.45 x .1745 (age 40 50% Beneficiary Option age factor)** = $53.48
- **10% of final compensation for each child ($322 x 3 children)** = $966
- **Total** = $1,019.48

Each dependent child’s benefit will stop when he or she reaches age 21. After David’s last child is no longer eligible, he will continue to receive his spouse’s benefit, $53.48 a month, for his lifetime. In addition, an annual benefit adjustment increase of 2 percent of the basic benefit will be added each September, beginning a year after Sharon’s death.

Here are the choices David must make for the spouse’s monthly benefit:

### Survivor Benefit Example

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coverage B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Member:</strong> Sharon, age 40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Spouse:</strong> David, age 40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Children:</strong> Joe, 12; Sam, 9; and Jake, 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Service Credit:</strong> 10 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Final Compensation:</strong> $3,220</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sharon’s Member-Only Benefit, as if she were normal retirement age

\[
2\% \times 10 \text{ years of service credit} \times $3,220 = $644.00
\]

Reduced benefit, based on option factor of .9517

\[
(\text{member and spouse normal retirement age})
\]

\[
0.9517 \times $644 = $612.89
\]

David would receive, when Sharon would have reached normal retirement age, one-half of Sharon’s reduced benefit

\[
$612.89 \div 2 = $306.45
\]

David could begin receiving, as of the date of Sharon’s death, actuarially reduced,

\[
$306.45 \times .1745 = $53.48
\]
Coverage A and B—When You Die After Retirement

One-Time Death Benefit
If you die after retirement, the one-time death benefit is the same under both Coverage A and Coverage B. CalSTRS pays a one-time death benefit to your named recipients if you’re a retired member. The current one-time death benefit is $6,163. The amount may be adjusted periodically by the Teachers’ Retirement Board. If you name more than one recipient, the benefit is divided equally, unless you specified other percentages of distribution. If you did not name a one-time death benefit recipient, CalSTRS will make the payment to your estate.

Monthly Benefit With an Option
Once you have retired, no monthly benefit is payable to your survivors unless you elected an option beneficiary for your retirement benefit. No one may elect an option for you after your death. If you elected an option, your option beneficiary will receive the monthly benefit payable under the option you elected. If you didn’t elect an option, you would have been receiving the Member-Only monthly benefit.

The option beneficiary you designated to receive a monthly Defined Benefit and Defined Benefit Supplement payment after your death may name their own beneficiary to receive any remaining accrued balance after their death.

Monthly Benefit Without an Option
If you elected the Member-Only Benefit for your Defined Benefit pension, you’ll receive it for your lifetime. No continuing monthly benefit will be payable after your death.

Your one-time death benefit recipient, however, will receive the monthly retirement benefit that accrued but was not paid during the month of your death, plus any contributions and interest in your Defined Benefit account not already paid to you in benefit payments.

In addition, your one-time death benefit recipient will receive any contributions and interest in your Defined Benefit Supplement account not already paid to you in benefit payments. If you elected a Member-Only Annuity for your Defined Benefit Supplement distribution, your one-time death benefit recipient will receive the monthly annuity payment that accrued but was not paid during the month you died.

Member Death After Retirement Example

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Member-Only Benefit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Elaine had been retired for 10 years at the time of her death on the 15th of the month. Elaine’s monthly benefit was $950. She had $35,000 in contributions and interest at the time of retirement and received $115,000 in retirement benefits before her death.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The amount payable to Elaine’s recipient would be calculated as follows:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contribution and interest balance at retirement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less retirement benefit paid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remaining contributions and interest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accrued monthly benefit during the month of death (½ month x $950)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current one-time death benefit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Payable</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Your Disability Benefits

As a member of the Defined Benefit Program, you have disability protection under one of the CalSTRS disability benefit programs: Coverage A (disability allowance) or Coverage B (disability retirement). Find your coverage on your Retirement Progress Report.

You may be eligible for a disability benefit if you meet:

- The eligibility requirements, including age, service credit and timelines for application and medical documentation.
- The definition of disabled as established for CalSTRS in the California Education Code and have a medically determined physical or mental impairment that is permanent or expected to last at least 12 continuous months. The impairment must prevent you from performing:
  - Your usual duties with or without reasonable modification from your employer.
  - Duties of a comparable level to your usual duties, which you are qualified for or can become qualified for in a reasonable period of time with education, training or experience.
  - Employment at a comparable level at which you can earn at least 66 2/3 percent of your final compensation.

If you were disabled while on active military duty and are unable to return to CalSTRS-covered employment, you may apply for a CalSTRS disability benefit if you meet the other eligibility requirements.

You can apply for service retirement and disability at the same time if you are otherwise eligible to service retire. This will enable you to receive a monthly retirement income while your disability application is being evaluated.

You’ll find the Disability Benefits Application in Your Disability Benefits Guide at CalSTRS.com/publications.

Applying for a Disability Benefit

If you’re considering applying for a disability benefit, learn about your choices and important considerations. For instance:

- If you return to work and later retire, your benefit will be calculated differently than if you had not received a disability benefit.
- If you’re age 55 or older and have 25 years or more of service credit, you may want to consider a service retirement instead of a disability benefit.

A benefits specialist can help you make an informed decision. When scheduling an interview, let the scheduling coordinator know you wish to discuss a disability application.

You should apply for a disability benefit before you exhaust the other benefits available to you.
Steps in the Disability Application Process

Before beginning the disability application process, talk with a CalSTRS benefits specialist. However, if you cannot talk with a specialist right away or if you prefer not to talk to a benefits specialist, do not delay submitting your application. The date CalSTRS receives your application can affect your eligibility, the effective date of your benefit, or both. You may talk to a benefits specialist any time during the application process.

Steps in the application process include:

1. Request the Your Disability Benefits Guide booklet, which includes the Disability Benefits Application or find the booklet and application online at CalSTRS.com.

2. Submit your completed application and any pertinent documents to CalSTRS in person, by fax or by mail. The date CalSTRS receives your application may establish your benefit effective date. If approved, your disability benefit will go into effect on whichever date occurs later:
   - The first day of the month CalSTRS receives your completed application.
   - The day after your last day of compensation, including sick leave and subdifferential pay.

3. CalSTRS receives and acknowledges receiving your disability application.

4. CalSTRS reviews your application and eligibility and mails you requests for medical and other required documents.

5. CalSTRS receives your information and sends follow-up requests for missing or additional documents.

6. CalSTRS verifies the employment information you provided in your completed application.

7. CalSTRS notifies you if an independent medical examination or an independent vocational evaluation must be scheduled.

8. CalSTRS reviews all the information submitted and determines if you qualify for a disability benefit.

9. CalSTRS sends you written notification when we reach a decision on your application.
Reasonable Accommodation

Sometimes modifications in your work environment can enable you to continue working. Making such adjustments is known as reasonable accommodation. Federal and state laws require employers to make reasonable accommodations for employees. CalSTRS may require you to request reasonable accommodation from your employer as a condition for receiving a disability benefit.

If you have questions about reasonable accommodation, contact your school district.

When to Apply

You can submit the Disability Benefits Application while you’re working or receiving sick leave or subdifferential pay from your employer. Your disability benefit effective date cannot be earlier than the first day of the month CalSTRS receives your application, but it must be later than the last day of service for which you receive compensation.

You should apply for a disability benefit before you exhaust other benefits available to you.

You can submit an application if you’re not working if you meet one of the following conditions:

- You apply within four months of terminating your CalSTRS-covered employment, or you may be eligible to apply more than four months after termination if your termination was due to a change of position and subsequent election of membership in the California Public Employees’ Retirement System and you’re not yet vested in CalPERS.

- You apply within four months of your last day of actual performance of service if you’re on a personal leave of absence.

- You apply within 12 months of your last day of actual performance of service if you’re on an employer-approved leave to study at an approved college or university.

- You have been physically or mentally incapacitated from performing service, and the incapacity has been continuous from your last day of actual performance of service.

For more information, visit CalSTRS.com or contact CalSTRS to request a disability session with a benefits specialist. Conservators, guardians or others caring for a physically or mentally incapacitated CalSTRS member are also encouraged to contact us to determine if the member qualifies for disability benefits.

The Application Review Process

Processing times vary depending on individual cases. To avoid processing delays, submit a complete and properly signed application. You’ll need to provide additional information such as medical records, hospital reports and employer-related information. You are responsible for submitting the medical documents and paying any fees charged for providing information to us.

If additional medical information is necessary, CalSTRS may schedule an independent medical examination. We will notify you if this is necessary and pay for the examination and any reasonable related costs.
Independent Vocational Evaluation

An independent vocational evaluation may be required to determine if you can perform your essential core duties at a comparable level. Duties of a comparable level are defined as any job you may be qualified to perform that will provide earnings of 66⅔ percent or more of your indexed final compensation.

The independent vocational evaluation usually begins with an interview with a vocational consultant. The consultant will discuss your job history and residual functional capabilities and limitations. Your employer may be interviewed to determine if your job can be modified and to see if reasonable accommodation would allow you to continue working.

Notification

CalSTRS will notify you in writing after we reach a decision on your disability application.

Service Retirement During Evaluation of a Disability Application

If you’re eligible to retire from service, you may wish to receive a service retirement benefit while your application for disability benefits is being evaluated. To learn more, visit CalSTRS.com or contact us for the booklet, Your Disability Benefits Guide, which includes the Disability Benefits Application and important considerations.

If your application for disability is approved, your service retirement benefit will be canceled and retroactively converted to a disability benefit.

Important Things to Consider

Before you apply for a service retirement benefit while your disability benefit application is being evaluated, consider the following:

- CalSTRS may require you to request a reasonable accommodation from your employer before submitting your application or while your application is being reviewed.
- You’ll remain retired from service if your application for disability is rejected.
- The election that you make for your service retirement benefit will remain in effect if your application for disability is not approved. For example, if you elect a Member-Only Benefit and begin receiving a service retirement benefit, your Member-Only Benefit will continue.
- Your Defined Benefit Supplement distribution under either service retirement or disability will be paid according to your disbursement election on your application.

- If you receive a service retirement benefit while your disability application is being evaluated, you will:
  - Not be eligible to participate in the Reduced Benefit Election.
  - Not receive credit for unused sick leave before an evaluation is made regarding your application for disability. If your application for disability is rejected, your service retirement benefit will be recalculated to include your eligible unused sick leave, adjusted to the effective date of your service retirement.
- If you receive a service retirement benefit during evaluation of your application and you die before a determination is made, any subsequent benefits payable will be based on your service retirement elections.
- If your disability application is rejected and you remain on service retirement, you will not be eligible to reapply for a disability benefit unless you terminate your service retirement, return to CalSTRS-covered employment and earn one year of service credit. In that case, any physical or mental conditions known to exist when you return to active membership may be considered pre-existing conditions, and you would not be able to apply for a disability benefit for those conditions if they remain substantially unchanged.
- If your application for a disability benefit is rejected, you still may be eligible to request an administrative appeal.
Application Approval
If we approve your disability application and you're still working, you must stop working before we can begin paying your benefits. If you do not stop working within 90 days of being notified of the approval, CalSTRS will reverse the approval and reject your application.

You should receive your first disability benefit payment within 45 days after we receive all necessary information. The payment will include any retroactive disability payments due. After receiving your first payment, you’ll receive a regular disability payment on or about the first day of each month. We will notify your employer that your application was approved.

Prescribed Treatment Program
If your disability is amenable to treatment that could allow you to perform your usual duties or those of a comparable level, you may be required to participate in a prescribed treatment program developed by your attending physician.

Limited-Term Disability Benefits
If your condition is expected to improve with mental, physical or vocational rehabilitation, you may be approved for limited-term disability benefits. These benefits are granted for a specific time period and can be renewed if your condition does not improve.

Benefits to Survivors
If you are approved for a disability benefit and die before receiving notification of your approval, any subsequent benefits will be paid as if you had died while receiving a disability benefit.

Application Rejection
If your disability application is rejected, CalSTRS will send you a letter explaining the reason and your right to reapply, request a review or appeal.

Reapply
If you have additional or new information you did not submit in your original application, you may be able to reapply. Your benefit effective date then will be based on the date we receive your second application or your last day of compensation, whichever is later.

If you receive a service retirement benefit during evaluation of your disability application, you will not be eligible to reapply. Once you retire from service, you’re no longer eligible to apply for a disability benefit.

Executive Review and Right to Appeal
An Executive Review is an internal, high-level review of your application and the initial decision. Not every case merits an Executive Review. If you are not satisfied with the outcome of the Executive Review, you may request an administrative appeal.

Coverage A Disability Benefit

The Coverage A disability benefit (disability allowance) is generally 50 percent of final compensation. The Coverage A disability benefit will be paid as long as you remain disabled or until you reach age 60. At age 60, your disability benefit will end and you must apply for service retirement to receive a monthly benefit. Your disability benefit may continue beyond age 60 only if you have eligible dependent children and remain disabled.

To qualify for a disability benefit under Coverage A, you must meet the following requirements:

- You must be under age 60.
- You must have five or more years of service credit. (If you were the victim of an unlawful act on the job, you may qualify for a disability benefit with one year of service credit. For more information, contact us.)
- Your last five years of service credit must have been performed in California. Four of the five years of service credit must be for actual performance of creditable service. You must have earned at least one year of service credit following a service retirement termination, or following the most recent refund of your accumulated contributions.

If you plan to reinstate to active member status, first make an appointment with a CalSTRS benefits specialist to discuss important considerations, including how your future benefits may be affected.

Benefit Increase for Eligible Dependent Children

If you have eligible dependent children, you’ll receive an additional 10 percent of final compensation for each child, up to an additional 40 percent.

A child is considered to be your dependent if he or she is all of the following:

- Not married or registered as a domestic partner.
- Is your natural, adopted or stepchild, and is not adopted by anyone other than your spouse or registered domestic partner.
- Born within the 10-month period beginning on the benefit effective date of your disability benefit.
- Under age 22.
- Financially dependent on you on your disability benefit effective date.

When your child reaches age 22, marries, registers as a domestic partner or dies, your monthly benefit will be reduced by that child’s portion.

Defined Benefit Supplement Distribution

If you are approved to receive a disability benefit under Coverage A, you will receive the balance of your Defined Benefit Supplement account. If your balance is $3,500 or more, you can choose from one of several Member-Only annuity choices.

Reductions to Your Disability Benefit
Your monthly Coverage A disability benefit, including the amount received for eligible dependent children, will be reduced by payments from other public systems, including:

- Workers’ compensation.
- Social Security disability.
- Federal military disability.
- Employer-paid income protection plans.
- Other disability programs financed with public funds.

Periodic Review
CalSTRS will periodically review your medical and work status for continuing eligibility for disability benefits. This review will include:

- Medical reports from your doctor.
- Your annual earnings from all employment.
- An annual inquiry about other disability benefits.

As part of the review, CalSTRS may ask you to verify your earnings with documentation from the Employment Development Department, your employer and your tax returns.

Notify us if you:

- Return to employment or become self-employed.
- Change your address.
- Receive a change in benefits from another public agency or the benefits end.
- Have a child who reaches age 22, or marries or becomes a registered domestic partner, or dies.

Preretirement Election of an Option
A preretirement election of an option may be available if you want to ensure a monthly lifetime income to someone if you should die before retirement. If you are approved for a disability benefit under Coverage A after making a preretirement election, you may maintain the preretirement election you made for service retirement. If you’re not eligible to elect a preretirement option at the time you apply for disability benefits, you may make a preretirement election of an option while receiving a disability benefit after reaching age 55.


A survivor benefit under Coverage A will not be payable if you made a preretirement election of an option. Instead, your option beneficiary will receive a lifetime benefit based on your preretirement election of an option.

- See “Survivor Benefits,” page 87.

Be sure to keep CalSTRS informed of events that may affect your eligibility.
**Transitioning to Service Retirement at Normal Retirement Age**

Approximately six months before normal retirement age, we will notify you of the pending termination of your Coverage A disability benefit and your eligibility to apply for service retirement. The notification includes an estimate of your service retirement benefit and the *Disability Allowance to Service Retirement Application*. If you still have eligible dependent children, you’ll continue to be eligible for a disability benefit. When you service retire, you will be subject to the earnings limit and other working after retirement restrictions. See page 84 to learn more.

Before calculating your service retirement benefit, we’ll project your service credit through the duration of your disability. The final compensation used for your disability benefit will be projected forward at the rate of 2 percent per year. Your retirement benefit will be calculated using your actual and projected service credit and projected final compensation. You will receive either the service retirement benefit or the disability benefit you were receiving before your 60th birthday, whichever is less.

You also may elect the Modified Benefit for your service retirement benefit by naming an option beneficiary. If you have a preretirement election of an option on file, you may change your option election when you transition to service retirement. However, if you do make a change, your service retirement benefit will be subject to an assessment.

**Single-Month Earnings Limit**

Margaret has a base disability benefit of $1,500 and employment earnings of $2,075 in a single month. Her employment earnings plus her disability benefit exceed 100 percent of her indexed final compensation ($3,100).

| $1,500 | Disability benefit and annual benefit adjustments |
| + 2,075 | Monthly employment earnings |
| $3,575 | Total monthly income |
| $3,100 | Indexed final income |
| $475 | Overpayment, which CalSTRS will recover |

**Six-Month Earnings Limit**

Bob earns $2,075 monthly from employment earnings over any continuous six-month period.

| $3,100.00 | Indexed final compensation |
| x .66667 | 66 2/3% |
| x 6 | Months |
| $12,400.06 | 6-month earnings limit |
| $2,075.00 | Monthly employment earnings |
| x 6 | Months |
| $12,450.00 | 6 months employment earnings |
| $12,400.06 | 6-month earnings limit |
| $49.94 | Earnings in excess of 6-month earnings limit, which CalSTRS will recover |

In addition, Bob’s disability benefit will be terminated.

**Coverage A Earnings Limits** You can earn income while you’re receiving a Coverage A disability benefit. You can teach under certain employer conditions, but you cannot earn CalSTRS service credit or contribute to CalSTRS while receiving a disability benefit. Two earnings limits apply:

**Single-Month Earnings Limit** Your disability benefit, including cost of living adjustments but not including any child’s portion or restrictions for other public benefits, plus your earnings from all employment is compared to your indexed final compensation. A comparison is made to determine if your earnings exceed the single-month earnings limit. If your earnings exceed the limit, the excess amount is considered an overpayment and CalSTRS will collect it back by deducting 15 percent of future benefit payments until paid in full.

**Six-Month Earnings Limit** CalSTRS makes a separate calculation that compares your earnings to 66⅔ percent of your indexed final compensation. If your average earnings over a continuous six-month period exceed 66⅔ percent of your indexed final compensation, you are no longer considered disabled. Your disability benefit will be terminated, effective on the first day of the month following the six-month period. Any benefit payments made after this termination date will be recovered by CalSTRS from the total benefit or any subsequent benefits.

Both limits apply to all earned income. The earnings limits are initially based on your final compensation. In subsequent years an index factor, developed from the average salary increase of all CalSTRS active members, is used to determine indexed final compensation. Indexed final compensation serves as a measure of current salaries.

You must provide CalSTRS with an annual report of your gross earnings from all employment.
Coverage A Disability Benefit

Examples

Your final compensation must be determined before your monthly disability benefit can be calculated. Service credit is used to determine your monthly benefit when you have fewer than 10 years of service credit and you are between the ages of 45 and 60.

Disability Benefit

More than 10 years of service, with children

Charles is granted disability benefits with a benefit effective date of July 1. Charles has one child eligible for benefits, and he receives $300 a month from workers’ compensation.

Alternative Formula

Fewer than 10 years of service, with children

Sharon is granted disability benefits with a benefit effective date of January 1. She has 8.072 years of service credit and is between age 45 and 60. She has two eligible children and receives $300 a month from workers’ compensation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Charles: Coverage A Disability Benefit—More Than 10 Years</th>
<th>Sharon: Coverage A Disability Benefit—Fewer Than 10 Years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Step A: Final Compensation</strong></td>
<td><strong>Step A: Final Compensation</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highest 36 consecutive months average annual compensation earnable</td>
<td>Highest 36 consecutive months average annual compensation earnable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7/1/12 to 6/30/13 (12 months)</td>
<td>7/1/12 to 12/31/12 (6 months)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7/1/11 to 6/30/12 (12 months)</td>
<td>7/1/11 to 6/30/12 (12 months)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7/1/10 to 6/30/11 (12 months)</td>
<td>7/1/10 to 6/30/11 (12 months)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$149,980 (36 months total) ÷ 36 months</td>
<td>1/1/10 to 6/30/10 (6 months)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Step B: 50% Formula</strong></td>
<td><strong>Step B: Alternate Formula</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Final Compensation x 50%</td>
<td>1. Service Credit x 5% x Final Compensation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$4,166.11 x 50%</td>
<td>8.072 x 5% x $3,863.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$2,083.06</td>
<td>$1,559.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Eligible dependent children (1 child @ 10%)</td>
<td>2. Eligible dependent children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10% x $4,166.11 + $416.61</td>
<td>2 x 10% x $3,863.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$2,499.67</td>
<td>+ $772.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Monthly benefit before offset for other public benefit</td>
<td>3. Monthly benefit before offset for other public benefit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$2,083.06 + $416.61</td>
<td>$1,559.41 + $772.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Less benefit payable from another public system (workers’ compensation)</td>
<td>4. Less benefit payable from other public system (workers’ compensation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$300.00</td>
<td>$300.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Adjusted Monthly Benefit</td>
<td>5. Adjusted Monthly Benefit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$2,199.67</td>
<td>$2,032.16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Coverage B Disability Benefit

The Coverage B disability benefit (disability retirement) is 50 percent of your final compensation. Your final compensation must be determined before your monthly benefit can be calculated and may be reduced for periods of part-time employment. Service credit is not a factor in determining your disability retirement benefit. (See example on next page.)

You will not receive service credit while you receive a disability retirement benefit. Your benefit will continue to be paid as long as you remain disabled, without respect to age. If we determine you are no longer disabled, your disability benefit will be terminated.

If you plan to reinstate to active member status, first make an appointment with a CalSTRS benefits specialist to discuss important considerations, including how your future benefits may be affected.

To apply for a Coverage B disability benefit, you must meet the following requirements:

- You must have five or more years of service credit. (If you were the victim of an unlawful act on the job, you may qualify if you have one year of service credit. To learn more, contact us.)
- Your last five years of service credit must have been performed in California. Four of the five years of credit must be for actual performance of creditable service. At least one year of service credit must have been earned after one of the following:
  - Receiving a disability benefit.
  - Service retirement.
  - The most recent refund of your accumulated contributions.

There are no age restrictions.

Option Beneficiary

An option is a plan feature that allows you to distribute your Coverage B disability benefit over your lifetime and the lifetime of your beneficiary or beneficiaries after your death. An option provides a reduced disability benefit based on a percentage of the Member-Only Benefit level. Your Member-Only Benefit will be adjusted depending on the option you elect, your age and the age of your beneficiaries.

A Member-Only Benefit is usually the highest monthly CalSTRS benefit you can receive. Upon your death, your Member-Only Benefit will stop. It does not provide for a monthly benefit to a survivor after your death.

Option factor tables for disability are not included in this handbook. Contact a CalSTRS benefits specialist for an estimate of your benefit and the benefit of your beneficiaries under each of the options.
Increased Benefit for Eligible Dependent Children

If you have eligible dependent children, each child’s portion will be 10 percent of your final compensation up to an additional 40 percent. If you have more than four children, each child will share equally in the maximum benefit of 40 percent. The maximum benefit you can receive, including portions for eligible dependent children, is 90 percent of your final compensation.

Your child is eligible if he or she is all of the following:

- Your natural, adopted or stepchild, and is not adopted by anyone other than your spouse or registered domestic partner.
- Born no later than 10 months after the effective date of your disability benefit.
- Under age 21.
- Financially dependent on you on the effective date of your Coverage B disability benefit.

When your child reaches age 21, your monthly benefit will be reduced by that child's portion. Your children's CalSTRS benefits are not affected if you receive other benefits.

**Coverage B Disability Benefit Calculation**

Jack is granted a Coverage B disability benefit with an effective date of September 1. He has three eligible dependent children. Jack has elected to receive a Member-Only Benefit. He is not eligible for workers’ compensation.

**Step A: Final Compensation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Compensation Earnable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7/1/13-8/31/13 (2 months)</td>
<td>$5,727.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7/1/12-6/30/13 (12 months)</td>
<td>$33,099.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7/1/11-6/30/12 (12 months)</td>
<td>$30,375.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/1/10-6/30/11 (10 months)</td>
<td>$24,908.30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Final Compensation**

$94,110.20 (36 months total) ÷ 36 months = $2,614.17

**Step B: Calculate Disability Benefit**

1. Final Compensation x 50% = Member-Only Benefit ($2,614.17 x 50%) = $1,307.09
2. Benefit payable from workers’ compensation = $0.00
3. Number of eligible children (3 x 10% x $2,614.17) + $784.25 = $2,091.34
Defined Benefit Supplement Distribution

If you are approved to receive a Coverage B disability benefit, you will receive the balance of your Defined Benefit Supplement account. If your balance is $3,500 or more, you may choose to receive your benefit as an annuity.


Preretirement Election of an Option

If you made a preretirement election of an option before being eligible for a disability benefit under Coverage B, your preretirement election will be voided as of the effective date of your approved disability benefit and the Member-Only Benefit or Modified Benefit you elected on your Disability Application will become effective.

To help you understand your disability coverage, make an appointment with a benefits specialist at CalSTRS.com/benefits-planning.

Earnings Limit

You can earn income after you begin receiving a disability Coverage B benefit. You can teach under certain employer conditions, but you are not allowed to earn CalSTRS service credit or contribute to CalSTRS while receiving a disability retirement benefit. Your earnings from all types of employment, including self-employment, are subject to an earnings limit, unless you are participating in an approved CalSTRS rehabilitation plan.

CalSTRS retirement benefits will be reduced dollar-for-dollar by the total amount of earnings from all employment in excess of the 12-month calendar year limit. You will be required to provide CalSTRS with an annual report of your gross earnings from all employment. The Employment Development Department and your employer will verify your reported earnings.

The 2016 calendar year earnings limit is $28,950. The limit is determined early each calendar year.

Periodic Review

CalSTRS will periodically review your medical and vocational status to determine your continuing eligibility. This review will include:

- Medical reports from your doctor.
- Your annual earnings from all employment.
- An annual inquiry about other disability benefits.

As part of the review, CalSTRS may ask you to verify your earnings with documentation from your employer’s W-2 forms and your tax returns.

Notify CalSTRS if you:

- Return to employment or become self-employed.
- Change your address.
- Receive a change in workers’ compensation benefits.
**Tax Information and Legal Matters**

This section covers tax information and legal matters that affect your benefits.

**Income Tax Withholding**

Under federal and California law, CalSTRS will withhold income tax from the taxable portion of your benefit unless you choose not to have taxes withheld. To do that, you must complete an *Income Tax Withholding Preference Certificate* (included in the *Service Retirement Application*).

View and update your tax withholding preferences on myCalSTRS. Elections made the first of the month are effective immediately. You may also change your income tax withholding by completing the *Income Tax Withholding Preference Certificate* form. Your election will take effect within 60 days after CalSTRS receives your form.

If you do not have taxes withheld or if you don’t withhold enough taxes, you may need to make estimated tax payments. Generally, your withholding or estimated tax payments, or the total of both, must cover at least 90 percent of your total tax liability for the current year. If you fail to meet the 90 percent limit, you may have to pay penalties.

A portion of your benefit may not be taxable if you made previously taxed contributions to CalSTRS during your career. CalSTRS uses the Simplified Method established by the IRS to determine the taxable portion of your benefit. You may use any acceptable method when reporting to the IRS.

CalSTRS does not provide tax advice. Consult a tax professional for assistance.

See *Pension and Annuity Income*, IRS publication 575, available at irs.gov or *Pension and Annuity Guidelines*, FTB publication 1005, from the California Franchise Tax Board at ftb.ca.gov.

**Periodic Payments**

Unless you choose not to withhold taxes or specify different income tax withholdings, CalSTRS will withhold income tax on your periodic payments—those payments you receive in installments at regular intervals—as if you were married with three allowances.

**Eligible Rollover Distributions**

CalSTRS withholds income tax from eligible rollover distributions made to you, including a one-time lump-sum distribution, a one-time death benefit, or a benefit accrued and unpaid on the date of death of a CalSTRS benefit recipient (non-periodic payments). Federal tax withholding from eligible rollover distributions made directly to you is mandatory and set at 20 percent. If you choose to have California state income tax withheld, CalSTRS will withhold at 2 percent.

See the *Tax Considerations for Rollovers* booklet, available at CalSTRS.com.
Tax Withholding for Out-of-State Residents

Under federal law, if you’re not a California resident, you are not subject to California state tax. However, your CalSTRS benefits may be subject to taxes in the state where you live. CalSTRS cannot withhold taxes for another state.

If you move from California to another state and want to discontinue your California tax withholding, you can make the change online using your myCalSTRS account or by completing the *Income Tax Withholding Preference Certificate* form, available on CalSTRS.com/forms (under *Most Requested Forms*).

If you or your beneficiaries reside outside the U.S. or its possessions, CalSTRS must withhold federal income tax from your payments.

Contact the IRS, the California Franchise Tax Board or a qualified tax adviser for information relevant to your individual situation. For general information on withholding tax from CalSTRS benefits, go to CalSTRS.com.

**Internal Revenue Codes Affecting Benefits**

CalSTRS and its members are subject to many Internal Revenue Code provisions and other sources of federal law. Here are three IRC provisions that may affect your benefits.

**Section 401(a)(9)**

Internal Revenue Code section 401(a)(9) and the California Education Code require CalSTRS to begin the required minimum distribution of your benefits no later than April 1 of the calendar year following the year you reach age 70½, provided you’re no longer performing CalSTRS creditable service. For example, if your birthday is October 5, you would turn 70½ on April 5, so you would have until April 1 of the following year to take the required minimum distribution.

If you’re age 70½ or older and no longer working in a CalSTRS-covered position and request a 100 percent rollover of your account balance based upon the IRC section above, CalSTRS will calculate and pay your required minimum distribution directly to you and rollover any remaining funds. The rollover will be considered a complete rollover, even though 100 percent of your account balance was not rolled over.

CalSTRS is not required to begin distribution of your account if:

- You’re currently employed in a CalSTRS-covered position.
- Your current employment is covered by another public retirement system.

See “Retiring From More Than One Public Retirement System,” page 44.

CalSTRS sends courtesy notification letters twice to both active and inactive members regarding the required minimum distribution. The first letter is sent the month after you reach age 69; the second is sent the month after you reach age 70. Be sure CalSTRS always has your current mailing address.

If you’re rolling over your payments from your Defined Benefit Supplement period-certain annuity of three to nine years and turn 70½ before the annuity payments end, your annuity rollover payments will end with the December payment, the year before you turn 70½. You’re not eligible to roll over funds once you reach 70½, even if there are remaining years for your period-certain annuity. Any remaining annuity payments will automatically become direct payments.
The IRS may impose an excise tax of 50 percent of the minimum required distribution if you receive less than the minimum required distribution for a taxable year. Contact the IRS or your tax professional for details.

**Section 401(a)(17)**

Internal Revenue Code section 401(a)(17) limits the compensation that can be used to provide a CalSTRS benefit. The compensation limit applies if you became a CalSTRS member or Cash Balance participant on or after July 1, 1996. For calendar year 2016, the compensation limit is $265,000. Any compensation in excess of this limit is not creditable compensation, and neither your employer’s nor your contributions to the Defined Benefit Program, the Defined Benefit Supplement Program or the Cash Balance Benefit Program should be paid to CalSTRS on the excess amount.

Employers may offer their employees a defined contribution plan, such as CalSTRS Pension2, for contributions on compensation in excess of the Section 401(a)(17) limit.

- **CalSTRS 2% at 62**: The limit on creditable compensation that may be counted toward your CalSTRS retirement benefit is lower than that required by IRC section 401(a)(17). The limit is adjusted annually by changes to the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers: U.S. City Average. For 2015–16, the compensation cap is $137,941.

**Section 415**

Internal Revenue Code section 415 limits the benefits that can be paid by CalSTRS. Benefits are limited to an absolute dollar amount that is indexed for inflation. For calendar year 2016, the Internal Revenue Code dollar limit is $152,846 at age 60. The limit is lower below age 60 and higher above it. However, the IRC limit serves as a general guideline. There are other considerations that could make you subject to the provisions of IRC 415.

Currently, few CalSTRS members have been, or are likely to be, affected by the limits of section 415. Once we receive your Service Retirement Application, we will notify you if your benefit will be affected by the section 415 benefit limit. Consistent with federal law, CalSTRS has established the Replacement Benefits Program to pay benefits in excess of the section 415 limits. If your benefit is limited by section 415, you will receive an additional separate payment from the Replacement Benefits Program.

- **CalSTRS 2% at 62**: The Replacement Benefits Program is not available.

**CalSTRS Right to Recover Costs**

When a third party causes you injury or death before you retire and you or your family pursues civil litigation, CalSTRS must be informed. We have the right of subrogation to recover an amount equal to the actuarial equivalent of benefits paid under the plan because of your injury or death.

**Power of Attorney**

You can arrange to have a third party manage your CalSTRS benefits if or when you become incapacitated and can no longer manage your financial affairs, including your CalSTRS account and benefits. That authority could extend to changing your mailing address, instituting or changing direct deposit authorizations, and changing tax withholding preferences.

A durable power of attorney is the most common method used to delegate authority to act on your behalf. This document permits you to act as a principal and appoint an agent. The document also identifies the extent of authority granted to your agent as well as when that authority becomes effective. A durable power of attorney can be drafted by an attorney or purchased as a commercially available fill-in-the-blank form. We do not provide this form. In
addition, we may require an agent to execute an affidavit affirming the agent’s authority under the durable power of attorney. For the agent’s convenience, the CalSTRS form, Declaration of Attorney in Fact, can be completed by the agent each time he or she makes a request.

Your Rights—The Appeals Process
Any qualified applicant who disagrees with a decision by the director of a CalSTRS program area may request a review of that decision by the program’s executive. If you disagree with the program executive’s determination, you may request an administrative hearing, and an administrative law judge will issue a Proposed Decision. The Teachers’ Retirement Board considers the Proposed Decision and makes the final CalSTRS decision. A brief description of the appeals process follows. It is not intended to take the place of the law, regulations or the written procedures for the appeals process.

Requesting an Executive Review
If you disagree with a Formal Decision by the director of a CalSTRS program area, you may request a review by the program’s executive (Executive Review) within 45 days of the date of the letter informing you of the CalSTRS Decision. According to state regulations, your request for an Executive Review must include a statement of all facts, any basis in the Education Code or other law that you believe is relevant, and any other pertinent information to dispute the decision.

Requesting a Hearing
Once the program’s executive issues a Determination, or you are informed that there will be no Executive Review, you may request a hearing before an administrative law judge at the Office of Administrative Hearings within 90 days of the date of the letter informing you of the CalSTRS Determination.

The Office of Administrative Hearings will schedule the hearing and notify all parties regarding the time, date and location. The hearing is a full evidentiary hearing, meaning witnesses may be called. CalSTRS may be represented by the state attorney general or in-house counsel. You may be represented by an attorney at your own cost or you may represent yourself. Following the hearing, the administrative law judge will submit a Proposed Decision to CalSTRS. CalSTRS will provide all parties with a copy of the Proposed Decision within 30 days.

Proposed Decision and Further Action
The Proposed Decision of the administrative law judge is not the Final Decision. The Teachers’ Retirement Board must decide whether or not to adopt the Proposed Decision within 100 days of receiving it. If the board takes no action, the Proposed Decision automatically becomes CalSTRS’ Final Decision.

When you receive your copy of the Proposed Decision, you’ll be given the date that the Appeals Committee will act on your case, staff recommendations regarding your case, and procedures for submitting written statements.

If the Appeals Committee adopts the Proposed Decision, then that is CalSTRS’ Final Decision. If the Appeals Committee does not adopt the Proposed Decision, it must either send it back to the administrative law judge or decide the matter itself at a future meeting of the committee.

If you’re dissatisfied with the board’s Appeals Committee’s decision, you may ask the committee to reconsider its decision or you may appeal to Superior Court. You’ll be notified of this right when you receive your copy of the Appeals Committee’s decision shortly after the hearing takes place.
Community Property Considerations

If you have been, or are currently going, through a divorce, legal separation or termination of a registered domestic partnership, your current or former spouse or partner may have a community property interest in your CalSTRS benefits. You may need to refer to your settlement agreement or contact an attorney for legal advice.

Your court order may address the CalSTRS benefits and might specify that your former spouse or partner is entitled to a share of each of your accounts and benefits, including death benefits. If you think your former spouse may be entitled to a community property share of your benefits, you can submit your judgment of dissolution and marital settlement agreement to the CalSTRS Community Property office for review. However, CalSTRS cannot provide you with legal advice.

It is important to know that a dissolution of marriage, legal separation or termination of a registered domestic partnership can invalidate the one-time death benefit designation of a former spouse or partner. However, the designation of any additional beneficiaries named on your Recipient Designation form (or One-Time Death Benefit Recipient form) may remain valid. Be sure to update your designation to assure your current election wishes are on file with CalSTRS.

If you choose to have your former spouse as your one-time death benefit recipient, and your dissolution or termination occurred after December 31, 2001, you must submit a new Recipient Designation form after your marital termination date and indicate the proper relationship status.

See the CalSTRS Community Property Guide at CalSTRS.com.

Overpayments

Overpayments occur from time to time. If you—or a benefit recipient on your account—receive an overpayment, you will receive a letter from CalSTRS with the amount of the overpayment and how we will recover the money. Early in retirement, the most common reasons for an overpayment are benefits that were based on estimated service credit or salary, or an incorrect last day of employment. Amounts due CalSTRS will also occur if you earn more than the applicable earnings limits while receiving a benefit.

CalSTRS typically will deduct overpayments from your monthly benefit at a rate of 5 percent of your gross benefit amount until the entire amount is paid in full. However, if the overpayment was made because you provided inaccurate information or failed to provide information affecting your benefit status, we will deduct the overpayment at a rate of 15 percent of your gross benefit amount until the entire amount is paid in full.

If you return to CalSTRS-covered employment in the first 180 calendar days of your most recent retirement—and you do not reinstate—you will be subject to the separation-from-service requirement. CalSTRS will deduct all of your excess earnings from your monthly benefit up to your benefit amount payable during that period. If you earn more than the annual postretirement earnings limit during the fiscal year, we will deduct all of the excess earnings from your monthly retirement benefit up to your total annual retirement benefit amount, minus any previous reduction to your benefit due to the separation-from-service requirement. You may also contact CalSTRS to request alternative payment arrangements.

If an overpayment is due to intentional misrepresentation of facts, or fraud by you, these collection methods do not apply, and CalSTRS will recover the amounts due by any means authorized under the law.
Benefit Forfeiture for Felony Convictions

Under the California Public Employees’ Pension Reform Act of 2013, if you are convicted of a felony committed in connection with your official duties, including a felony involving a child you have contact with as part of your official duties, you will forfeit all of your retirement benefits earned or accrued after the commission of the felony but not benefits accrued before the commission of the felony.

CalSTRS will return any contributions you made after that date, without interest. CalSTRS will also collect any overpayment of benefits that might have been paid to you after the commission of the felony. After being convicted, you and the prosecuting agency must notify your employer within 60 days of your conviction, and you and your employer must notify CalSTRS within 90 days of your conviction.

If your conviction is reversed, you can either receive the forfeited benefits or redeposit the returned contributions, with interest.
**Glossary**

**Age Factor**
The percentage of your final compensation that you will receive as a retirement benefit for every year of service credit. The age factor is based on your age on the last day of the month in which your retirement is effective.

**CalSTRS 2% at 60:**
The age factor at age 60 is 2 percent. The maximum age factor is 2.4 percent. The age factor gradually decreases to 1.1 percent at age 50 if you retire before age 60, and increases to the maximum 2.4 percent at age 63 if you retire after age 60.

For example, if you retire at age 60 and have 20 years of service, you will receive 2 percent (your age factor at age 60) of your final compensation multiplied by the 20 years of service credit, or 40 percent of your final compensation (2 percent x 20).

**CalSTRS 2% at 62:**
The age factor at age 62 is 2 percent. The age factor gradually decreases to 1.16 percent at age 55 if you retire before age 62 and increases to the maximum 2.4 percent at age 65 if you retire after age 62.

**Additional Earnings Credit**
A percentage increase to the account balance of Defined Benefit Supplement Program members and Cash Balance Benefit Program participants that is granted by the Teachers’ Retirement Board when investment earnings exceed what is necessary to meet the liabilities of the programs.

**Air Time**
See nonqualified service credit.

**Annual Benefit Adjustment**
An automatic annual increase to your monthly benefit provided by state law. The increase is effective on September 1 of each year after the first anniversary of your benefit effective date and appears on your October 1 payment. Annual benefit adjustments are calculated at 2 percent of your initial benefit. The increase is not compounded or tied to changes in the cost of living.

Under the 2014 CalSTRS Full Funding Plan, the Legislature cannot reduce the 2 percent annual benefit adjustment for members who retire on or after January 1, 2014. The 2 percent annual benefit adjustment for members who retired before January 1, 2014, is not contractually guaranteed—it can be reduced or eliminated by the Legislature, if economic conditions dictate. However, the Legislature has yet to reduce the 2 percent annual benefit adjustment in the 43 years since first providing this adjustment in 1972.

**Annuity**

**Member-Only Defined Benefit Supplement or Participant-Only Cash Balance Annuity:** A monthly payment equal to the balance of your Defined Benefit Supplement account or Cash Balance Benefit account spread over your lifetime. Any balance remaining upon your death will be paid to your one-time death benefit recipients.

**100% Beneficiary Annuity:** Provides an actuarially reduced monthly payment equal to the balance of your Defined Benefit Supplement account or Cash Balance Benefit account spread over your lifetime and the lifetime of your annuity beneficiary. One hundred percent of your monthly annuity payment will continue to be paid to your option beneficiary upon your death.

**75% Beneficiary Annuity:** Provides an actuarially reduced monthly payment equal to the balance of your Defined Benefit Supplement account or Cash Balance Benefit account spread over your lifetime and the lifetime of your annuity beneficiary. Seventy-five percent of your monthly annuity payment will continue to be paid to your option beneficiary upon your death.

**50% Beneficiary Annuity:** Provides an actuarially reduced monthly payment equal to the balance of your Defined Benefit Supplement account or Cash Balance Benefit account spread over your lifetime and the lifetime of your annuity beneficiary. Fifty percent of your monthly annuity payment will continue to be paid to your option beneficiary upon your death.

For the 100%, 75% and 50% beneficiary annuities, if your beneficiary dies before you, your annuity payment will rise to the Member-Only amount.

**Period-Certain Annuity:** A monthly payment for any number of years from three to 10 equal to the balance of your Defined Benefit Supplement account or Cash Balance Benefit account spread over your lifetime and the lifetime of your annuity beneficiary. The amount you receive is based on the number of years over which the annuity is paid; the lower the number of years, the higher the annuity. If you die before the annuity period ends, the remaining payments are paid to your one-time death benefit recipients.
**Assessment**  
The reduction applied to your benefit if you change or cancel your preretirement election of an option—or if your option beneficiary dies before you retire. The amount is the actuarial equivalent of the coverage you received as a result of the preretirement election. (Assessments of $0 do not result in a benefit reduction.)

**Annuitant**  
A retired member or participant who receives a benefit as an annuity payment equal to the balance of her or his Defined Benefit Supplement or Cash Balance Benefit accounts.

**Beneficiary**  
Any person or entity receiving or entitled to receive payments after your death. Only a person (not an estate, trust or corporation) may be designated to receive an option benefit upon your death.

**Benefit**  
A monthly or lump-sum amount payable to a retired member, disabled member, retired participant, disabled participant or beneficiary.

**Benefit Formula (Service Retirement)**  
For the Member-Only Benefit, the formula is service credit x age factor x final compensation. If choosing an option, multiply the Member-Only Benefit by the appropriate option factor.

**Benefit Formula (Disability Coverage A or B)**  
For the Member-Only disability benefit, the formula is generally 50 percent of your final compensation.

**Benefit Recipient**  
A person or entity that receives a one-time death benefit payment or an ongoing CalSTRS benefit payment.

**CalPERS**  
California Public Employees’ Retirement System

CalSTRS 2% at 60  
CalSTRS 2% at 62  
The California Public Employees’ Pension Reform Act of 2013 made significant changes to the benefit structure for Defined Benefit members and Cash Balance Benefit participants first hired to perform service that could be credited to the Defined Benefit Program on or after January 1, 2013. As a result, CalSTRS now has two benefit structures:

- Members and participants first hired on or before December 31, 2012, are under CalSTRS 2% at 60.
- Members and participants first hired on or after January 1, 2013, are under CalSTRS 2% at 62.

In addition, educators who were members of a concurrent retirement system on or before December 31, 2012, and performed service in that system within six months of becoming a CalSTRS member are under the CalSTRS 2% at 60 benefit structure, as are those who performed service that could be credited to the Defined Benefit Program that was subject to coverage under a different retirement system, including Social Security, on or before December 31, 2012.

The 2 percent refers to the age factor, or percentage of final compensation, that Defined Benefit members will receive as a retirement benefit for every year of service credit. To receive an age factor of 2 percent, you must work until age 62 if you’re under CalSTRS 2% at 62. The basic age factor for members under CalSTRS 2% at 60 is 2 percent at age 60.

Other benefit differences for CalSTRS 2% at 62 include a 36-month final compensation period (based on the highest average annual compensation earnable for 36 consecutive months regardless of years of service credit), lower compensation cap, no career factor, and a higher retirement age (you are not eligible to retire as early as age 50 with 30 years of service credit).

**CalSTRS Pension2**  
CalSTRS’ voluntary defined contribution plan offers 403(b), 457(b) and Roth 403(b) plans for additional income in retirement. Select from a variety of investment options with low fees and expenses.

**Career Factor**  
For members under the 2% at 60 benefit structure: An increase in the percentage of final compensation on which your Defined Benefit service retirement is based. If you retire with at least 30 years of earned service credit, 0.2 percent is added to the age factor up to the maximum age factor of 2.4 percent, which is reached at age 61½ with the career factor. The career factor doesn’t apply if you die before retirement unless you filed a preretirement option election with CalSTRS.

CalSTRS 2% at 62:  
There is no career factor enhancement to the age factor.
Cash Balance Benefit Program
An alternative cash balance type of CalSTRS retirement plan for educators hired to work part time. The Cash Balance Benefit Program is an alternative to Social Security, private plans and the CalSTRS Defined Benefit Program.

Cash Balance Plan
A retirement plan in which your contributions and your employer’s contributions earn a guaranteed annual interest rate. When you retire, you or your beneficiary will receive all the funds in your account as an annuity or a lump sum. The Defined Benefit Supplement and the Cash Balance Benefit programs are cash balance plans.

Client ID
A CalSTRS randomly generated number used to identify members. CalSTRS uses it instead of your Social Security number to secure your identity. Your Client ID is on your Retirement Progress Report.

Comparable Level Position
Any job in which you can earn 66⅔ percent or more of indexed final compensation.

Compensation Earnable
Compensation you could earn in a school year for creditable service performed full time not including service for which contributions are credited to your Defined Benefit Supplement account.

Concurrent Service Retirement
Retiring for service from CalSTRS and the Legislators’ Retirement System, California Public Employees’ Retirement System, San Francisco Employees’ Retirement System, University of California Retirement System or those systems established under the County Employees’ Retirement Law of 1937 as long as you perform no service creditable to either system between retirement dates. CalSTRS may use the compensation earnable for service performed under the other retirement system to calculate the CalSTRS service retirement benefit if the service was not performed during the same pay period as CalSTRS service.

County Employees’ Retirement Law of 1937
The following counties provide retirement benefits under this law: Alameda, Contra Costa, Fresno, Imperial, Kern, Los Angeles, Marin, Mendocino, Merced, Orange, Sacramento, San Bernardino, San Diego, San Joaquin, San Mateo, Santa Barbara, Sonoma, Stanislaus, Tulare and Ventura.

Coverage A
The disability and survivor benefit programs available to those who became members on or before October 15, 1992. Coverage A is mandatory for all members of the Defined Benefit Program who were receiving a disability benefit or a service retirement benefit with an effective date on or before October 15, 1992. Members who were not receiving a benefit on or before that date could choose to retain Coverage A or elect Coverage B.

Coverage A Disability Benefit
(Disability Allowance)
A feature of the Defined Benefit Program elected by and offered to individuals who became members on or before October 15, 1992, that provides partial income replacement for disabled members. The benefit is paid as long as you are disabled up to normal retirement age.

Coverage A Survivor Benefit (Family Allowance)
A monthly amount paid to your surviving spouse or registered domestic partner with eligible dependent children after your death. The maximum amount is 90 percent of your final compensation—40 percent for your spouse or partner plus 10 percent for each eligible dependent child up to an additional 50 percent.

Coverage B
The disability and survivor benefit programs for new members after October 15, 1992, or who previously had Coverage A and elected Coverage B.

Coverage B Disability Benefit
(Disability Retirement)
A feature of the Defined Benefit Program for individuals who became members after October 15, 1992, or elected Coverage B during the special election held October 1992 to April 1993. Those receiving payments under Coverage B are “retired” and will be paid as long as they are disabled, without respect to age, until eligible to transition to service retirement.

Coverage B Survivor Benefit
If you die before retirement and had a preretirement election of an option on file with CalSTRS, a lifetime benefit will be payable to your elected option beneficiary. If you do not have a preretirement election of an option, a survivor benefit may be payable to your surviving spouse or registered domestic partner and eligible dependent children.
Creditable Compensation
Salary and other remuneration, excluding allowances and cash in lieu of fringe benefits, paid in cash by an employer to everyone in the same class of employees for performing creditable service.

CalSTRS 2% at 62:
Only compensation paid in cash each pay period in which creditable service is performed under a publicly available written contractual agreements is considered creditable compensation. Creditable compensation for service in excess of one year in a school year is creditable to the member’s Defined Benefit Supplement account, up to the compensation cap. Limited-term payments or compensation determined to have been paid for the purposes of enhancing a benefit are not creditable to any CalSTRS benefit program.

The limit on creditable compensation counted toward the CalSTRS retirement benefit formula is adjusted annually by changes to the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers: U.S. City Average. For 2015–16, the compensation cap is $137,941. Employers may offer their employees a defined contribution plan, such as CalSTRS Pension2, for contributions on compensation in excess of the limit.

Creditable Service
Specific employment activities, such as teaching, vocational or guidance counseling, mentoring, services related to school curriculum and certain administrative duties performed for an employer in a position that requires certification qualifications adopted by the Commission on Teacher Credentialing or under minimum standards adopted by the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges, or under the provisions of an approved charter for a charter school eligible to receive a state apportionment. Includes service performed by school health professionals, school librarians, superintendents and others as defined in California Education Code section 22119.5.

Credited Interest
At the end of each fiscal year, interest is credited to the accumulated Defined Benefit contributions and interest in each active and inactive member’s account at the interest rate adopted by the Teachers’ Retirement Board. The current rate approximates the yield on two-year Treasury notes.

Credited Service
See service credit.

D
Defined Benefit Plan
A retirement plan in which your retirement benefit is based on a formula, not on how much you contribute or how well investments perform.

Defined Benefit Program
A traditional defined benefit plan within the State Teachers’ Retirement Plan that provides a lifetime retirement benefit (based on a formula set by law: age factor x service credit x final compensation); and disability and survivor benefits.

Defined Benefit Supplement Program
The Defined Benefit Supplement Program is a cash balance plan for Defined Benefit members that provides an additional retirement benefit. For every dollar you and your employer contribute to the program, your account is credited accordingly. In addition, your account earns guaranteed interest and any additional earnings credits declared by the Teachers’ Retirement Board. Your benefits are paid as either a lump-sum or an annuity equal to the total balance of your account. You and your employer make contributions on compensation earned from service in excess of one year of service credit and, for CalSTRS 2% at 60 members, limited-term payments and retirement incentives. From January 1, 2001, through December 31, 2010, 25 percent of your regular monthly Defined Benefit member contribution was also credited to your account.

CalSTRS 2% at 62:
You and your employer make contributions on compensation earned for service performed in excess of one year, up to the compensation cap.

Defined Contribution Plan
A retirement plan in which the benefit depends on your contributions, investment gains or losses, and expenses. Benefits under defined contribution plans are not guaranteed. CalSTRS Pension2 is CalSTRS’ voluntary defined contribution plan.
Disability or Disabled
A medically determinable physical or mental impairment that is permanent or that can be expected to last continuously for at least 12 months. The disability must prevent you from performing your usual duties with reasonable accommodation or the duties of a comparable level for which you are qualified or can become qualified by education, training or experience. You may apply for disability while still employed. Any impairment from a willful self-inflicted injury does not constitute a disability.

See Service Retirement During Evaluation of a Disability Application.

Earnings Limit
The amount a disabled or retired Defined Benefit member or Cash Balance annuitant may earn from employment in a month or year without a reduction in the CalSTRS benefit. The earnings limits are different for disabled and retired members and participants, and may be adjusted each year by the Teachers’ Retirement Board.

See Postretirement Earnings Limits.

Earnings Limits While Receiving a Coverage A Disability Benefit

Single-Month Earnings Limit: The amount a disabled member may earn in any month without a reduction in the disability benefit. Your disability benefit and employment earnings in a single month are added together and compared to the indexed final compensation for the month. Amounts in excess of the limit will be collected by CalSTRS dollar for dollar.

Six-Month Earnings Limit: Average earnings and disability benefit over any continuous six-month period are compared to two-thirds of the indexed final compensation. If you exceed this limit, your disability benefit can be terminated.

Earnings Limit While Receiving a Coverage B Disability Benefit
You can earn income after you begin receiving a disability Coverage B benefit. You can teach under certain employer conditions, but you are not allowed to earn CalSTRS service credit or contribute to CalSTRS. Your earnings from all types of employment, including self-employment, are subject to an earnings limit, unless you’re participating in an approved CalSTRS rehabilitation plan. The 2016 calendar year earnings limit is $28,950. Your disability benefit will be reduced dollar-for-dollar by the total amount of earnings from all employment in excess of the 12-month calendar year limit.

Eligible Dependent Children
Coverage A: Your unmarried children or children not in a registered domestic partnership, or adopted children or stepchildren under age 22 who are financially dependent on you on the effective date of your disability benefit or the date of your death.

Coverage B: Your children, adopted children or stepchildren, under age 21, if financially dependent on you on the effective date of your disability retirement or the date of your death.

Excess Contributions
Beginning July 1, 2014, the CalSTRS Funding Plan, approved by the Governor under AB 1469, increased the member contribution rates for the Defined Benefit Program. The contribution rate for compensation creditable to the Defined Benefit Supplement Program, which includes compensation for service in excess of one year, is still 8 percent.

CalSTRS is unable to determine if you performed service in excess of one year until the annual review of member accounts at the end of the school year. If you did, we will transfer the appropriate amount of contributions to your Defined Benefit Supplement account and return your member contributions in excess of the 8 percent Defined Benefit Supplement contribution.

CalSTRS will return excess contributions to employers in late September. Your employer is responsible for returning your excess member contributions to you. Your total excess member contributions for the past school year are reported on your Retirement Progress Report in the Special Messages section and on your myCalSTRS account (under the Services tab).

Final Compensation
The highest average annual compensation earnable during a specified period of CalSTRS-covered paid employment. The period is 12 consecutive months if you have at least 25 years of service credit. Otherwise, the period is 36 consecutive months if you have fewer than 25 years of service credit.

CalSTRS 2% at 62: Final compensation is based on the highest average annual compensation earnable during any consecutive 36 months.
Full Time
The number of days or hours of creditable service the employer requires a class of employees to perform in a school year under a collective bargaining or employment agreement to receive the compensation earnable.

H
Home Loan Program
The CalSTRS Home Loan Program has been suspended.

Hybrid Retirement System
CalSTRS administers a hybrid retirement system consisting of traditional defined benefit (Defined Benefit Program), cash balance (Defined Benefit Supplement and Cash Balance Benefit programs) and voluntary defined contribution (CalSTRS Pension2) plans. CalSTRS also provides survivor and disability benefits.

I
Indexed Final Compensation
The final compensation used to determine your disability benefits, multiplied by the indexed final compensation factor, based on the year of your initial benefit.

L
Longevity Bonus
A benefit enhancement that increases your monthly benefit if you had at least 30 years of qualified service credit on or before December 31, 2010. The bonus will be reduced by an option factor if you choose an option.

M
Member
Anyone who has performed creditable service as a Defined Benefit Program member, has earned creditable compensation for that service, and has not received a refund for that service, unless specifically excluded by law.

Active Member: A member who is not retired or disabled and who earns creditable compensation during the school year.

Inactive Member: A member who is not retired or disabled and who has not earned creditable compensation during the current or preceding school year.

Disabled Member: A member who receives a CalSTRS disability benefit.

Retired Member: A member who has terminated employment and has retired from service or has retired for disability and receives a retirement benefit.

Member-Only Benefit
The highest monthly benefit you can receive when you retire for service or disability before any reduction to provide for an option beneficiary.

N
Nonconsecutive Final Compensation
If your employer certifies your salary was reduced due to a reduction in school funds, CalSTRS can use nonconsecutive periods of time to determine your final compensation.

Nonqualified Service Credit
Service not connected to any prior specific employment. The purchase of nonqualified service credit, or air time, is no longer permitted.

O
One-Time Death Benefit
A one-time benefit paid to your death benefit recipients after you die.

Option
A plan feature that allows you to distribute your retirement benefit over your lifetime and the lifetime of one or more persons.

100% Beneficiary Option: Upon your death, the reduced benefit will be paid to the option beneficiary for life. If your option beneficiary dies before you, your benefit will be raised to the Member-Only Benefit level.

75% Beneficiary Option: Upon your death, three-quarters of the reduced benefit will be paid to your option beneficiary for life. If your option beneficiary predeceases you, your benefit will be raised to the Member-Only Benefit level.

50% Beneficiary Option: Upon your death, one-half of the reduced benefit will be paid to your option beneficiary for life. If your option beneficiary predeceases you, your benefit will be raised to the Member-Only Benefit level.

Compound Option: Upon your death, benefits will be paid to one or more option beneficiaries for life. The benefit paid to an individual beneficiary depends on which option was elected for that beneficiary, and what percentage of the total benefit was subject to the option and beneficiary elected.
Option Beneficiary
The person you name to receive a lifetime monthly benefit after your death.

Option Factor
An actuarially determined factor used to calculate the amount of monthly benefit when you elect an option to provide a lifetime monthly benefit to a designated option beneficiary after your death.

Participant
A person who has performed creditable service subject to coverage by the Cash Balance Benefit Program and who has contributions credited or is receiving an annuity under the Cash Balance Benefit Program, or who hasn’t yet received his or her lump-sum retirement benefit.

Pension2
See CalSTRS Pension2.

Postretirement Earnings Limits

Separation-From-Service Requirement: If you return to CalSTRS-covered employment, including substitute teaching, in the California public school system as an employee, an independent contractor or an employee of a third party during the first 180 calendar days after your most recent retirement date, your retirement benefit will be reduced dollar for dollar by the amount you earn up to your benefit amount payable during that period. Any amount you earn in a CalSTRS-covered position during the first 180 calendar days of retirement will also count against the annual post-retirement earnings limit for the appropriate fiscal year.

All Cash Balance annuitants also have the 180-day separation-from-service requirement. If you’re a Cash Balance Benefit participant and receive your retirement benefit as a lump-sum payment, your benefit will not be payable until 180 calendar days after you terminate employment. If you return to work in a CalSTRS-covered position during this waiting period, your retirement will be canceled and you will not receive your benefit.

Postretirement Earnings Limit: If you return to work in a CalSTRS-covered position as an employee of a public school system, an independent contractor, or an employee of a third party, you can earn up to the annual postretirement earnings limit without affecting your benefit. If you earn more than the limit, your CalSTRS benefit will be reduced dollar for dollar by the amount of creditable earnings in excess of the limit up to your annual retirement benefit minus any reduction due to the zero-dollar earnings limit. The Teachers’ Retirement Board adjusts the earnings limit annually. The earnings limit for the 2015–16 fiscal year is $40,321.

Post-Tax Contributions
Member contributions paid into the CalSTRS Defined Benefit Program based on creditable compensation from which federal and state income taxes have been withheld.

Projected Final Compensation
The final compensation used to determine your disability or survivor benefit under Coverage A, increased by 2 percent, compounded annually, to the earlier of age 60 or the date the disability benefit is terminated.

Projected Service
Service credit plus the service you would have earned to age 60 (or termination of the disability benefit, whichever comes first) had you continued to work and receive service credit at the same rate as the highest of any one of the three school years immediately preceding your death or the date your disability benefit began to accrue under Coverage A.

Reasonable Accommodation
Federal and state laws give you the right to request accommodation that would allow you to continue working and obligate employers to make a good faith effort to accommodate these requests. Before making a final decision on your application for disability benefits, CalSTRS may require you to pursue a request for reasonable accommodation. This would enable you to continue employment in your same position, or in one with comparable responsibilities. Reasonable accommodation could be accomplished by changing the duties of your position or reassigning you to alternate duties you are qualified to perform through modification of your work site or other measures.

Recipient
The beneficiary you name to receive your one-time death benefit.
Redeposit
The purchase of service credit represented by previously refunded member contributions and interest. Redeposit costs include the interest the refunded amount would have earned had the funds remained in the CalSTRS account. If repaid over time, a financing charge is added.

Reduced Benefit Election
A retirement alternative for Defined Benefit members. You must be at least age 55, but under age 60, and have at least five years of service credit to retire under this alternative. You receive one-half of your monthly benefit amount calculated as if you were age 60. The reduced benefit will continue for the same number of months after age 60 that you received benefits before age 60. After that, you will receive your normal service retirement benefit. You’re not eligible if you previously received a CalSTRS service retirement or disability benefit, or if you are applying for a service retirement while your disability application is being evaluated.

CalSTRS 2% at 62: You’re not eligible for the Reduced Benefit Election.

Reduced Workload Program
Under this CalSTRS program, you may reduce your workload from full time to part time (a minimum of at least 50 percent of full time) and still receive a full year of service credit. You and your employer contribute to CalSTRS based on full-time employment. You may participate in this program for up to 10 years before retirement. The opportunity to participate is available only if your employer offers the program.

Refund
A distribution of all your post-tax contributions, tax-deferred contributions and interest credited on those contributions after you terminated employment with the California public school system.

Registered Domestic Partner
A registered domestic partner has many of the same rights and responsibilities as a spouse under California law, including laws concerning community property, child custody and support, and access to family court for the dissolution of a partnership. To register a domestic partnership with the California Secretary of State’s office, you and your partner must be of the same sex, or if you and your partner are opposite sexes, one of you must be at least 62 years old.

Reinstatement
Returning to employment in a position requiring CalSTRS membership and terminating a CalSTRS benefit, such as a retired educator returning as an active member to the classroom in a credentialed position.

Retirement Benefit
A monthly benefit paid to a member each month after retirement for reasons other than disability.

Retirement Benefit Calculation
The formula used to calculate the Member-Only amount CalSTRS members will receive each month after retiring from service. The formula is: service credit x age factor x final compensation = your retirement benefit.

CalSTRS 2% at 60:
Age factor is 2 percent at age 60.

CalSTRS 2% at 62:
Age factor is 2 percent at age 62.

Retirement Incentive Program
A program provided by employers that would increase the service credit used in calculating the CalSTRS service retirement benefit. This program allows Defined Benefit members who are eligible to retire to receive two additional years of service credit. If you return to work in any job with the same employer within five years of retirement, or if you reinstate, you will lose the ongoing increase in your benefit. In addition, you cannot receive unemployment benefits.
Retirement Progress Report
An annual report for active and inactive members that includes:

- A summary of Defined Benefit, Defined Benefit Supplement and Cash Balance Benefit program transactions during the prior year.
- Accumulated service credit.
- Contribution and interest balances.
- Any excess member contributions made in the year.
- Death benefit recipient and beneficiary information.
- Two projections of your retirement benefit if you are at least age 45.

Return of Member Contributions
A one-time payment of all your accumulated contributions and interest earned. The payment equals your total contributions and interest at time of retirement, disability or death, less the sum of all monthly benefit payments received. This is payable when there are no longer any option beneficiaries or survivors who qualify for a continuing monthly benefit.

Service Credit
Accumulated period in years, including partial years, for which you earned creditable compensation and made contributions under the Defined Benefit Program. Service credit is one of the factors used to determine your eligibility for benefits under the Defined Benefit Program. Service credit cannot exceed 1.000 in any given school year.

Service Retirement During Evaluation of a Disability Application
If you are applying for a disability benefit, you may be eligible to receive a service retirement benefit while CalSTRS evaluates your application for disability benefits. This will enable you to receive monthly retirement income while awaiting the determination. You can receive only one benefit at a time. You will not be eligible for the Reduced Benefit Election.

Subrogation
A process that permits CalSTRS to participate in an action to recoup benefits paid, expenses and legal costs when a third party causes the injury or death of a CalSTRS member before retirement, and the member or family pursues civil litigation.

Supplemental Benefit Maintenance Account
The account from which payments are made to members and beneficiaries whose current benefit is worth less than a specified percent of the original benefit when adjusted for increases in the California Consumer Price Index. The percentage is currently set at 85 percent.

Surviving Spouse or Registered Domestic Partner
A person who was one of the following:

- Married to you or registered as your domestic partner for at least 12 months before your death.
- Married to you or registered as your domestic partner fewer than 12 months if a child was born during the marriage or partnership or if your surviving spouse or partner is pregnant with your child.
- Continuously married to you or registered as your domestic partner for fewer than 12 months before your accidental death or for the period beginning before the occurrence of the injury or diagnosis of the illness that resulted in your death.
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