YOUR SMART TARGET MEMBER KIT
Mid-Career 2018
THE BENEFIT OF A LIFETIME
Dear CalSTRS member,

As your retirement plan, CalSTRS is dedicated to your secure financial future and helping you get there. Your income in retirement is a shared responsibility between CalSTRS and you. Your CalSTRS benefit generally will replace about 60 percent of your final salary. How much will you need for your future? Pension2, CalSTRS’ voluntary supplemental savings plan, can help fill the gap. See pages 10–11 to learn more.

Also be sure to check out benefits and financial awareness workshops and videos online at CalSTRS.com.

We invite you to take a few minutes now to look through your kit.

Thank you for choosing education for your career.

Sincerely,

Jack Ehnes
Chief Executive Officer

Keep Your Address Current

Be sure CalSTRS has your current mailing and email addresses, so you don’t miss important communications from us.

Moved or planning a move soon?
Three ways to update your contact information:

- myCalSTRS makes it easy. From the home page, select Update Your Profile, then follow the instructions. Not yet registered for myCalSTRS? Complete the registration process today to activate your account.
  - myCalSTRS.com

- Complete the Address Change Request form, sign, date and mail it to us.
  - CalSTRS.com/forms

- Call us at 800-228-5453. To use this option, you must have a valid email address. Best times to call are Wednesday, Thursday or Friday, 7 a.m.–10 a.m. or 4 p.m.–6 p.m.

On our cover:
Alicia teaches second grade at an elementary school in Northern California. She has been a CalSTRS member for 18 years.

How do you picture your future?
Start envisioning with the checklist on page 21.

CalSTRS Member Handbook

Know your benefits.
Find the handbook online at CalSTRS.com/publications.
Things to do now for your smart target

You’re helping students build their futures, don’t forget about yours. How much money will you need for your retirement?

THE BENEFIT OF A LIFETIME
Your CalSTRS defined benefit pension may be your greatest asset. Take a few minutes now to learn more.

- Open your Smart Target Member Kit
- Access your account information on myCalSTRS
- Estimate your retirement benefit
- Review your Retirement Progress Report
- Increase your retirement benefit
- Increase your 403(b) or 457(b) contribution
- Get the facts on Social Security
- Name your one-time death benefit recipient
- Attend a workshop, view a video
- Understand your retirement decisions

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 booklet, the law prevails. CalSTRS makes every effort to provide accurate information in its publications, but legislation can change quickly. To stay informed, consult a variety of sources, including CalSTRS.com, the California State Legislative Counsel website at leginfo.legislature.ca.gov, your union and elected legislative representatives. CalSTRS can provide information on your benefit choices but does not provide advice. For financial advice, consider consulting a financial professional.
myCalSTRS

Access Your CalSTRS Information Online, Anytime

*myCalSTRS* offers easy, secure and convenient access to your accounts and CalSTRS forms, anytime, anywhere. Register at *myCalSTRS.com*. Once you complete the process, your *myCalSTRS* account will be active.

With *myCalSTRS*, you can:

1. Update your contact information.
2. Access your annual *Retirement Progress Report* and view information reported by your employer.
3. View your account balances.
4. Name and update your one-time death benefit recipient.
5. Exchange secure messages with CalSTRS representatives.
6. Complete and submit forms.
7. Link to your CalSTRS Pension2 403(b) or 457(b) account, if you have one.

Need help registering?
View the self-paced, interactive online registration guide at *myCalSTRS.com*. You’ll find help with resetting your password at *CalSTRS.com/myCalSTRS-help-videos*.

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**Did You Know?**

You have survivor benefits. Have you designated your one-time death benefit recipient yet?

You may name one or more recipients for the one-time death benefit—a person, trust, charity, estate, parochial institution, corporation or public entity—and you can change your recipient at any time, without a financial penalty.

Use your *myCalSTRS* account or the *Recipient Designation* form, available at *CalSTRS.com/forms*, to designate or update your recipient information.

See page 13 to learn more.
Get Smart About Your Future

Your Benefit of a Lifetime

As a vested member of CalSTRS, you’re entitled to a guaranteed, lifetime monthly benefit when you retire.

Your retirement benefit is a defined benefit pension calculated using a formula set by law that provides a fixed percentage of your final compensation based on your age at retirement and your years of service—not on how much you contribute or how well investments perform:

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

CalSTRS Is Here for You

The California State Teachers’ Retirement System is your retirement plan. For more than 100 years, we have been prudently managing your defined benefit pension funds. CalSTRS is the largest educator-only pension fund in the world and the second largest public pension fund in the U.S.

As your retirement plan, our primary responsibility is to provide you with retirement, disability and survivor benefits. We also offer resources specific to your career stage:

• Your annual Retirement Progress Report, available on myCalSTRS, which provides a summary of your accounts and service credit.

• Online services and forms on myCalSTRS.

• Customer service in person or by secure online messaging, phone or letter.

• Knowledgeable CalSTRS representatives to help you understand your benefits and more.

• Publications, including the Purchase Additional Service Credit booklet, workshops and member education videos.

• CalSTRS Pension²® 403(b) and 457(b) plans with low costs for additional income in retirement.

• Side-by-side comparisons of your district’s 403(b) plans at 403bCompare.com.

Find publications, forms, videos, workshops and more at CalSTRS.com.

Your CalSTRS Retirement Benefit—Will It Be Enough?

On average, the CalSTRS retirement benefit replaces about 60 percent of a career educator’s salary. You’ll need to close any gap between your retirement income goal and your retirement benefit with savings and investments, such as CalSTRS Pension².

See pages 10–11 to learn more.
Your CalSTRS Retirement at a Glance

If you’re like most educators, your retirement income will come from four main sources:

- Your CalSTRS monthly retirement benefit.
- Your CalSTRS Defined Benefit Supplement account funds.
- Your investment savings, such as CalSTRS Pension2 403(b) and 457(b) plans.
- Other personal savings.

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

- **Traditional defined benefit plan**: Your CalSTRS monthly retirement benefit is a defined benefit pension calculated using a formula that provides a fixed percentage of your final compensation based on your age at retirement and your years of service:

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

- **Cash balance plan**: Your CalSTRS Defined Benefit Supplement account is a cash balance plan. Your contributions and your employer’s contributions on earnings in excess of one year of service earn a guaranteed annual interest rate. All the funds in your account are yours at retirement. See page 7 to learn more.

- **Defined contribution plan**: CalSTRS Pension2 offers 403(b), 457(b), Roth 403(b) and Roth 457(b) plans for additional income in retirement. Contribute to your tax-advantaged account through paycheck deductions. The amount you have at retirement depends on your contributions, investment gains or losses, and expenses. See page 11 to learn more.

Your income in retirement is a shared responsibility between CalSTRS and you. Your CalSTRS retirement benefit is a strong foundation, but you’ll likely need more to meet your retirement income goal.
Estimate Your Retirement Benefit

How much will your benefit be each month? Your primary retirement benefit is based on a formula set by law:

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

Service Credit

Service credit is the accumulated period of time, in years and partial years, during which you received creditable compensation and made contributions to the Defined Benefit Program.

If you earn more than one year of service credit in a school year by performing service, such as outgrowth assignments or working in multiple positions, most of your and your employer’s contributions from the additional service will go into your Defined Benefit Supplement account (see page 7).

Age Factor

Your age factor is a percentage based on your age at the time you retire. As a member under the 2% at 60 benefit structure, your age factor is set at 2 percent at age 60. It decreases if you retire before age 60 and increases to a maximum of 2.4 percent at age 63.

Final Compensation

Final compensation is your highest average annual compensation earnable for 36 consecutive months, or your highest 12 consecutive months if you have more than 25 years of qualified service credit.

See “Your Retirement Benefit” in the Member Handbook.

View the Understanding the Formula video at CalSTRS.com/videos.

Your Retirement Benefit—Your Options

The highest retirement benefit you can receive is the Member-Only Benefit. The Member-Only Benefit stops with your death. Or you can choose to provide a lifetime monthly benefit to someone upon your death.

See pages 17–20 to learn more about your eligibility to retire and your retirement decisions.

Are you saving enough? Are you moving in the right direction?

According to the 18th Annual Transamerica Retirement Survey, nearly half of workers say they “guessed” when asked how they estimated their retirement savings needs. About one in four workers estimated the amount based on their current living expenses, and only 7 percent have used a retirement calculator.

Use the worksheets on pages 22–24 to estimate your expenses and income in retirement.

Estimate your projected retirement benefit using the calculator at CalSTRS.com/calculators.
Contributions to Your CalSTRS Retirement
CalSTRS pays retirement benefits using a combination of investment income and contributions.

Your Member Contributions
You contribute 10.25 percent of your Defined Benefit creditable earnings to help finance your retirement benefit.

Your Employer’s Contributions
For 2018–19, your employer contributes an amount equal to 16.28 percent of your Defined Benefit creditable compensation. Employer contributions will continue to increase every year, up to 19.1 percent in 2020–21.

The State’s Contribution
For 2018–19, the State of California contributes 9.828 percent of the annual creditable compensation of all members, which includes an amount for purchasing power protection.

Inflation Protection
Your retirement benefit is protected against rising prices in two ways:

1. Starting September 1 after the first anniversary of your retirement date, your benefit increases automatically each year by 2 percent of your initial benefit.

2. If inflation erodes the purchasing power of your retirement benefit to less than 85 percent of your initial monthly benefit, you’ll receive an additional quarterly payment, subject to the availability of funds set aside for purchasing power protection.

Health Insurance in Retirement
CalSTRS does not provide health benefits. Your health benefits depend on your district’s agreement with your employee bargaining unit. Many retired educators have to contribute to or pay their own health insurance costs. Consider setting aside extra money now for your future.

You and your employer each pay 1.45 percent of your wages toward earning coverage under Medicare, the federal health insurance program for people age 65 and older.

Investment returns from the CalSTRS portfolio provide 58 percent of the funds to pay benefits, with contributions providing 42 percent.

Securing Your Financial Future
CalSTRS is committed to your financial security. We continue to make progress on the CalSTRS Funding Plan, set into motion by Chapter 47, Statutes of 2014 (Assembly Bill 1469–Bonta), which established a schedule of contribution rate increases shared among members, employers and the state. This plan works together with our investment portfolio performance to advance us along the path of long-term sustainability.

A snapshot of the Defined Benefit Program’s assets and liabilities as reported in the June 30, 2017, actuarial valuation, released in May 2018, reflects an unfunded liability of $107.3 billion—that is, the shortfall between our assets and the amount we need to pay future benefits. This shortfall was anticipated, primarily due to the adoption of our lower investment return assumption and an increase in our members’ life expectancies. These changes also caused the system’s funded ratio—the ratio of the smoothed actuarial value of assets to benefit obligations—to decrease, from 63.7 percent to 62.6 percent.

Even with this decline, we project a future upswing with a steady ascent toward full funding by 2046.

Learn more at CalSTRS.com/plan-funding.
Your Defined Benefit Supplement Account—Additional Money for Retirement

As a Defined Benefit member, you have a Defined Benefit Supplement account that provides additional savings for your retirement.

Your Defined Benefit account contains your member contributions up to one year of service performed in a school year. Any contributions on your earnings in excess of one year of service are credited to your Defined Benefit Supplement account.

As a CalSTRS 2% at 60 member, your contributions on limited-term payments are also credited to your Defined Benefit Supplement account.

Your Defined Benefit Supplement account balance earns a guaranteed interest rate. For 2018–19, the rate is 2.89 percent. When you retire, you’ll receive your CalSTRS monthly retirement benefit and the funds in your Defined Benefit Supplement account.

Contributions to your Defined Benefit Supplement account don’t affect your ability to make contributions to 403(b), 457(b) or similar tax-advantaged accounts.

Find your current account balance on your Retirement Progress Report at myCalSTRS.com.

Excess Contributions

If you make contributions on earnings in excess of one year of service, you’re eligible for a return of your contributions that exceed the 8 percent contribution rate for Defined Benefit Supplement compensation.

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.

We 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. If you have any questions regarding the return of your excess contributions, please contact your employer.

View the Defined Benefit Supplement videos at CalSTRS.com/videos.

Consider rolling over the money in your Defined Benefit Supplement account into CalSTRS Pension2 at retirement. Learn more on page 11.
Keep tabs on your CalSTRS account and service credit balances by reviewing your Retirement Progress Report each year. Your new report is available online on myCalSTRS in mid-September.

Your report summarizes:

- The service credit you earned the previous year.
- Your total accumulated service credit.
- The name of your one-time death benefit recipient.
- Accumulated contributions and interest in your Defined Benefit and Defined Benefit Supplement accounts.
- Information about your disability and survivor benefit coverage.
- Two estimates of your retirement benefit. These are estimates only and are not binding.

Find Your Retirement Progress Report at myCalSTRS.com.

If you believe there’s a discrepancy in your report, don’t wait to correct errors. Contact your employer immediately.

Be sure to verify your paycheck information, including your deductions, each pay period.
Increase Your Retirement Benefit

You can increase your benefit by increasing one or more of the elements of the retirement benefit formula:

- Purchase additional service credit, if you’re eligible to do so.
- Work longer to increase your years of service credit and age factor, and to qualify for benefit enhancements.
- Convert unused sick leave to service credit at retirement.

| service credit | x | age factor | x | final compensation |

Purchase Additional Service Credit

The more service credit you have at retirement, the greater your retirement benefit.

- Buy service credit for eligible:
  » Employer-approved maternity, paternity or sabbatical leave and leave approved under the federal Family and Medical Leave Act or California Family Rights Act.
  » Service in out-of-state or foreign public schools, the military, Peace Corps or Job Corps.
- Redeposit previously refunded contributions and restore service credit if you return to CalSTRS membership or work in certain other California public retirement systems.
- Purchase nonmember service, such as part-time or substitute service in the California public school system, earned before you were a CalSTRS member or after taking a refund and before becoming a member again.

See the Purchase Additional Service Credit booklet at CalSTRS.com/publications.

View the Purchase Service Credit video at CalSTRS.com/videos.

Work a While Longer

By working longer, you’ll continue to earn service credit, which will increase your benefit and can be used to qualify for the one-year final compensation and career factor benefit enhancements.

The older you are at retirement, the higher your age factor, up to a maximum age factor of 2.4 percent at age 63. If you retire with 30 or more years of service credit, you’ll qualify for the career factor benefit enhancement, which adds 0.2 percent to your age factor up to a maximum combined age factor and career factor of 2.4 percent at age 61 years and 6 months.

Postpone your retirement and you can still make tax-advantaged contributions to your 403(b), 457(b) or IRA account. Take advantage of catch-up contributions starting at age 50.

Convert Unused Sick Leave to Service Credit at Retirement

CalSTRS will convert your unused sick leave as reported by each employer during your last year to service credit when you retire. If you change employers during your career, be sure to coordinate with your former employer to arrange for the transfer of your accumulated unused sick leave to your new employer.

See “Converting Unused Sick Leave to Service Credit” in the Member Handbook.

It’s cheaper to buy service credit now rather than later. Estimate the cost to purchase at CalSTRS.com/calculators.
Increase Your 403(b) or 457(b) Contribution

Are you saving enough? One smart way to save is to invest in a 403(b) or 457(b) tax-advantaged account. It’s never too late to start.

Already saving? Consider increasing your monthly contribution. Use the savings calculator at CalSTRS.com/savingscalculator to help you keep your savings on track.

Did You Know?

Power of time and money. With compound interest, you earn interest on your total balance—your original contribution plus all interest earned and any additional contributions—so your money can grow faster.

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. Contribute to a Roth 403(b) or Roth 457(b) account through your paycheck and you won’t get a tax break up front, but your contributions and earnings will be tax-free at retirement when you withdraw your funds.

Investing involves risk, including risk of loss of principal.

To help you keep your savings on track, use the savings calculator at CalSTRS.com/savingscalculator. See how much more you could have at retirement if you increased your monthly contribution by $100.
Learn the Advantages of CalSTRS Pension2 403(b) and 457(b) Plans

If you’re like many other educators, you’ll likely need additional savings to bridge the gap between your CalSTRS retirement benefit and your retirement income goal. Pension2, the CalSTRS voluntary supplemental savings plan, offers 403(b), 457(b), Roth 403(b) and Roth 457(b) plans.

With Pension2, you’ll belong to a plan with:

- Low and transparent costs—no commissions, no load fees and no surrender charges.
- Flexible investment options that match all levels of investment ability:
  - Easy Choice Portfolios—designed to take into account your risk tolerance and retirement date, each is a ready-made mix of the core investment options.
  - Core Investment Options—build your own portfolio from a carefully selected list of more than 20 funds.
  - Self-Directed Brokerage Account—gives you access to a greatly expanded range of mutual funds.
- Personal advice services and planning tools.
- A website with investment education and retirement income planning tools.
- Account management through your mobile devices.

Have Other Retirement Savings Accounts?

Bring Them All Together!

Now’s the perfect time to combine your retirement accounts. By rolling over money currently held in other qualified retirement plans to CalSTRS Pension2, you’ll be able to manage your retirement savings in one place and benefit from some great features.

Have funds in your CalSTRS Defined Benefit Supplement account? Roll them over to Pension2 when you retire.

Asset consolidation is a powerful management strategy. Combining all your retirement accounts into one account makes it easier to manage your overall investment strategy—when you have fewer accounts, you have less to keep track of and can focus on one investment strategy to meet your savings goals.

You may be able to save on fees. Why pay fees on multiple accounts, many of which may have investments with higher fees than investments offered in Pension2. Less in fees can translate into more money for you.

To get a no-cost, no-obligation comparison of the fees you may pay elsewhere and with Pension2, simply call 888-394-2060, option 2.

Pension2 has low costs—something everyone likes. Compare costs at 403bCompare.com and see the Pension2 advantages.
Get the Facts on Social Security

As a California public school educator, you do not contribute to Social Security, so you will not receive a Social Security benefit for your CalSTRS-covered employment when you retire.

If you’re counting on Social Security through your spouse or other employment, two federal rules—the Government Pension Offset and the Windfall Elimination Provision—may leave you with a smaller Social Security benefit or possibly no Social Security benefit at all.

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

Government Pension Offset
Affects the Social Security benefit you receive as a spouse or surviving spouse.

• May reduce or eliminate your spousal Social Security benefit.

• Will offset your Social Security benefit by two-thirds of the amount of your CalSTRS retirement benefit.

For example: Assume your expected spousal Social Security benefit is $600 and your CalSTRS retirement benefit is $1,200. Since two-thirds of $1,200 is $800, which is more than your $600 Social Security benefit, you would not get a Social Security benefit.

Windfall Elimination Provision
Affects your Social Security benefit that is based on your earnings from other employment.

• May reduce your Social Security benefit but will not eliminate it. The amount of reduction depends on your years of Social Security earnings and the amount of your CalSTRS benefit.

• The reduction to your Social Security benefit cannot be more than half of your monthly CalSTRS benefit.

• Doesn’t apply if you have 30 or more years of Social Security substantial earnings.

For More Information
Find details, including calculators, to help you determine if these federal rules might affect you at ssa.gov.

See the Social Security, CalSTRS and You fact sheet at CalSTRS.com.

View the Introduction to Social Security video at CalSTRS.com/videos.

Manuel
High school teacher
CalSTRS member for 15 years
Name Your One-Time Death Benefit Recipient

You’re working hard to earn your CalSTRS benefits. Be sure to name your loved ones or a favorite organization to receive your one-time death benefit. You also have other survivor benefits along with disability benefits.

Your Survivor Benefits
Your spouse, children and other loved ones may be eligible for survivor benefits after your death. The type and amount of benefits depend on:

• Your years of service credit.
• Your type of coverage: A or B. Find your coverage on your Retirement Progress Report.
• Your membership status.
• Whether you elect an option.

Depending on your coverage and member status at the time of your death, your beneficiaries may be eligible for three types of benefits:

• One-time death benefit.
• Monthly benefit.
• Defined Benefit Supplement distribution.

One-Time Death Benefit
After your death, your one-time death benefit recipient will receive a one-time death benefit if eligibility requirements are met. The amount of this benefit depends on whether you die before or after retirement. You may name a living person, estate, trust or charity as your recipient.

You can change your death benefit recipient any time, with no financial penalty.

Monthly Benefit
If you die before retirement, your survivors, including your spouse or registered domestic partner and dependent children, may be eligible for a monthly survivor benefit.

Instead of a monthly survivor benefit, you may choose to elect an option to provide a lifetime monthly benefit to one or more beneficiaries when you’re eligible to retire, under Coverage B disability retirement or at retirement.

Defined Benefit Supplement Distribution
Your membership status when you die determines how the balance in your Defined Benefit Supplement account will be distributed.

If you die before retirement, your Defined Benefit Supplement account balance will be distributed to your one-time death benefit recipient. If you did not name a recipient, CalSTRS will pay the balance to your estate.

If you die after retirement, your account balance will be distributed to your one-time death benefit recipient or option beneficiary, depending on the distribution you elected at retirement.

See the Survivor Benefits brochure at CalSTRS.com/publications.

View the Survivor Benefits video at CalSTRS.com/videos.

Name your one-time death benefit recipient using myCalSTRS. Be sure to keep your recipient information current.
Your Disability Benefits

You may be eligible for disability benefits if you have a medically determined physical or mental impairment that is permanent or expected to last at least 12 consecutive months and:

• Prevents you from performing your usual duties with or without reasonable accommodation, or
• Prevents you from performing duties in a comparable level position.

In general, the basic disability benefit is 50 percent of your final compensation. The maximum benefit, including benefits for eligible dependent children, is 90 percent of your final compensation.

So that you have income while your application for disability benefits is being evaluated, you may apply while:

• You’re still working,
• You’re receiving sick leave or differential pay.

In addition, if you’re eligible to service retire, you can apply for service retirement during the evaluation of your application. However, if your disability benefits application isn’t approved, you’ll remain in service retirement and won’t be eligible to apply for disability again.

Unlike workers’ compensation benefits, your disability benefit does not require your disability to be work-related.

Attend a Workshop, View a Video

Want to learn more about your benefits as a CalSTRS member? How to save, plan and protect your financial future? Take advantage of our workshops for every stage of your career and member education videos covering a host of topics. In addition, CalSTRS representatives are available by phone, by secure online messaging or at our member service centers to answer your questions.

My Retirement Workshops
Looking for a quick way to learn how to make the most of your CalSTRS membership? Then the My Retirement interactive workshop series is for you.

- **My Retirement System**—Introduces your retirement, survivor and disability benefits, how to calculate your retirement benefit, and why it pays to start a 403(b) or 457(b) supplemental savings plan sooner rather than later.
- **My Retirement Benefits**—Provides more in-depth information about your benefits, earned and purchased service credit, and the gap between your CalSTRS benefit and your retirement income goal and ways you can bridge it.
- **My Retirement Decisions**—Covers the decisions you’ll need to make before you retire, including if you want to elect a beneficiary option, how to complete the application and what you’ll need to know after retirement.

Sign up at CalSTRS.com/workshops.

Financial Awareness Workshops
Learn how to make smart financial decisions today about your future. You’ll take home a booklet of helpful checklists and worksheets after attending each of our three financial awareness workshops:

- **Save for Your Future**—Discover new ways to create a spending plan, understand your credit report, build and keep good credit, manage debt and ask the right questions before investing.
- **Plan for Your Future**—Learn how to create an action plan for your retirement picture, identify your expense in retirement and how they’ll likely change over time, and about Medicare basics and Social Security offsets, if you’ll qualify for Social Security from other work or a spouse.
- **Protect Your Future**—Learn how to maximize and protect your income and reduce the risk of underestimating your expenses, and how to choose a financial professional.

Register now at CalSTRS.com/financial-awareness.
Our Member Service Centers

We have six member service centers where you can attend workshops, meet with CalSTRS benefits specialists by appointment or seek general information on a walk-in basis. We can also review and receive forms, and provide CalSTRS forms and publications.

In addition, we have local benefits planning offices located statewide that provide workshops, benefits planning sessions and other assistance.

Connections Newsletter

Stay engaged and be informed by reading Connections, which provides information about benefits, retirement planning, workshops, legislative news and more. Published in spring and fall.

Go paperless. Sign up on myCalSTRS to receive your newsletter electronically to help us conserve natural resources and reduce costs.

View Our Member Benefit Videos

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

Understanding the Formula:
Know how your retirement benefit is calculated.

The Gap: Consider how much of your working salary you’ll need to live the retirement you want.

Defined Benefit Supplement Program:
Learn about this additional source of money for retirement.

Disability Benefits: Introduces your disability coverage, eligibility requirements and the application process.

Go to CalSTRS.com/videos
Understand Your Retirement Decisions

Are you eligible to retire? Do you want to provide a lifetime monthly benefit to someone after your death? How do you want to receive the funds in your Defined Benefit Supplement account? It’s never too early to start planning for your retirement. Attend a CalSTRS workshop or benefits planning session to help you with these decisions and others. Then when you’re ready, complete and submit your Service Retirement Application online using myCalSTRS.

Are you eligible to retire?
You’re eligible to retire as early as age 50 with at least 30 years of service credit or age 55 with at least five years of service credit.

Do you want to provide a lifetime monthly retirement benefit to someone after your death?

**Member-Only Benefit**
The Member-Only Benefit provides the highest monthly benefit. It does not provide a monthly lifetime benefit for someone after your death. After your death, any remaining balance in your account will be paid to your one-time death benefit recipient.

**Modified Benefit**
You can choose to distribute your retirement benefit over your life and the life of one or more people. You’ll receive a reduced monthly lifetime benefit, known as a Modified Benefit, based on the option you choose, your age and your beneficiary’s age at election. When you die, your option beneficiary will receive a lifetime monthly benefit.

Your option choices include providing your beneficiary with 100 percent, 75 percent or 50 percent of your Modified Benefit. Or you can choose the Compound Option that lets you provide a lifetime monthly benefit for one or more individuals and keep a portion of your benefit as a Member-Only Benefit. After you retire, you can change your option beneficiary only under limited circumstances.

To find out how each option would affect your retirement benefit, use the Retirement Benefits Calculator at CalSTRS.com/calculators or schedule a benefits planning session at CalSTRS.com/benefits-planning.

Electing an Option Beneficiary Before Retirement
You can elect an option beneficiary when you are eligible but not yet ready to retire.

**Advantages include:**
- The benefit begins immediately after your death.
- If you die before you retire, your option beneficiary will receive a monthly lifetime benefit. If you did not pre-elect an option beneficiary and you die before retirement, your beneficiary may receive a smaller or no lifetime benefit.
- In most cases, the Modified Benefit you’ll receive in retirement will be higher if you pre-elect an option than if you elect an option at the time of retirement.

**Disadvantages include:**
- If you cancel or change your option before retiring, a lifetime assessment will be applied to your retirement benefit. The assessment may reduce your retirement benefit for life.
- If your option beneficiary dies before you retire, the election will be canceled automatically. Your retirement benefit will be subject to an assessment that may reduce your benefit for life.

If you choose to elect an option before retirement, complete and submit the Preretirement Option Election form online using myCalSTRS for faster processing.

See “Protecting Your Loved Ones Before You Retire” and “Protecting Your Survivors With a Lifetime Benefit” in the Member Handbook.

View the Beneficiary Options video at CalSTRS.com/videos.
Your Retirement Formula: How It Works

Let’s look at Faye:

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 $5,708.

Here are three examples for her Member-Only retirement benefit calculation, not including any unused sick leave she may have that will be converted to service credit at retirement. The examples assume her pay stays the same and she doesn’t elect an option to provide a lifetime benefit to someone upon her death.

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 2.4 percent.

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

**Example 1**

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

\[
29 \times 1.76\% \times 5,708 = 2,913
\]

**Example 2**

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

\[
31 \times 2.2\% \times 5,708 = 3,893
\]

**Example 3**

If she continues working until her 62nd birthday, she would be eligible for the maximum combined age factor and career factor of 2.4 percent, giving her a monthly retirement benefit of:

\[
33 \times 2.4\% \times 5,708 = 4,521
\]

Find the “Age Factor Table” and “Career Factor Table” in the *Member Handbook* at CalSTRS.com/publications.
How do you want to receive the funds in your Defined Benefit Supplement account?

When you retire, you'll receive the funds in your Defined Benefit Supplement account. Your most recent Retirement Progress Report shows the total amount in your account at the end of the last school year.

Things to Consider

The amount in your account determines how you can receive your funds at retirement:

- If you have less than $3,500 in your account, you will receive your account balance as a lump-sum payment. You may receive your funds directly or roll them into a qualified retirement plan, such as CalSTRS Pension2.
- If you have $3,500 or more in your account, your choices depend on whether you elect a Member-Only Benefit or a Modified Benefit. The choices include a lump-sum payment, annuity payments or both.

See “Your Retirement Benefit, Defined Benefit Supplement Program” in the Member Handbook.

View the three-part Defined Benefit Supplement series at CalSTRS.com/videos.

Ease Into Retirement Under the Reduced Workload Program

If you are not ready to retire but want to cut back on the number of hours you work, consider the Reduced Workload Program (also known as the Willie Brown Act). It allows you to work less than full time but continue to earn service credit as if you were working full time. You continue to pay your CalSTRS member contributions based on your full-time salary, and your employer continues to pay its CalSTRS contributions based on your full-time salary.

To participate, you must be at least age 55, have at least 10 years of service credit and have been employed full time in a CalSTRS-covered position for the last five years. Talk to your employer to find out whether the program is offered. Availability and participation are at your employer's discretion.

See “Reduced Workload Program” in the Member Handbook.

If You Contributed to Another Public Retirement System

If you are also a member of another public retirement system in California, you'll need to file for retirement separately with each system.

When calculating your retirement benefit, CalSTRS may be able to use your salary for service performed under the other retirement system if you didn’t work for both systems at the same time. If you worked under both retirement systems during the same pay period, however, we are required by law to use your CalSTRS salary. If you perform service under either system between the two retirement dates, we must use your CalSTRS salary.

See the Concurrent Retirement fact sheet at CalSTRS.com/publications for a list of public retirement systems.

Not sure how much you’ll need?

Try living on your estimated retirement income for a few months while you’re still working. Use the monthly retirement expense and income worksheets on pages 22–24 to get an idea of where you stand now.
Working After Retirement

As you plan for retirement, consider how you will spend your days as well as how much money you will need.

If you think you may return to work, here’s what you need to know:

• You can work in any job outside the California public school system with no restrictions on your earnings. This includes working for private schools, state colleges and universities, and the private sector.

• Under the separation-from-service requirement, your CalSTRS benefit will be reduced by the amount you earn performing retired member activities during the first 180 calendar days following your most recent retirement date, up to your benefit amount payable during that period. This includes performing retired member activities as a substitute teacher and as an employee of a public school system, an independent contractor or an employee of a third party.

• If you perform retired member activities, including substitute teaching, as an employee of a public school system, an independent contractor or an employee of a third party, there’s a limit to the amount of money you can earn without affecting your retirement benefit. For fiscal year 2018–19, the postretirement earnings limit is $45,022.

• If you retired under the Retirement Incentive Program, you will lose the ongoing increase in your benefit from the incentive if you return to work within five years of retirement in any job with the employer that granted the incentive.

Your Responsibility

If you return to work in the California public school system, you will need to keep track of your gross earnings (your income before any taxes are deducted) so you do not exceed the earnings limit. CalSTRS will also monitor your earnings, but it usually takes three to four months to receive, review and post your earnings to your account.

If you earn more than the limit, your monthly retirement benefits will be reduced by the excess amount, up to the amount of your total annual benefit. For example, if you earn $3,000 above the limit in a fiscal year (July 1 to June 30), we will reduce your retirement benefits by $3,000.

See the Working After Retirement fact sheet at CalSTRS.com/publications and “Reinstatement to Active Member Status” in the Member Handbook.

Did You Know?

22% of retired members work for pay. The main reason: they enjoy working and want to stay active (26%). Some 24% of those working for pay said they need the income for living expenses. One-third of those retirees working for pay work in CalSTRS-covered employment. About half of all CalSTRS retirees do volunteer work.

—CalSTRS 2017 Retirement Readiness Assessment Survey
Would you like to start a new business? A new career? Volunteer? Travel? Spend more time with family or pursue new hobbies? Check all the things you see yourself doing when you retire.

**Work**
- Start a new career or business
- Work part time or consult
- Volunteer
- Be a mentor

**Family**
- Visit family often
- Care for grandchildren
- Care for a parent
- Care for a spouse

**Education**
- Take classes
- Learn a language
- Read a lot
- Focus more on staying healthy

**Travel**
- Travel as much as possible
- Take one trip a year
- Buy an RV

**Fun**
- Spend more time on hobbies
- Eat out often
- Go to special events

**Transportation**
- Reduce the number of cars I own
- Use public transportation

**Housing**
- Stay in my current home
- Downsize my living space
- Pay off a home mortgage
- Remodel
- Do home repair or maintenance projects
- Rent
- Buy a second or vacation home
- Move to an active adult community
- Live with family
- Look into assisted living

**Location**
- Stay near friends or family
- Live in a different climate
- Live closer to family
- Live closer to my interests
- Move somewhere with a lower cost of living

**Other**

__________________________________________

__________________________________________
## Your Estimated Monthly Retirement Expenses

*Fill in the first column with what you’re now spending monthly.* Next, calculate the inflation factor by following the steps listed on the Inflation Factor table on the following page, then place the inflation factor in the second column. Multiply the first column by the second column to get an idea of the income you’ll need during your first year of retirement. Mortgage/rent, loan and credit card payments are set under specific terms and rates, so no inflation applies.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expense</th>
<th>Current Monthly Cost</th>
<th>Inflation Factor</th>
<th>Monthly Cost at Retirement (current cost X inflation factor)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mortgage/rent (excluding property taxes and insurance)</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Property taxes</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homeowner's insurance</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homeowner's association dues</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilities (gas, electric, water, sewage, trash)</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TV, internet, phone</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home maintenance</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Automobile/transportation (gas, maintenance, insurance)</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food (groceries, eating out)</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clothing</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal care</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dependent care</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health care/Medicare</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loan payments (car, home equity, credit line)</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Credit cards (minimum payment)</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entertainment</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charitable donations/gifts</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MONTHLY TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>$</td>
<td></td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Inflation is defined as a sustained increase in the general level of prices for goods and services. It’s measured as an annual percentage increase. As inflation rises, every dollar you own buys a smaller percentage of goods and services. While inflation affects everyone, those on a fixed income may feel the effect more than others. Here are the steps to calculate the inflation factor for the Your Estimated Monthly Retirement Expenses worksheet on the previous page:

1. Choose the number of years until your retirement starts from the far left column, “Years to Retirement.”

2. Select an estimated annual inflation rate from the row across the top. Inflation cannot be predicted from year to year. The current inflation rate for the U.S. is 2.5 percent. From 2000 to 2009, inflation averaged 2.56 percent; from 1990 to 1999, inflation averaged 3 percent; and from 1980 to 1989, inflation averaged 5.51 percent. You’ll have to make an educated guess.

3. Read across and down to find the appropriate inflation factor corresponding to your predicted rate of inflation. For example, if your retirement is five years out and you guess a 5 percent annual inflation rate, your inflation factor will be 1.28. List your inflation factor in the “Inflation Factor” column of your worksheet.

4. Finally, multiply your estimated monthly living expense from the first column by the inflation factor in the second column to get an idea of the income you’ll need for your first month of retirement if you would like to maintain your current lifestyle.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years to Retirement</th>
<th>3%</th>
<th>5%</th>
<th>7%</th>
<th>10%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.03</td>
<td>1.05</td>
<td>1.07</td>
<td>1.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>1.16</td>
<td>1.28</td>
<td>1.40</td>
<td>1.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>1.34</td>
<td>1.63</td>
<td>1.97</td>
<td>2.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>1.56</td>
<td>2.08</td>
<td>2.76</td>
<td>4.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>1.81</td>
<td>2.65</td>
<td>3.87</td>
<td>6.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>2.09</td>
<td>3.39</td>
<td>5.43</td>
<td>10.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>2.43</td>
<td>4.32</td>
<td>7.61</td>
<td>17.45</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Medicare starts at age 65, but you’ll still have copayments, deductibles and other expenses that aren’t covered, including custodial care—that’s help with daily living. According to the Employee Benefit Research Institute, Medicare covered 64 percent of the cost of health care services for those age 65 and older in 2014. Out-of-pocket spending accounted for 12 percent, with private insurance covering the rest.
# Your Retirement Income Worksheet

This worksheet will give you an idea of what your income in retirement will look like. Enter monthly amounts before taxes.

## Guaranteed Income

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Defined Benefit Pension</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My benefit</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other benefit</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Defined Benefit Supplement Payment</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lifetime monthly annuity</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Social Security</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My benefit from other work</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other benefit</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Veteran’s Benefit</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My benefit</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other benefit</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Annuities</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My annuity income</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other annuity income</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other Guaranteed Income</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other income</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Guaranteed Monthly Income</strong></td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Non-Guaranteed Income

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>403(b), 457(b), 401(k), IRA</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monthly distributions</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Roth 403(b), Roth 457(b), Roth 401(k), Roth IRA</strong></td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monthly distributions</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Brokerage/Savings Accounts</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monthly distributions</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Work/Part-Time Work</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Income Outside of Work</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Real estate rental income</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other annuity income</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Non-Guaranteed Monthly Income</strong></td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Total Monthly Income

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Guaranteed Monthly Income</strong></td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Non-Guaranteed Monthly Income</strong></td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL MONTHLY INCOME</strong></td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Guaranteed Income Checklist

- Have I received estimates of my monthly benefits from all sources?
- Do these income sources adjust with inflation?
- What are the tax considerations of these income sources?
- What happens to these income sources if I or my significant other dies?

### Non-Guaranteed Income Checklist

- Do I have a strategy for taking distributions from each account?
- Have I looked into converting these accounts to guaranteed income, if needed?
- How do the IRS required minimum distribution rules affect these accounts?
- What are the tax considerations of these income sources?
## CalSTRS Benefits Planning Offices

### Member Service Centers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Telephone Number</th>
<th>Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Glendale</td>
<td>800-228-5453 ext. 3</td>
<td>M–F 8–5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irvine</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Riverside</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Diego</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santa Clara</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Sacramento</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Satellite Offices*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Telephone Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bakersfield</td>
<td>800-228-5453 ext. 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ceres</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cordelia</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culver City</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Downey</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>El Centro</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eureka</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fresno</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lancaster</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oroville</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oxnard</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palm Springs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pleasant Hill</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Redding</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salinas</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Francisco</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Marcos</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santa Barbara</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santa Cruz</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santa Fe Springs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santa Maria</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santa Rosa</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visalia</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walnut</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Hours and services vary at satellite offices, so please call ahead of time or visit CalSTRS.com/localoffices for more information.

## CalSTRS Resources

### WEB
- CalSTRS.com
- Click Contact Us to email
- myCalSTRS.com
- 403bCompare.com
- Pension2.com

### CALL
- **800-228-5453**
  - 7 a.m. to 6 p.m.
  - Monday through Friday
- 916-414-1099
- Calls from outside the U.S.
- 888-394-2060
  - CalSTRS Pension2®
  - Personal Wealth Plan
- 855-844-2468 (toll free)
  - Pension Abuse Reporting Hotline

### WRITE
- CalSTRS
  - P.O. Box 15275
  - Sacramento, CA 95851-0275

### VISIT
- Member Services
  - 100 Waterfront Place
  - West Sacramento, CA 95605
- Find your nearest CalSTRS office at CalSTRS.com/localoffices

### FAX
- 916-414-5040

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