

# My Retirement Benefits

Learn more about my benefits, how to calculate my retirement benefit, and ways to increase it

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Section 1: Important Considerations

- CalSTRS provides retirement, disability and survivor benefits—but not health benefits. I'm responsible for my own health benefit coverage in retirement.
- The Windfall Elimination Provision reduces but cannot eliminate my earned Social Security benefit.
- The Government Pension Offset reduces and can eliminate my spousal/widow(er) Social Security benefit.

### My Action Items

- Check with my employer about health benefit coverage in retirement.
- Learn more about these two rules at the Social Security Administration's website, [ssa.gov](http://ssa.gov).
- View the *Social Security, CalSTRS and You* fact sheet at [CalSTRS.com](http://CalSTRS.com).

## Section 2: Online Resources

- **CalSTRS.com**—access benefit information, forms, publications, videos and calculators.
- **myCalSTRS**—view and update my personal account information, submit forms and messages, and access my *Retirement Progress Report*.
- **Retirement Progress Report**—track my membership and benefit information, service credit, account balances, and other information reported by my employer.

### My Action Items

- Explore **CalSTRS.com** and view the *Member Handbook* at [CalSTRS.com](http://CalSTRS.com).
- Register for **myCalSTRS** at [myCalSTRS.com](http://myCalSTRS.com) so I can review my account and service credit balances, plus update my communication preferences.
- Review my *Retirement Progress Report* each September on **myCalSTRS** and contact my employer immediately if there are discrepancies.

## Section 3: Membership Information

- My benefit structure determines my contribution rate and how my retirement benefit is calculated.

I am a CalSTRS 2% at \_\_\_\_\_ member.

### My Action Items

- Verify my benefit structure on my *Retirement Progress Report*.

## Section 4: Retirement Benefits

- The earliest I can retire is age 55 with five years of service credit. (If I'm a 2% at 60 member with at least 30 years of service credit, I can retire at age 50).
- My service retirement benefit is a lifetime benefit based on a formula, not on how much I contribute or how well CalSTRS investments perform:

**Service Credit x Age Factor x Final Compensation = Monthly Retirement Benefit**

	What it is	How to increase it
Service Credit	Time worked for which contributions were paid	Work longer or purchase
Age Factor	Percentage based on age at retirement For CalSTRS 2% at 60 members, the age factor is increased by 0.2 percent if you have 30 or more years of earned service credit	Work longer or wait to retire
Final Compensation	Highest average annual compensation earnable, generally 36 consecutive months, is used to determine your final compensation For 2% at 60 members with 25 or more years of service credit at retirement, we use the highest 12 consecutive months	Work at higher pay rates

### My Action Items

- See the *Member Handbook* for more about my retirement eligibility and my age factor table.
- Review the *Understanding the Formula* fact sheet and video at **CalSTRS.com**.
- Use the *Retirement Benefits Calculator* at **CalSTRS.com** to estimate my retirement benefit.
- Track my service credit balance on my *Retirement Progress Report* and be sure to transfer my unused sick leave balances if I change employers.

🔗 Calculate Laura's final compensation using the information in the table:

School Year	Compensation Earnable	Number of Months
Year A	\$61,800	12
Year B	\$60,600	12
Year C	\$59,400	12
Year D	\$58,300	12
Year E	\$57,200	12

**Highest three years average compensation earnable:**

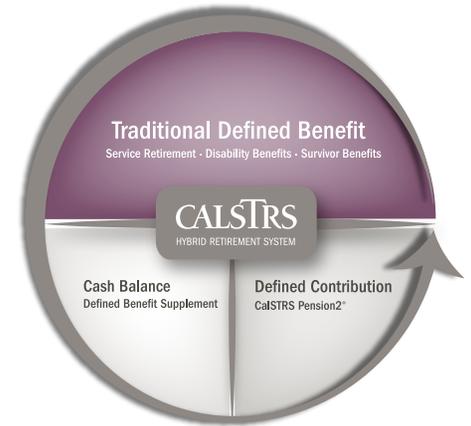
Year 1 \_\_\_\_\_  
 + Year 2 \_\_\_\_\_  
 + Year 3 \_\_\_\_\_  
 = \_\_\_\_\_ **36-month total**  
 ÷ 36 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Laura's Final Compensation

## Section 5: Additional Income Sources

- On average, a CalSTRS monthly benefit replaces about 50 percent of a career educator's working salary. I can calculate my replacement ratio by multiplying my service credit by my age factor.
- Contributions for service in excess of one year are credited to my Defined Benefit Supplement account. I can increase my account by working extra-pay assignments.
- CalSTRS Pension2® is a voluntary defined contribution plan with low cost 403(b), 457(b), Roth 403(b) and Roth 457(b) accounts for additional income in retirement.

### My Action Items

- If I have service credit to purchase, review the *Purchase Additional Service Credit* booklet and estimate the cost of my purchase and change to my benefit using the calculators at **CalSTRS.com**.
- Estimate my expenses in retirement and research supplemental savings and other income sources.
- Find my Defined Benefit Supplement account balance on **myCalSTRS** and watch the video series at **CalSTRS.com/videos** to understand funding sources, distribution choices and tax considerations.
- Visit **Pension2.com** or call 888-394-2060 for more information, videos and contribution calculators.
- Research and compare my employer's 403(b) supplemental savings plans at **403bCompare.com**.



## Section 6: Coverage Types

- My coverage type determines how my disability and survivor benefits are calculated.
  - I have Coverage \_\_\_\_\_.

### My Action Items

- Verify my coverage type on my *Retirement Progress Report*.

## Section 7: One-Time Death Benefit

- The one-time death benefit is a lump-sum payment to my designated recipients. My coverage type determines the amount payable. Under Coverage \_\_\_\_\_, my one-time death benefit is \$ \_\_\_\_\_ before retirement and \$ \_\_\_\_\_ after.

### My Action Item

- Name or update my recipient online at **myCalSTRS** or use the *Recipient Designation* form at **CalSTRS.com**.

## Section 8: Survivor Benefits

- I am eligible for my survivor benefits if I am an active member and have at least one year of service credit.
- My spouse or registered domestic partner is an eligible survivor.
- My financially dependent children under age \_\_\_\_\_ are eligible survivors.
- If I have no eligible survivors, my account balances will be paid to my one-time death benefit recipient.

### My Action Items

- Read more about my survivor benefit eligibility in the *Member Handbook*, at **CalSTRS.com**.
- View the *Survivor Benefits* video on **CalSTRS.com/videos**.
- Be sure my loved ones know to notify CalSTRS of my death.

## Section 9: Disability Benefits

- I may be eligible for a disability benefit with five years of service credit, or one year of service credit if my disability is due to an unlawful act of bodily injury while working in a CalSTRS-covered position.
- My mental or physical impairment must be permanent or expected to last longer than 12 months.
- My impairment must prevent me from performing my usual duties or those of a comparable level position.
- The basic disability calculation is:  
**50% Final Compensation + 10% Final Compensation per Eligible Dependent Child up to an additional 40%**

### My Action Items

- Schedule a disability benefits planning session, if needed.
- Read *Your Disability Benefits Guide* for more information, including alternate calculations for Coverage A or periods of part-time service.

## Section 10: Learn More

- Make the most of my CalSTRS membership by attending the **My Retirement Decisions** workshop to understand my retirement elections and timelines.
- Attend the CalSTRS three-part financial awareness workshop series for an in-depth look at financial planning:
  - **Save for Your Future**—budgeting basics, savings and investing, credit and debt
  - **Plan for Your Future**—retirement lifestyle, expenses and income in retirement, potential obstacles
  - **Protect Your Future**—retirement distributions, maximizing and protecting income

### My Action Items

- View and register for workshops near me at [CalSTRS.com/workshops](https://www.calstrs.com/workshops).
- Visit [CalSTRS.com/financial-awareness](https://www.calstrs.com/financial-awareness) for more information.
- Customer service is available at *myCalSTRS* or by phone, letter or in person at a member service center. Visit [CalSTRS.com/contactus](https://www.calstrs.com/contactus) or call 800-228-5453.

