

Text of Regulations: Creditable compensation

Title 5. Education. Division 3. Teachers' Retirement System.

All new text to be added to the California Code of Regulations follows, under new Articles 1-5 in new Chapter 2.

Chapter 2. Compensation

Article 1. General Provisions

§ 27200. Members affected by this chapter.

This chapter applies to members who are not subject to the California Public Employees' Pension Reform Act of 2013 (Article 4 [commencing with Section 7522] of Chapter 21 of Division 7 of Title 1 of the Government Code).

§ 27201. Effective date.

The provisions of this chapter are effective beginning with compensation that is earned for service performed on or after July 1, 2014.

Article 2. Class of Employees

§ 27300. Basis of establishment of a class of employees.

- (a) One or more employees constitute a class of employees pursuant to Education Code Section 22112.5 on the basis of either or both of the following:
 - (1) Similarity of the job duties being performed.
 - (A) Job duties are those activities described as creditable service in subdivisions (a) and (b) of Section 22119.5 of the Education Code.
 - (B) The job duties grouped within each paragraph of subdivision (a) of Section 22119.5 and subdivision (b) of Section 22119.5 of the Education Code are deemed similar for the purposes of this subdivision.
 - (C) An employer may establish a class that is comprised of employees whose assignment is any combination of two or more job duties.
 - (D) The employer must demonstrate that job duties for a class comprised of one employee under this subdivision are in common use by at least two other employers.
 - (2) Employment in the same type of program.
 - (A) A program is any educational program established pursuant to state or federal law.
 - (B) One or more employees may be considered a separate class because they work in a separate program as defined in subparagraph (A) from other employees who have similar job duties.

Note: Authority cited: Section 22305, 22112.5, 22119.2 and 22213, Education Code. Reference: Sections 1205, 22112.5 and 22119.5, Education Code.

§ 27301. Prohibited classes of employees.

- (a) An employer may not establish a class of employees that is distinguished by any of the following:
- (1) The retirement benefit formula or retirement program.
 - (2) A minimum or maximum threshold for age or service credit.
 - (3) The characterization or restructuring of compensation, in the absence of the criteria described in Section 27300.
 - (4) An option or requirement for one or more employees who perform similar job duties to work a longer day, or work more days per year, performing additional separate or similar job duties, in the absence of the criteria described in paragraph (2) of subdivision (a) of Section 27300.

*Note: Authority cited: Section 22305, 22112.5, 22119.2, 22207, and 22213, Education Code.
Reference: Sections 22112.5 and 22119.5, Education Code.*

Article 3. Creditable Compensation

§ 27400. Salary.

- (a) Salary is compensation that meets all of the following requirements:
- (1) Paid in cash by an employer to an employee for the performance of creditable service.
 - (2) Explicitly characterized as salary on a contract, salary schedule or employment agreement.
 - (3) Used as a basis for future pay increases.
 - (4) Paid without a requirement by the employer for proof of expenditure.
- (b) The employer must establish a full-time requirement and compensation earnable for all assignments for which an employee will earn salary.
- (c) If the employer releases an employee from an assignment with a requirement that the employee perform another assignment within the same hours or days, the employer may not report salary as if it was earned in the assignment from which the time was reassigned. To report the assignment the employer must do either of the following:
- (1) Establish a separate class of employees pursuant to Section 27300.
 - (2) Establish a full-time requirement and compensation earnable for each assignment pursuant to subdivision (b).
- (d) If compensation is restructured into salary, regardless of how it was paid previously, and the restructure is a permanent change in the employer's business practice, the compensation is salary beginning on the effective date of the restructure.
- (1) A change is presumed to not be permanent if it has a specified end date.

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- (2) A change is presumed to not be permanent if the restructure is negotiated outside of that employer's standard bargaining or employment contract negotiation time frames and the restructure affects final compensation.
- (3) A change is presumed to not be permanent if it is implemented for a class of one and it affects that member's final compensation calculation and the change is reversed upon hire and negotiation of the first contract of the immediate successor.
- (e) Salary includes amounts deducted from salary at the discretion of the employee.
- (f) If compensation otherwise meets the definition of "fringe benefit" under Section 27501 or "expenses paid or reimbursed by an employer" under Section 27502, and the compensation is consistent with paragraphs (1) through (4) of subdivision (a), it is salary.

Note: Authority cited: Sections 22305, 22119.2, 22119.5, 22138.5, 22207, 22213, 22214, and 22215, 22458, Education Code. Reference: Sections 22115, 22119.2, 22119.5, 22138.5 and 22138.6, Education Code.

§ 27401. Remuneration that is paid in addition to salary.

- (a) Remuneration in addition to salary, when paid in cash in accordance with a publicly available written contractual agreement where applicable and required by law, includes the following compensation that is not associated with the performance of additional service, provided that it is paid to all persons who are in a class of employees, in the same dollar amount, same percentage of salary or same percentage of amount being distributed:
 - (1) Compensation for meeting any of the following qualifications or requirements:
 - (A) Possession or attainment of a certificate, license, special credential or advanced degree.
 - (B) Career or service longevity.
 - (C) Hiring, transfer or retirement.
 - (D) Employment in a position that is hazardous or difficult to staff.
 - (E) Employment in an assignment in which the number of students enrolled exceeds the contractual amount.
 - (F) Achievement of a performance benchmark.
 - (2) Compensation that is paid contingent upon availability of funds.
- (b) If compensation is restructured into remuneration in addition to salary, regardless of how it was paid previously, and the restructure is a permanent change in the employer's business practice, the compensation is remuneration in addition to salary beginning on the effective date of the restructure.
 - (1) A change is presumed to not be permanent if it has a specified end date.
 - (2) A change is presumed to not be permanent if the restructure is negotiated outside of that employer's standard bargaining or employment contract negotiation time frames and the restructure affects final compensation.

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- (3) A change is presumed to not be permanent if it is implemented for a class of one and it affects that member's final compensation calculation, if the change is reversed upon hire and negotiation of the first contract of the immediate successor.
- (c) Remuneration in addition to salary does not include:
 - (1) Cash paid by an employer to an employee who receives cash in lieu of a fringe benefit, or cash in lieu of an expense paid or reimbursed by the employer.
 - (2) Cash paid by an employer on behalf of an employee for a fringe benefit, expense or reimbursement.
 - (3) Cash paid by an employer to an employee that is the remainder from money allocated for fringe benefits or expenses that are paid by the employer.

Note: Authority cited: Sections 22305, 22119.2, 22119.5, 22207, 22213, 22214, 22215, and 22458, Education Code. Reference: Section 22119.2, Education Code.

Article 4. Noncreditable compensation

§ 27500. Amounts not deducted from a member's salary.

- (a) Compensation paid in addition to salary that is contingent upon the purchase of any of the items described in paragraph (5) of subdivision (a) of Section 22119.2 of the Education Code is deemed covered by the employer and is not creditable compensation.

Note: Authority cited: Sections 22305, 22119.2, 22207, 22213, and 22250, Education Code. Reference: Section 22119.2, 22458, and 24950, Education Code.

§ 27501. Fringe benefit.

- (a) A fringe benefit is any of the following:
 - (1) A good or service for which the cost is paid to a third party or otherwise covered by the employer.
 - (2) Compensation allocated to an employee to cover a personal or business expense that could otherwise be provided in the form of a good or service as specified in paragraph (1).
 - (3) Cash in lieu of, or cash remaining from, a good or service as specified in paragraph (1).

Note: Authority cited: Section 22305 and 22119.2, Education Code. Reference: Section 22119.2, Education Code.

§ 27502. Expenses paid or reimbursed by an employer.

- (a) An expense paid by an employer includes any of the following:

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- (1) Compensation allocated to an employee to cover a cost the employee is expected to incur in the course of performing duties for that employer, which could otherwise be covered by the employer or provided in the form of a reimbursement of the cost.
 - (2) Cash paid directly to a third party or a cost that is otherwise covered by the employer.
 - (3) Cash in lieu of, or cash remaining from, compensation allocated to cover a cost pursuant to paragraph (1).
- (b) An expense reimbursed by an employer is cash paid to the employee that meets all the following requirements:
- (1) There is a business connection to the expenditure.
 - (2) The employee is required to provide documentation or accounting of the expenditure to the employer.
 - (3) The employee is required to return excess reimbursements or advances to the employer if actual incurred expenses are less than the amount reimbursed or advanced.

Note: Authority cited: Section 22305 and 22119.2, Education Code. Reference: Section 22119.2, Education Code.

Article 5. Appropriate crediting of contributions.

§ 27600. Consistent treatment of compensation.

- (a) In assessing the consistency of an increase affecting a member's final compensation calculation, an increase is consistent, if the employer demonstrates that it is due to any of the following:
- (1) A restructure of compensation that meets the criteria described in subdivision (d) of Section 27400 or subdivision (b) of Section 27401.
 - (2) A salary deferral due to a reduction in school funds.
 - (3) A commensurate percentage increase in compensation earnable for other employees performing similar job duties for the same employer.
 - (4) A change in duties required of the employee that is incorporated in the first contract for the immediate successor to the position.
 - (5) An increase in responsibility of the employee that is incorporated in the first contract for the immediate successor to the position.
 - (6) Attainment of an educational or performance benchmark.
 - (7) An increase that establishes pay parity as demonstrated by any of the following:
 - (A) Commensurate compensation earnable for that same position in the past.
 - (B) Commensurate compensation earnable for other employees performing similar duties for the same employer or other employers.
 - (C) Commensurate increase in compensation earnable for other employees at the same employer.
 - (8) A commensurate compensation earnable for the immediate successor.
 - (9) A commensurate compensation earnable for the immediate predecessor.

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- (10) More education or experience than the immediate predecessor.
- (b) In assessing the consistent treatment of compensation for a position, if the successor's compensation earnable is lower than the member's and the reduction in successor pay is attributable to less education or experience, it shall be presumed to be consistent.
- (c) In assessing the consistency of an increase affecting a member's final compensation calculation, an increase that is not due to any of the circumstances listed in subdivision (a) is presumed to be inconsistent.
- (d) Notwithstanding subdivision (a), if there is determined to be a pattern of assignment of duties or responsibilities by an employer to employees during the final compensation period, the additional compensation for those duties is presumed to be inconsistent.

Note: Authority cited: Sections 22305, 22119.2, 22207, 22215, 22250, and 22458, Education Code. Reference: Sections 22112.5, 22119.2, 22458, and 22905, Education Code.

§ 27601. Appropriate crediting of contributions.

- (a) Upon determination that compensation was treated inconsistently and the inconsistency affects the member's final compensation calculation, CalSTRS shall limit the amount of contributions that are credited to the Defined Benefit Program.
- (1) If the inconsistent treatment of compensation is the result of a restructure of compensation that is not permanent pursuant to subdivision (d) of Section 27400 or subdivision (b) of Section 27401, the amount that was restructured shall be credited to the member's Defined Benefit Supplement account beginning with the effective date of the restructure.
- (2) If any part of creditable compensation is restructured into a fringe benefit or an expense paid or reimbursed by the employer, or otherwise becomes noncreditable, that amount is not creditable compensation beginning with the effective date of the restructure.
- (3) If the inconsistent treatment of compensation is not attributable to a restructure, the portion of compensation affecting the member's final compensation determined to be in excess of the following thresholds is not creditable to the Defined Benefit Program. The employer shall be instructed to report that portion of compensation to the member's Defined Benefit Supplement account:
- (A) For inconsistent compensation increases concurrent with a change in position, the threshold is the immediate predecessor's salary increased by the average percentage increase of the compensation earnable of a representative sample of employees during the year the inconsistent compensation increase occurred.
- (B) For inconsistent compensation increases for a position held between two and five years, the threshold is the member's compensation earnable for the year prior to the year in which the inconsistent increase occurred increased by the average percentage increase of the compensation earnable for a representative sample of employees during the year the inconsistent compensation increase occurred.

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- (C) For inconsistent compensation increases for a position held five or more years, the threshold is the member's compensation earnable for the year prior to the year in which the inconsistent increase occurred, increased by the average of the compensation increases earned during the member's final five years of employment.
- (4) For the purposes of subparagraphs (A) and (B) of paragraph (3), a representative sample of employees is the member and a number of other employees at the same employer as follows:
- (A) If the member performs similar job duties to two or more other employees, the representative sample is the member and two other employees performing those similar duties.
- (B) If the member is performing more than one job duty pursuant to subparagraph (C) of paragraph (1) of subdivision (a) of section 27300, and there are not two additional employees performing a similar combination of job duties, the representative sample is the member and two other employees performing each of the duties that comprise that combination.
- (C) If the member is performing a single set of job duties as defined in subdivision (a) of section 27300, and there are not two additional employees performing similar job duties, the representative sample is the member and two other employees performing the next closest similar duties, as demonstrated by either of the following:
- (i) Nearest match in salary range.
 - (ii) Nearest match in full-time requirement.

Note: Authority cited: Section 22305, 22119.2, 22207, 22213, and Education Code. Reference: Section 1205, 2574, 22112.5, 22119.2, and 22458, Education Code.

§ 27602. Compensation that is paid a limited number of times.

- (a) Contributions for the following types of compensation are creditable to the Defined Benefit Program:
- (1) Compensation paid to achieve compensation parity between part-time and full-time faculty of California Community Colleges for similar work, as funded pursuant to the Budget Act.
 - (2) Compensation based on the allocation of funds from the California State Lottery Education Fund.
- (b) Contributions for remuneration in addition to salary shall be credited to the member's Defined Benefit Supplement account if both paragraphs (1) and (2) are met:
- (1) The compensation is not ongoing, as limited by either of the following:
 - (A) The number of times is specified in law or in a publicly available written contractual agreement.
 - (B) The compensation is not scheduled to continue.
 - (2) The compensation is paid to an individual contingent upon either of the following:
 - (A) Availability of funds, except as provided in subdivision (a).
 - (B) Meeting any of the following qualifications or requirements:

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- (i) Possession or attainment of a certificate, license, special credential or advanced degree.
- (ii) Career or service longevity.
- (iii) Hiring, transfer or retirement.
- (iv) Employment in a position that is hazardous or difficult to staff.
- (v) Employment in an assignment in which the class size exceeds the contractual amount.
- (vi) Achievement of a performance benchmark.

Note: Authority cited: Sections 22305, 22119.2, and 22458, Education Code. Reference: Sections 14700, 22119.2 and 22905, Education Code; Section 8880.5, Government Code.