

Retirement

OUTLOOK



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To help you stay connected to the latest retirement information available, we're introducing a free digital subscription service. The service automatically emails you when items on the DRS website change or when new information becomes available. The only information that's required from you is your email address. After you sign up, you can change your subscription details or cancel the service at any time.

How it works

Every hour, the service checks the DRS website to see what's been updated and sends emails to people who have signed up for notifications (for example, an update to the PERS Plan 2 handbook or a new edition of the Outlook newsletter). As a subscriber, you can tailor the frequency you wish to receive notices: immediately upon posting, daily, weekly or monthly (please note that the page you select may not be updated at each of those intervals, depending upon the topic).

It's easy to use – with just a few clicks you can sign up for updates on a variety of topics including news and announcements, legislation impacting retirement and informational brochures. And as you browse our website, you'll notice that individual articles also feature a link reading, "Email me when this page is updated." Click this link to subscribe for updates on that particular page and topic.

Subscribe now



To start receiving updates from DRS, visit our homepage any time at www.drs.wa.gov and look for the link and envelope icon at the top of the page. Once you click on the link, you can start creating your personalized list of subscription options.

Subscription benefits

- Quick email notification: Know as soon as a publication or news article becomes available or has been updated on the DRS website
- Individual: Sign up only IF you want to; cancel your subscription any time
- Customizable: Offers a list of retirement plans, systems and topics to choose from at sign up that you can change any time
- Automatic: Once you establish a subscription profile, you will automatically receive updates without having to check the DRS website for changes

Privacy Policy

We value your privacy. Email updates are a free service provided by the DRS. Your email address will only be used to deliver the information you have requested and allow you to access your account. ■

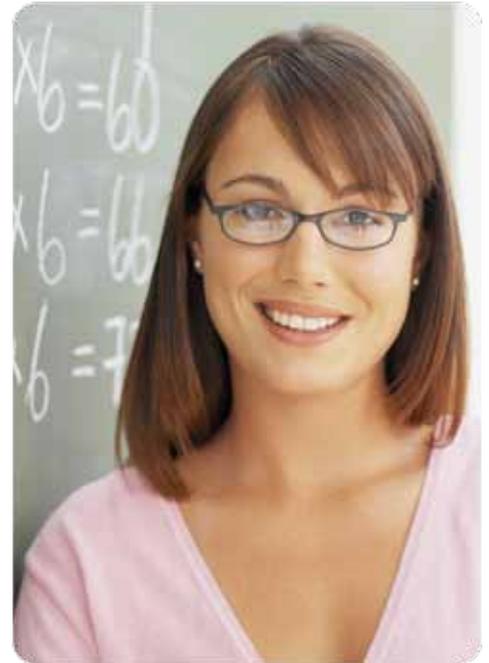
Annual statements available for education employees

Annual retirement statements for the 2010-2011 school year are now available for employees of public school districts, educational service districts, higher education institutions and the Washington State Center for Childhood Deafness and the School for the Blind. To view or print a copy of your statement visit the DRS website, www.drs.wa.gov, login to *myDRS* and select Defined Benefit Access.

Your annual retirement statement gives you updates on your service credit and contributions, and is based on the most recent information DRS has received from your employer. It's important to keep in mind that your statement may not match the total retirement contribution you see on your year-end pay slip. This is because contributions are generally posted to your account the month following payroll deduction.

Plan 3 members receive a quarterly statement that details their contributions and account balance. So, annual statements for Plan 3 members provide only service credit information. If you have questions about your account balance, please call us at 888-711-8773.

Review your annual statement carefully. If you find any discrepancies or have questions, contact your payroll officer, or call DRS if you are no longer employed.



PEBB launches new cost-efficient way to receive communications



The Public Employees Benefits Board (PEBB) has launched a new program that offers a fast, convenient way for you to receive PEBB communications.

The new “**Saving the Green**” campaign will get benefit-related news to you quicker than ever. At the same time, it reduces the state’s reliance on paper mailings and decreases the impact on the environment.

PEBB regularly mails newsletter and other materials to subscribers to help them stay informed about their PEBB health coverage, but postal mail doesn’t make sense for everyone, and it continues to represent rising costs for the Health Care Authority, which administers the PEBB program.

The green campaign replaces some of the general mailings (like newsletters and reminders), but you will continue to receive some items by mail.

To sign up for the new program, just follow these steps:

Go to the PEBB website, www.pebb.hca.wa.gov and select My Account on the left side of the page.

Complete the sign-in screen and select Continue.

Select the link next to the Email Address header to subscribe.

If you have questions or need help with the sign-in process:

Review the Sign-in Tips

Read the FAQs on the site

Send a message through PEBB’s FUZE system

On October 28, 2011 the changes to the investment options for Plan 3 and the Deferred Compensation Program (DCP) were finalized. The Washington State Investment Board (WSIB) worked closely with DRS to develop a core menu of options that include proven familiar performers as well as new options that reflect changing markets. Communication about the transition began in April newsletters, and followed with a detailed guide that was mailed to Plan 3 members and DCP participants in August. As a result of the change, there were some funds in Plan 3 and DCP that were discontinued at 1:00 p.m. PT on October 28. As we mentioned in prior communications, if you had a balance or future payroll allocation directed toward a fund(s) that closed, your investments were moved into a Retirement Strategy Fund based on your birth year and an assumed retirement at age 65.

Fund Transition Complete



You can evaluate your current investments, review fact sheets on the new options and make changes online at any time.

For Plan 3, call 888-711-8773 or visit www.icmarc.org/plan3. For DCP, call 888-327-5596 or visit www.drs.wa.gov/dcp. Be sure to consult with your financial advisor if you have questions about your investment strategy. Additional resources explaining the fund transition in detail are available on the DRS website at www.drs.wa.gov. Just look for the Fund Transition article on the home page under *News and Announcements*. ■

Save more – today

Do you want to decrease your federal income tax obligation?

DCP

Do you participate in DCP? If not, we encourage you to join if your employer participates.

For those who do participate in DCP, it's a great way to save for your future. And since your contributions are not taxed until you withdraw your funds, DCP allows you to reduce your federal income taxes.

The coming of the new year is a great time to either begin participating in DCP or to increase your contributions. After the first of the year, the maximum DCP deferral amount will increase. Also, if you're age 50+, or if you are within three years of your normal retirement age, the maximum amount you can make under "catch-up" provisions will increase.

Regular deferrals will increase from \$16,500 to \$17,000 annually or \$1,416 monthly. 50+ catch-up deferrals will go from \$22,000 to \$22,500 annually or \$1,875 per month. And the three-year catch-up provision will increase from \$33,000 to \$34,000 annually or \$2,833 monthly.

You can make changes to your regular and 50+ catch-up deferrals online or over the phone. To inquire about the three-year catch-up provision, please give us a call. ■

www.drs.wa.gov/dcp

888-327-5596

January brings opportunity for change

January and the beginning of a new year are just around the corner. The month of January means TRS Plan 3 members and eligible Plan 2 members have another opportunity to make changes that affect their retirement.

TRS Plan 3 Contribution Rate Change

If you're a TRS Plan 3 member, you have the opportunity in January to change your contribution rate. If you decide to do so, you'll find the *TRS Plan 3 Contribution Rate Change* form on the **Plan 3 website**, www.icmarc.org/plan3/trs under publications and forms. Complete the form and submit it to your employer between January 1 and January 31.

Please note that future ability to change your contribution rate in January is subject to IRS approval.

Eligible Plan 2 members can transfer to Plan 3

The following members are eligible to transfer to Plan 3 during the month of January:

- PERS Plan 2 state or higher education employees who established membership before March 1, 2002;
- PERS Plan 2 local government employees who established membership before September 1, 2002; and
- SERS and TRS Plan 2 members hired before July 1, 2007.

To transfer, complete a *Member Information* form and turn it in to your employer between January 1 and January 31. Remember, the decision to join Plan 3 cannot be changed at a later date. ■

We want to know: What would it take?

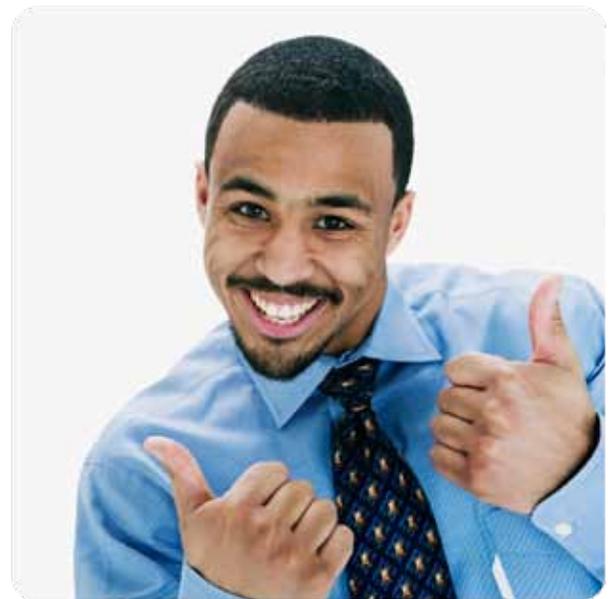
We're all learning to do more with less in this economic climate. But that doesn't mean we're scrimping on our level of service here at DRS. While we provide a high standard of customer service now for a low cost, we know we can always get better. Listening to you – our valued retirement system members – is the best way to make improvements that are both economically wise and address your needs.

We want to understand and deliver, so we're asking...

What would it take for you to be a 100% satisfied customer of DRS?

We recognize your ongoing need for fast, friendly, accurate and cost-effective service. What expectations do you have to be 100% satisfied with the service you receive from us? Give us your best examples and ideas.

We want to hear it straight from you! Please send your thoughts and ideas to: Communications@drs.wa.gov and stay tuned as we develop more ways for you to share with us so we can continue to serve you best.



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