



Rules for Governor-Appointed Officials

The following rules apply to governor-appointed officials who choose to be covered by the Public Employees' Retirement System (PERS) Plan 2 or Plan 3 while in office. You are eligible to participate in PERS Plan 2 or Plan 3 while in office if:

- You were appointed to office directly by the governor, your appointment was confirmed by the legislature, and you are either:
- A member of PERS Plan 2, PERS Plan 3, TRS Plan 2, TRS Plan 3, SERS Plan 2, SERS Plan 3 or LEOFF Plan 2 when appointed to office, or
- You are a former member of one of these plans (even if you withdrew funds from your retirement account).
- You have never been a member of a retirement plan administered by the state of Washington.

You are not required to join PERS membership while serving in your elected position. However, if you would like to become a member while in office, you must apply to the Department of Retirement Systems (DRS).

When can I apply for membership?

You may apply for membership at any time while you are serving in your appointed position. If you enter membership after your appointment has begun, membership will be retroactive to the first day of your appointment to office. You will be required to pay employee contributions plus interest back to the first day of your appointment.

As a governor-appointed official, you are not eligible to purchase service credit for previous terms of governor-appointed service. However, you are entitled to establish membership and service credit for service in previously held **elected** positions.

If you have been appointed by the governor to a position that does not have a set term of office, your “current term of office” includes all uninterrupted service beginning with the first day of your current appointment.

Your membership decision is final: Once you have established retirement system membership, you must remain a member until you separate from all eligible public employment. If you serve an additional term of office with the same employer without a break in service, you will remain a retirement system member.

Can I receive credit for past elected service?

As a governor-appointed official, you are not eligible to purchase service credit for previous terms of governor-appointed service. However, you are entitled to establish membership and service credit for service in previously held elected positions retroactive to the first day of any previous PERS elected term or terms of office.



To receive service credit you must pay the required employee and employer contributions and interest for your previous term or terms of elected service as determined by DRS. Your employer may elect to pay the required employer contributions and interest for you.

How much service credit will I earn?

The amount of service credit you earn helps to determine the size of your retirement benefit. As a governor-appointed official, you will earn service credit as follows:

- For service prior to September 1, 1991, you receive service credit for only those months in which you worked for at least 90 hours and earned compensation in excess of 90 times the state hourly minimum wage.
- For service on or after September 1, 1991, you receive service credit as follows:
 - 90 or more hours = one service credit month
 - At least 70, but fewer than 90 hours = one half service credit month
 - Less than 70 hours = one-quarter service credit month

What will my retirement benefit be?

The amount you will receive for a service retirement benefit is based on the formula:

Plan 2

$$2 \text{ percent} \times \text{service credit years} \times \text{Average Final Compensation (AFC)} = \text{Monthly benefit}$$

Plan 3

$$1 \text{ percent} \times \text{service credit years} \times \text{AFC} = \text{Monthly benefit}$$

Average Final Compensation is the monthly average of your 60 consecutive highest-paid service credit months. Not included are payments for any type of severance pay such as lump-sum payments for deferred sick leave or annual leave.

How much will I contribute to my retirement fund?

Plan 2 contribution rates are variable and may be changed as necessary to reflect the cost of the plan.

In Plan 3, the amount you contribute depends on the contribution rate option you choose. Plan 3 features six contribution rate options that, once selected, may only be changed if you change employers.

The Plan 3 contribution rate options are:

- Option A: 5% fixed at all ages
- Option B: 5% up to age 35; 6% ages 35 to 44; 7.5% age 45 and up
- Option C: 6% up to age 35; 7.5% ages 35 to 44; 8.5% age 45 and up
- Option D: 7% fixed at all ages
- Option E: 10% fixed at all ages
- Option F: 15% fixed at all ages

What if I am retired when appointed?

If you are a retired PERS Plan 2 or Plan 3 member who is appointed to office by the governor, you have the option of remaining retired and continuing to receive your retirement benefit while serving in office, or returning to active member status while serving in office. If you choose to continue receiving your retirement benefit, you will be subject to retiree return to work rules for your system and plan. For more information, see the PERS Plan 2 and 3 *Thinking about working after retirement?* brochure.

If you return to active member status, you will stop receiving a monthly retirement benefit, and you will resume making contributions to your retirement system and accumulating service credit prospectively from the first day of the month following the date the department accepts your application for membership.

How do I enroll?

To begin, continue or reestablish PERS Plan 2 or Plan 3 membership, contact DRS and provide the following information:

- Name
- Social Security number
- Address and phone number
- Position title and employer
- Beginning date of current governor-appointed service
- Beginning and ending dates of any prior elected official service

DRS will send you a letter and application once you provide us with all of these items.



To Learn More

More information about elected or governor-appointed officials is available on the DRS Web site or by contacting DRS. Additional rules governing all PERS Plan 2 or Plan 3 members are summarized in the *PERS Plan 2 and PERS Plan 3 Member Handbooks*. To obtain a copy of a member handbook, visit the DRS Web site at www.drs.wa.gov or contact DRS.

Web site: www.drs.wa.gov

Telephone: 1-800-547-6657; or (360) 664-7000 in the Olympia area
TDD: 1-866-377-8895; or (360) 586-5450 in the Olympia area

E-mail: recep@drs.wa.gov

Address: P.O. Box 48380
Olympia WA 98504-8380



May 2007

Summary Description

The actual provisions governing elected or governor-appointed officials are contained in the Revised Code of Washington. This publication is a summary of those provisions, not a complete description of the law. If there are any conflicts between what is written in this publication and what is contained in the law, the applicable law will govern.