

Plans 2 and 3 Military Service Credit

Washington State Department of Retirement Systems



This publication is for Plan 2 and 3 members of Public Employees' Retirement System (PERS), School Employees' Retirement System (SERS) Plan, Teachers' Retirement System (TRS), Public Safety Employees' Retirement System (PSERS), Law Enforcement Officers' and Fire Fighters' Retirement System (LEOFF), and Washington State Patrol Retirement System (WSPRS).



What is interruptive military service?

If you take a leave of absence from your Department of Retirement Systems-covered position to serve in the United States military, you are interrupting membership in your retirement system.

If you return to your DRS-covered position, you might be able to recover service credit for the time you spent in the U.S. armed forces. That service credit is called "interruptive military service credit."

Service credit is one of the factors used in computing your retirement benefit, so increasing your service credit would increase your future monthly benefit.



What qualifies as U.S. military service?

Your military service must have been with the armed forces of the

United States. That includes:

- Army
- Navy
- Air Force
- Marine Corps
- Marine Reserves
- U.S. Coast Guard
- National Guard



How do I recover interruptive military service credit?

To recover interruptive military service credit, you must:

- Leave DRS-covered employment to serve in one of the armed forces of the United States
- Receive an honorable discharge
- Return to employment with your DRS-covered employer within 90 days of leaving military service
- Send DRS a copy of your DD214, or Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty

We will review your documents and employment history and notify you of our findings.



How much military service credit can I recover?

You can recover between five and 10 years of interruptive military service credit, depending on your circumstance.

If your service was during a period of war or an armed conflict during which you earned a campaign badge or medal, you can recover five years of interruptive military service credit at no cost to you. You can also recover up to five more years of service credit by paying the contribution cost for those years.

If you don't meet the no-cost criteria, you are still eligible to buy up to five years of interruptive military service credit.

If interested, contact DRS and we'll

You can update your beneficiaries in your online retirement account at www.drs.wa.gov/oa.

send you a bill for the amount due. You must complete payment of the contributions within five years of returning to employment or before you retire, whichever comes first.

Whether you receive full or partial service credit months depends on when you served in the military. The service credit rules at the time of your military service will apply.



What if I die or become disabled as a result of my military service?

If you become totally incapacitated for continued employment as a result of your service in the U.S. military, you can apply for interruptive military service credit.

If you die while serving your country, your surviving spouse, registered domestic partner or guardian of your minor children can apply for your interruptive military service credit.

Contact DRS for more information.



I'm a member of LEOFF Plan 2. When am I eligible for disaster response service credit?

There are certain circumstances, on or after March 22, 2014, when members of LEOFF Plan 2 might qualify for disaster response benefits and service credit. In all situations listed in this section, your death or disability must have occurred while you were in eligible federal service providing eligible emergency management services.

Death benefit while working for a LEOFF Plan 2 employer

Your surviving spouse or registered domestic partner, or if none, the guardian of your minor child or children might qualify for an unreduced death benefit if you leave the employment of your LEOFF Plan 2 employer to provide a disaster response, and you die on or after March 22, 2014. The benefit will be a minimum 10% of your Final Average Salary.

Disability benefit while working for a LEOFF Plan 2 employer

You might qualify for a disability benefit if you leave the employment of your

LEOFF Plan 2 employer to provide a disaster response, and you become disabled on or after March 22, 2014. Your benefit won't be reduced if you retire early. The benefit will be a minimum 10% of your Final Average Salary.

Service credit for leave of absence while working in eligible federal service

You might qualify for service credit for your leave of absence if you become disabled when you leave the employment of your LEOFF Plan 2 employer to provide a disaster response, on or after March 22, 2014. Your surviving spouse or registered domestic partner, or if none, the guardian of your minor child or children may qualify for this service credit if you die as a result of this federal service.

To contact DRS

<p>Call</p> <p>Phone 360.664.7000 800.547.6657</p> <p>TTY 711</p> 	<p>Write</p> <p>Department of Retirement Systems PO Box 48380 Olympia, WA 98504-8380</p> 	<p>Email</p> <p>recep@drs.wa.gov</p> <p>It might be possible for other people to read messages sent over the Internet. If you contact us by email, please include only the last four digits of your Social Security number.</p> 
<p>Visit</p> <p>6835 Capitol Blvd. Tumwater, WA 98501</p> <p><i>Directions are available on the DRS website.</i></p> 	<p>Hours</p> <p>Monday - Friday 8 am to 5 pm Pacific Time</p> 	<p>Website</p> <p>www.drs.wa.gov</p> <p>You can also send us email through the DRS website. Visit the <i>Contact Us</i> page.</p> 

This document is a summary. It is not a complete description of military service credit. State retirement laws govern your benefit. If a conflict exists between the information in this document and what is contained in current law, the law governs.