

How Dual Membership Works for PERS/PSERS Retirement Accounts

Washington State Department of Retirement Systems



If you're a member of more than one Washington state retirement system, you are a dual member. You can combine service credit earned in all of your systems to become eligible for retirement.



What happens if I'm a dual member or become one?

You are a dual member if you have established membership in more than one Washington state retirement system, including First Class City Retirement Systems for Seattle, Spokane and Tacoma. We also refer to dual membership as multiple plans.

To see if you're eligible to retire, add up the service credit you earned in each of your member systems. If that combined service makes you eligible to retire from one of your plans, you can choose to retire from all of them. Retiring before full retirement age can result in permanent reductions in your benefit.



Example 1

Let's say you're 60 years old. You worked in PERS Plan 2 for 15 years and earned a PERS Average Final Compensation (AFC) of \$5000. Now, you've been working in PSERS Plan 2 for 15 years and you have a PSERS AFC of \$8000. The PSERS AFC of \$8000 will be used for both calculations.

Dual member benefit calculation

PERS Plan 2:

2% X Years of Service in PERS X Highest AFC X PERS early retirement factor (if applicable)

$$2\% \times 15 \times \$8000 = \$2400$$

$$\$2400 \times 91\% \text{ (early retirement factor)} = \$2184 \text{ at age 60}$$

PSERS Plan 2:

2% X Years of Service in PERS Plan 2 X Highest Average Final Compensation X PSERS Plan 2 early retirement factor (if applicable)

$$2\% \times 15 \times \$8000 = \$2400$$

$$\$2400 \times 100\% \text{ (no early retirement factor applies)} = \$2400$$

The resulting combined lifetime monthly benefit amount would be \$4584.



Example 2

Chris is 53 years old. They worked 10 years as a PERS Plan 3 member, with a PERS AFC of \$4000. They are actively working as a PSERS Plan 2 member with 10 years of service and a PSERS AFC of \$6000.

In a dual member calculation, the highest average compensation between the systems is used for both benefits.

Dual member benefit calculation

PERS Plan 3:

1% X Years of Service in PERS Plan 3 X PSERS Plan 2 AFC (if higher than PERS Plan 3) X PERS Plan 3 early retirement factor (if applicable)

$$1\% \times 10 \times \$6000 = \$600$$

$$\$600 \times 34.68\% \text{ (early retirement factor)} = \$208 \text{ (retiring at age 53)}$$

PSERS Plan 2:

2% X Years of Service in PSERS Plan 2 X Highest Average Final Compensation X PSERS Plan 2 early retirement factor (if applicable)

$$2\% \times 10 \times \$6000 = \$1200$$

$$\$1200 \times 79\% \text{ (early retirement factor)} = \$948 \text{ (retiring at age 53)}$$

The resulting combined benefit amount would be \$1156. Chris still has a Plan 3 investment portfolio.



Still have questions? See the requirements for your retirement system and plan at <https://www.drs.wa.gov/plan/>. And see the best ways to contact DRS and your account login information at <https://www.drs.wa.gov/contact/>.

This document is a summary. It is not a complete description of how career transitions affect your account. 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.