



OPERS Board of Trustees Election

Your Voice, Your Choice - Vote in 2017



OPERS and Ohio Deferred Compensation Boards of Trustees Board Election Talking Points

GENERAL INFORMATION

- Groups whose representatives' position to the OPERS Board of Trustees are up for election this year include:
 - Miscellaneous employees** – those not included in one of the other groups, employed by employers such as park districts, conservancy districts, sanitary districts, health districts, townships, metropolitan housing authorities, state retirement systems, public libraries, county law libraries, union cemeteries, joint hospitals or institutional commissaries within the state of Ohio (approximately 46,000 members)
 - County employees** – those employed at a county job within the state of Ohio (approximately 87,600 members)
 - Retirees** – approximately 177,500 age and service, disability, and defined contribution (DC) plan retirees will be voting for one of two retiree Board representatives; this group includes re-employed retirees
- Those elected will serve four-year terms beginning **January 1, 2018**.
- Any **public employee**, who is a member of OPERS in one of the categories up for election, is eligible to represent their group, except one who is receiving a disability allowance.
- Any OPERS **retiree** receiving an age and service benefit, disability benefit, or benefits under the DC plan is eligible to represent retirees. **Beneficiaries and surviving family members are not eligible to run for election or nominate candidates by signing a petition. Beneficiaries are also ineligible to vote and will not receive a ballot.** If a person is receiving age and service payment, the candidate must run for retiree position, even if re-employed.
- An election announcement can be found on the OPERS website, www.opers.org/elections. This announcement provides general election information and also access to a complete list of OPERS employers and their corresponding employer groups, including separate lists for the County and Miscellaneous categories. The lists are designed to help active members identify their employer group.
- Interested individuals still unsure after checking these lists should check with their employer or OPERS on their proper classification.
- Judges and magistrates are not eligible to hold a seat on the OPERS Board.
- OPERS Board members also automatically serve on the board governing the Ohio Public Employees Deferred Compensation Program (Ohio Deferred Comp or ODC).

PETITIONS/CANDIDACY PACKETS

- Nominating petition packets will be mailed to employers on Thursday, **June 1, 2017**, for distribution to interested candidates.
- Petition packets will also be available for pick-up at the OPERS office, 277 East Town Street, Columbus, Ohio and on the OPERS website, www.opers.org/elections, or can be mailed by request on or after **June 1, 2017**.
- Under Ohio law, an eligible candidate seeking an **employee member** position is required to **obtain a minimum of 500 member signatures. Within that 500, at least 10 different counties must be represented by a minimum of 20 signatures from each county.** Employees signing petitions should indicate the county of their employment.

- Eligible candidates seeking a **retiree position** are required to **obtain a minimum of 250 retiree signatures. Within that 250, at least 5 different counties must be represented by a minimum of 10 signatures from each county.** Retirees signing petitions should indicate the county in which they reside. Signatures of a retiree's spouse or beneficiary do not count toward the 250 signatures required.
- We require that those signing the petitions provide the last four digits of their Social Security number and county of employment for active members, or their county of residence for retirees. Any signature without this information may not be able to be verified and may not be counted towards the candidate's total.
- It should be noted that duplicate signatures on petitions will not be counted.
- OPERS must receive **original documents**. Candidate/petitions cannot utilize electronic signatures. Petitions cannot be emailed (scanned) or faxed.
- RC 3501.38(B) states petitions filed with any other public office shall be **in ink**.
- Potential candidates should check specific employers/offices/counties in regards to solicitation policies and procedures.
- A qualifying candidate must submit a biographical statement on the affidavit form provided for inclusion with the ballot mailing. This statement cannot exceed 200 words and must be submitted with the petitions and the provided Certification by Candidate for Election form **no later than 4:30 p.m., Monday, July 31, 2017**. The Board reserves the right to edit these biographical statements with notice to a candidate.
- A candidate must provide a disclaimer on or with any written or spoken **campaign materials** that neither the board nor system endorses any particular candidate or statement, and these materials must be submitted to staff for pre-approval (see following bullet).
- Third parties sending **campaign materials** out on candidate's behalf must also include the OPERS disclaimer
 - Turnaround time for any advertising approval is 3 business days upon receipt of materials. This is both for candidate as well as third parties.
 - Any posting on the OPERS blog/Facebook pages that includes any endorsement for a candidate will be removed from posting.
- Any items listed on your Biographical statement WILL be published (including home phone number). Your biographical statement including spelling, layout, etc., will go on the ballot as is presented on form – font is the only item to change for consistency purposes.
- Candidates should check with their employer before using an employer email address.
- Candidates must also submit the provided packet forms referencing State Retirement System Candidate Campaign Finance Requirements from the Ohio Secretary of State. These forms should be submitted to the Secretary of State's office according to the direction provided on the packet's cover letter. Any questions regarding these forms should be directed to Secretary of State's Campaign Finance Division at (614) 466-2655 or 1-877-767-6446.
- **July 31, 2017 at 4:30 p.m.** is the deadline for candidates to complete the petitions, forms and draft biographical information with OPERS. This is an actual receipt date, not a postmark date.
- Overnight or certified mail or hand delivery of Candidate petition packet information is strongly encouraged to ensure timely delivery. This also applies to petition signature forms.

BOARD COMMITMENT

- OPERS Board members attend a monthly board meeting on the third Wednesday of each month in Columbus. Board members may also meet on the preceding Tuesday each month for education and/or committee meetings, and, at times, a Deferred Compensation meeting. These meetings usually involve full-day commitments on that Tuesday and Wednesday. From time-to-time, the OPERS Board may call special meetings.
- On average, OPERS Board members should expect to spend at a minimum 40-50 working days each year on OPERS and Deferred Compensation Board business (excluding preparation time discussed below), including meetings, education, committee commitments, and/or planning. New board members, or those with a limited financial background, should anticipate spending a little more time during their first year to accommodate additional training.
- OPERS Board retreats are scheduled once or twice each year for strategic planning or other topics.
- OPERS Board members are required to complete specific education sessions and an orientation for new board members within 90 days of taking seat.
- Preparation for each OPERS Board meeting involves reviewing board materials that are available electronically approximately one week prior, which takes about eight hours to review.
- Board members should expect to attend six to eight half-day meetings on Deferred Compensation business each year. Beginning in January, the Deferred Compensation Board normally meets every other month on the Tuesday immediately preceding the OPERS Board committee meetings.
- In addition to bi-monthly meetings, the Deferred Compensation Board conducts an annual strategic planning session and an annual self-evaluation. Three committees of the Deferred Compensation Board meet on an as-needed basis, usually immediately before or after a Deferred Compensation Board meeting. From time-to-time, the Deferred Compensation Board may call special meetings.
- Deferred Compensation Board members receive agenda materials approximately one week in advance of each meeting. Materials typically require one to three hours of reading.
- Board members are not penalized for absence from their regular employment while attending authorized Board meetings. Although Board members receive no additional compensation, reimbursement is made for necessary expenses while serving the System.
- Board members are subject to Ohio Ethics Laws which generally govern conflict of interest situations and prohibit board members from soliciting or accepting anything of value from persons or corporations doing business with the System. Board members must annually file Financial Disclosure Statements with the Ohio Ethics Commission. Board members are also prohibited from soliciting or accepting payment of travel expenses, including expenses incurred with the travel for lodging, meals, food and beverages, from anyone other than OPERS.
- Board members are trustees of the System funds and are subject to strict fiduciary standards of conduct. The Board members must act solely in the best interests of the participants and beneficiaries and for the exclusive purpose of providing them with benefits and defraying reasonable administrative expenses.
- **Removal from the Board:** Board members may be removed by a trial court if the member commits misconduct in office. If a board member breaches his or her fiduciary duty, the Ohio Attorney General may file a civil action against the member and seek restitution.