

Ohio PERS NEWS

Your Benefit Connection



News and information for retired members of the Ohio Public Employees Retirement System

OPERS offers Connector Readiness seminars this spring

The OPERS education staff will be traveling throughout the state during April and May presenting Connector Readiness seminars for eligible OPERS retirees. These seminars are designed to provide general Medicare information and also a basic understanding of the OPERS Medicare Connector and the enrollment process.

seminar, please do not sign up for a seminar this spring. The content is the same and many retirees have not yet had the opportunity to attend. If you have not yet attended a Connector Readiness seminar, you can register through your online account by selecting “Tools and Resources” then “Seminars and Counseling” or by calling OPERS at 1-800-222-7377.

We added these dates due to the overwhelming popularity of these seminars in late 2014 and early 2015. **If you have already attended an OPERS Connector Readiness**

In August and September, OPERS will partner with OneExchange to hold a number of seminars around the state. A full schedule and registration instructions will be provided to eligible retirees within a second Connector Readiness Kit in late June.

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2015 Connector Readiness seminars

Chillicothe
April 8

Cleveland East
April 20

Boardman
April 30

Sharonville
May 12, 13

Perrysburg
April 9

Akron
April 23

Cleveland South
May 5, 7

Mentor
May 19, 21

Bellville
April 14

Columbus
April 30

Lima
May 7

Worthington
May 21

The following previously scheduled Connector Readiness seminars are still being held, but are completely full - Bellville (April 15), Columbus (April 29), Cleveland South (May 6), Mentor (May 20)

Webinars and recorded presentations

OPERS conducts weekly, “live” webinars to provide our membership with an understanding of the upcoming changes to retiree health care coverage. Visit www.opers.org and click on “Educational Opportunities” under the heading of “Retirees” to register for webinars. OPERS has also made available some recorded presentations. These presentations cover a variety of topics and can be found by visiting www.opers.org and clicking on “Educational Opportunities” under the heading of “Retirees” to view available recorded presentations.

Disability benefit recipients must complete and return an Employment and Earnings Statement

OPERS NEWS – Your Benefit Connection is a quarterly newsletter providing news and information to more than 160,000 age and service retirees, disability benefit recipients and survivor benefit recipients of the Ohio Public Employees Retirement System. This publication allows us to communicate vital information concerning retirement benefits and health care coverage to our retirees and also educate them on the services we provide.

CONTACT INFORMATION:

www.opers.org

1-800-222-7377

Monday - Friday

8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

newsfeedback@opers.org

It is your responsibility to be certain that OPERS has your current address on file. If OPERS is not made aware of address changes, we cannot guarantee that you will receive important information pertaining to your OPERS account.

This newsletter is written in plain language for use by members of the Ohio Public Employees Retirement System. It is not intended as a substitute for the Federal or state law, namely the Ohio Revised Code, the Ohio Administrative Code, or the Internal Revenue Code, nor will its interpretation prevail should a conflict arise between it and the Ohio Revised Code, Ohio Administrative Code, or Internal Revenue Code. Rules governing the retirement system are subject to change periodically either by statute of the Ohio General Assembly, regulation of the Ohio Public Employees Retirement Board, or regulation of the Internal Revenue Code. If you have questions about this material, please contact our office or seek legal advice from your attorney.

OPERS is not required to provide health care coverage to retirees or their dependents and will only do so at the discretion of the Board of Trustees.

Every year OPERS disability benefit recipients, regardless of their age, are required by state law to complete an Employment and Earnings Statement. You will need to indicate whether or not you were employed in the previous year. If you were employed, you will need to provide the total of your earnings as well as information about the employer(s) for which you worked. If available, please provide a job description for each position you held.

It is important that you submit this statement. The information will be used to assist OPERS in the proper administration of its disability benefits program. To ensure continued receipt of your disability benefits payment, you must submit the Employment and Earnings Statement even if you did not work. These statements no longer require a notarized signature.

Failure to comply with this request will result in suspension of your monthly disability benefit.

OPERS will begin mailing statements during the last week in February. If we have not received a form back from you, we will send you a second notice on March 18, 2015. Employment and Earnings Statements cannot be accepted by fax so it is important that you mail the completed form to OPERS as soon as possible.

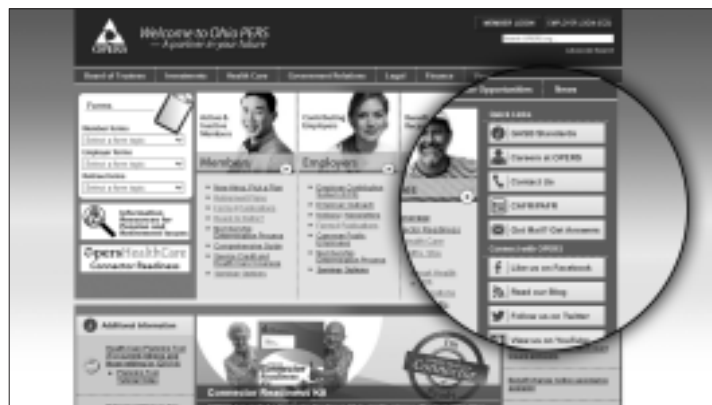
You have until April 15, 2015 to complete and mail the form back to OPERS. If we do not receive your form by no later than April 15, your May disability benefit payment and subsequent disability benefit payments will be held until we receive the form.

For more information and specific instructions for completing the form, please visit www.opers.org and click on "Got Mail? Get Answers" on the home page. There you will find an explanation about Employments and Earnings Statements. By clicking on "More Info," you'll be able to view a recorded presentation containing helpful information about completing your Employment and Earnings Statement.

Got Mail? Get Answers.

New section of OPERS website to help you

As an OPERS retiree, we know you receive a lot of mail. That's why we now offer a section of www.opers.org called "Got Mail? Get Answers." This page is designed to provide you with an overview of our most common mailings, so you know what you received, why you received it, and any action that you need to take.



You can view a detailed list of the most recent OPERS mailings, including descriptions and resources that provide additional information. To access this page, simply click on the "Got Mail? Get Answers" quick link located on right side of the opers.org home page.

Legislative update

New leadership in the Ohio legislature

In January, the OPERS Government Relations team welcomed back members of the Ohio General Assembly and U.S. Congress as they began new legislative sessions in Columbus and Washington, D.C.

Ohio's congressional delegation remains the same after the November 2014 election; however, there are a number of new faces at the Statehouse.

In addition to 29 new state legislators, the Ohio House of Representatives ushered in new leadership. Representative Cliff Rosenberger (R-Clarksville) replaced term-limited Representative William Batchelder (R-Medina) as Speaker of the House. Representative Fred Strahorn (D-Dayton) replaced term-

limited Representative Tracy Heard (D-Columbus) as minority leader. On the Senate side, Senate President Keith Faber (R-Celina) remains in his leadership position, as well as minority leader Senator Joe Schiavoni (D-Boardman).

The OPERS Government Relations team continues to educate legislative leaders on important issues of interest in 2015 and beyond, such as:

- The implications of new GASB standards for public pension systems' and public employers' accounting
- OPERS' continued opposition to proposals requiring mandatory Social Security coverage for our members

- Advocacy on health care issues, such as biosimilar pathways, lower exclusivity periods and ways to reduce the cost of prescription and specialty drugs
- The multiple ways OPERS is good for Ohio's economy, via benefit payments to retirees, ensuring they have income in retirement that keeps them from having to rely on other safety net programs like Medicaid or SNAP
- OPERS' continued support for retirement options for all Ohioians in the workforce, both in the public and private sector

Visit the Government Relations page on www.opers.org to view a complete list of legislation and issues OPERS is monitoring.



Ohio Public Employees
Retirement System

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Ohio PERS NEWS

YOUR BENEFIT CONNECTION

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2014 Form 1099R and Benefit Recipient Tax Guide available online

OPERS mailed Form 1099Rs for tax year 2014 in January. If you wish to print an additional copy of your 1099R, you can access it by signing in to your online account at www.opers.org. Once you are signed in, click on “Documents.” If you need help printing your 1099R, OPERS offers a recorded presentation that provides step-by-step instructions. Click on “Educational Opportunities” under the retiree heading on the OPERS website home page.

The Benefit Recipient Tax Guide is available to view and print on the OPERS website, www.opers.org, or you can contact OPERS to request a paper copy by mail.

Ohio PERS Board of Trustees

The 11-member OPERS Board of Trustees is responsible for the administration and management of OPERS. Seven of the 11 members are elected by the groups that they represent (i.e., college and university non-teaching employees, state, county, municipal, and miscellaneous employees, and retired members); the Director of the Department of Administrative Services for the state of Ohio is a statutory member, and three members are investment experts appointed by the Governor, the Treasurer of State, and jointly by the Speaker of the Ohio House of Representatives and the President of the Ohio Senate.

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