



## April deadlines are quickly approaching

April 17 is a popular day for the U.S. government and for OPERS – here's why.

**Taxes.** The deadline for submitting taxes to the U.S. government is April 17. If you need advice about tax withholdings, consult a tax advisor and/or reference the Benefit Recipient Tax Guide, available at [opers.org](http://opers.org).

You can also log in to your OPERS online account to access Forms 1099-R and 1095, update federal or state of Ohio tax withholdings and change personal information. Updating your withholdings through your online account is easy and you'll be able to see how that change would impact your net benefit before you submit the change.

**Employment and Earning Statements.** If you are a Disability Benefit Recipient and have not mailed back your completed statement, time is running out.

 **If OPERS does not receive your completed statement by April 15, 2018, your May disability benefit payment and subsequent payments will be held until we receive the completed form.**



For more information on the Employment and Earnings Statement, a video is available at [opers.org](http://opers.org). Click on "Got mail? Get Answers."

# For members who applied for disability benefits on or after Jan. 7, 2013

Reminder: Check with Medicare to verify coverage eligibility.

If you are coming up on five years of receiving an OPERS disability benefit and are enrolled in the OPERS health care plan, remember you must meet the minimum age and service credit requirements for health care eligibility, or be enrolled in Medicare due to a disability, to remain enrolled in the OPERS health care plan. Refer to [opers.org](http://opers.org) or the previous edition of the OPERS retiree newsletter for age and service requirements.

**Because Medicare enrollment can take up to two years, OPERS strongly suggests you check with Medicare regarding your eligibility for coverage.** You may qualify for health care coverage through Medicare even if you do not qualify for Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI). If eligible, disability benefit recipients (except for law enforcement) are required to apply for SSDI within 90 days of the application approval by the OPERS Board of Trustees.



## Protecting your information, one number at a time

OPERS continually looks for ways to keep your personal information safe.

OPERS is moving toward a more secure method of obtaining information from you – over the phone and online. In fact, you may have noticed some of the changes already. For example, when calling in, you may be asked to provide your OPERS ID instead of your Social Security number as a means to identify you with your account.



### OPERS News

OPERS News is a quarterly newsletter providing news and information to retired members of the Ohio Public Employees Retirement System. This publication allows us to communicate vital information concerning retirement benefits to our members.

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 federal or state law, nor will its interpretation prevail should a conflict arise between it and the Ohio Revised Code, Ohio Administrative Code or Internal Revenue Code. If you have questions about this material, please contact our office or seek legal advice from your attorney.

#### Contact information:

[opers.org](http://opers.org)  
1-800-222-7377  
Monday - Friday  
8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.  
[newsfeedback@opers.org](mailto:newsfeedback@opers.org)

#### Connect with us on social media



[youtube.com/ohiopers1](http://youtube.com/ohiopers1)

[facebook.com/ohiopers](http://facebook.com/ohiopers)



[linkedin.com/company/opers](http://linkedin.com/company/opers)

[twitter.com/ohiopers](http://twitter.com/ohiopers)

### OPERS Board of Trustees

For more information on the OPERS Board of Trustees, visit [www.opers.org](http://www.opers.org).

#### Elected Board Members

*Randy Desposito*  
Non-teaching College/  
University Employees

*Julie Albers*  
County Employees

*Christopher Mabe*  
Vice Chair  
State Employees

*Vacant*  
Retirees

*Cynthia Sledz*  
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*Ken Thomas*  
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Municipal Employees

*Steve Toth*  
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#### Statutory Board Members

*Robert Blair*  
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Administrative Services

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Investment Expert,  
General Assembly  
Appointee

*Karen Carraher*  
Executive Director



Visit [opers.org](http://opers.org) for a complete list of cities and dates.

## The OPERS Education Team may be coming to a location near you

### How to Use Your Health Reimbursement Arrangement (HRA)

The goal of this seminar is to help retirees who are enrolled in a plan through the Connector better understand and manage their Health Reimbursement Arrangement. Topics include explanation of reimbursement types, what forms to use for different expenses, information for spouses and caregivers as well as common questions from retirees. Additional resources available at <https://My.ViaBenefits.com/OPERS>.

**April 11**  
Findlay

**May 16**  
Lima

**June 13**  
Mentor

**April 17**  
Boardman

**May 22**  
Strongsville

**June 19**  
Sharonville

**April 25**  
Cincinnati

**May 29**  
Worthington

**June 26**  
Hilliard

### NEW Health Reimbursement Arrangement Small Group Workshops

OPERS now offers 30-minute, hands-on HRA workshops, facilitated by OPERS educators, that guide small group participants through how to complete HRA reimbursement forms. These workshops are designed to offer assistance; it is still the individual's responsibility to mail the completed reimbursement claim requests. OPERS will not be responsible for mailing claims at the end of the workshop. Seats are limited. Registration must be completed through your OPERS online account or by calling OPERS at 1-800-222-7377.

### Transitioning to the Connector

Created with the pre-Medicare plan participant in mind, this in-person seminar will help those near Medicare eligibility learn about Transitioning to the Connector. Seats are limited. Registration must be completed through your OPERS online account or by calling OPERS at 1-800-222-7377.

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Worthington

**June 27**  
Hilliard

### Listen from your living room!

Log in to a live *Transitioning to the Connector* online webinar session or watch a video to learn about the *Via Benefits Enrollment Call* or *Returning to Work After Retirement*. You may also view recorded presentations about the OPERS retiree online account, Benefit Change Notices, Form 1099-R, Medicare basics and more. **All videos and recorded presentations are found in the Educational Opportunities for Retirees section at [opers.org](http://opers.org).**





## The Diabetes Prevention Program offers lifesaving benefits



If you are pre-Medicare and at risk for type 2 diabetes, consider enrolling in the no cost, YMCA Diabetes Prevention Program\*, or DPP. Doing so may delay or even prevent diabetes-related health problems down the road.

DPP is a proven yearlong program offered through local Ohio YMCAs and focuses on teaching lasting lifestyle changes through creating healthy eating habits and

participating in physical activity. Visit [opers.org/videos](https://opers.org/videos) to watch a testimonial from an OPERS plan participant and learn more about what this program can do for you.

*\*The Diabetes Prevention Program is available at no cost to OPERS pre-Medicare retirees and adult dependents who are enrolled in the OPERS Medical Mutual plan. Register at [ohioymcadiabetesprevention.org](https://ohioymcadiabetesprevention.org)*



## Set personal goals to manage chronic disease with the help of Healthy U

If you are a pre-Medicare retiree living with a chronic condition like arthritis, diabetes, heart disease or depression you may benefit from Healthy U, a free program offered by the Ohio Department of Aging and Ohio's area agencies. During each of the six weekly sessions, Healthy U participants learn strategies for effectively managing a long term condition and develop action plans to help reach weekly goals.

*To learn more and find a workshop near you, visit [aging.ohio.gov](http://aging.ohio.gov) or call your local Ohio area agency on aging at 1-866-243-5678.*

## Medicare replaces Social Security number on Medicare cards

Last year, Medicare announced that Social Security numbers would no longer print on Medicare's red, white and blue card. Instead, as early as April 2018, new card carrying members will see an alpha-numeric sequence, referred to as a Medicare Beneficiary Identifier (MBI), in place of the Social Security number. Medicare will mail new cards to existing Medicare members between April 2018 and April 2019.





VIA BENEFITS™



# OneExchange is now Via Benefits™

Medicare-eligible plan participants use the OPERS Medicare Connector administered by Towers Watson's OneExchange to select and enroll into health insurance coverage and manage their health reimbursement arrangements. Effective March 1, 2018, OneExchange, has changed its name to Via Benefits™.

The new name, Via Benefits, reflects the evolving benefits landscape that we have come to know. Via Benefits will continue to offer the same year-round service you experience today - from answering questions about new coverage and providing support in choosing the right plan for your needs to helping with online account set up, understanding Explanation of Benefits forms and more.

You'll see the change in both OneExchange and OPERS materials. We appreciate your patience during this transition as some materials may take longer to update than others.

**Questions? Contact Via Benefits at 1-844-287-9945.**

## Via Benefits enhances account authorization process

Existing POAs and HIPAA Approved Representatives need re-authorized.

Via Benefits, formerly OneExchange, has added an extra level of protection for each account in terms of how they receive permission to speak with individuals other than the HRA account holder.

Previously, Via Benefits collected two levels of authorization – Power of Attorney and HIPAA Approved Representative. Going forward, they will collect **three levels of authorized representatives** – Authorized Representative Full, Authorized Representative Limited and Power of Attorney.

- 1. Authorized Representative Full** – Provides your representative permission to access your HRA to change information and file reimbursement claims. They will not be able to complete enrollments on your behalf.
- 2. Authorized Representative Limited** – Provides your representative with access to receive information on the HRA, but not make changes or file claims. They will not be able to complete enrollments on your behalf.
- 3. Power of Attorney** – Provides your representative with the same level of access as you, the HRA account holder, and will also be able to complete enrollments on your behalf.

If you are affected by this change, you will be contacted by Via Benefits as all existing POAs and HIPAA Approved Representatives will need to be re-authorized by the participant. Accounts can be updated through your online Via Benefits account or by calling Via Benefits at 1-844-287-9945.



Ohio Public Employees Retirement System  
277 East Town Street Columbus, OH 43215-4642

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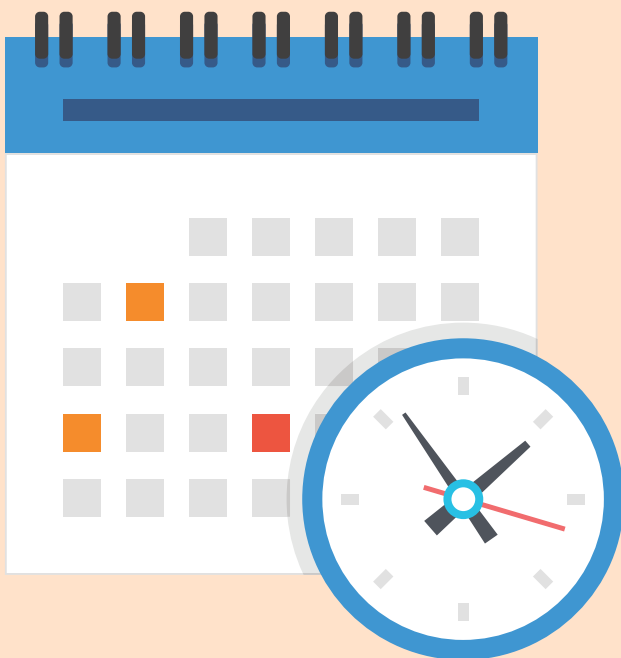
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First quarter 2018

# OPERSNEWS

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



## IMPORTANT DEADLINES:

- **APRIL 17** – Taxes due
- **APRIL 15** – Employment and Earning Statements due  
*(Disability Benefit Recipients only)*