



Future Matters

Start Thinking About Tomorrow – Today

August 2025

Invest in Yourself

A SERS pension gives you a foundation, but more than one source of income is necessary for retirement security. Think about adding to your SERS pension with other forms of savings.

Your pension is a percentage of your present income. It is an income, but it will not be what you are taking home as pay today.

Start boosting your retirement savings now. Small steps can have a big impact. Save today for the kind of future you want tomorrow.

Supplement with Ohio Deferred Compensation



You have opportunities. As a public employee, you are eligible to participate in Ohio

Deferred Compensation, a 457(b) deferred compensation retirement savings plan that allows you to make tax-deferred investments through payroll contributions.

Use those pre-tax dollars to save for the future you want. Pre-tax dollars give you firepower for financial wellness.

With pre-tax dollars, you do not owe income tax on your contribution amount the year your employer pays you. Instead, the income tax obligation is deferred until you withdraw it from your 457(b) account.

Learn more at www.ohio457.org.

Reading Your Annual Statement

Your annual statement shows your total employee contributions and service credit as of June 30, 2025.

If you have service credit or are buying service credit with another Ohio system, it is NOT shown in your total credit.

About Your Pension

SERS offers two types of service retirement:

- unreduced service retirement
- early service retirement

For unreduced service retirement, you earn the maximum pension amount based on your service credit, which is how long you worked in an Ohio public service job, and final average salary, which is the average of your three highest years of salary.

Early service retirement pensions are reduced to cover the cost of providing a pension over a longer period of time.

The Service Retirement Eligibility Requirements chart on your statement includes eligibility requirements for both unreduced service retirement and early service retirement.

Questions?

If you have a question about this statement, visit our website at www.ohsers.org and submit your question using the message feature on Account Login, or call SERS at 800-878-5853.

You can also check your current contributions and service credit anytime on our website by using Account Login.



Ask SERS

Q: What if I am not planning on staying at my SERS-covered job?

A: If you do not work long enough to meet the requirements to receive a pension, the money in your account can be refunded or rolled over into another qualified retirement plan.

However, keeping it in SERS might be a smart choice.

If you return to a public service job in the future, your account will already be established, and your time can be combined with other public service time. You also will retain disability benefits if eligible, or benefit protection for your qualified survivors.

Once you refund, you lose any rights to retirement benefits, disability benefits, and survivor benefits for your dependents.

Additionally, any refunds are taxable.

SERS cannot pay partial refunds of, or provide loans on, your contributions.

A refund of your employee contributions is only available after employment has ended. SERS cannot issue your payment before three months have elapsed from your last date of service.

Applying for a Refund

If you choose to refund, you must complete a refund application. You can complete an application through Account Login by visiting our website at www.ohsers.org.

Board Election Update

On March 4, SERS staff counted ballots for the two employee-member seats, with terms beginning July 1, 2025, and ending June 30, 2029.



Becky Roe



Jeanine Alexander

The ballot counting process was observed by representatives of the Attorney General's Office and the Secretary of State. At the April Board Meeting, election results were certified in favor of Becky Roe and Jeanine Alexander.

Roe is the director of human resources administration for Columbus City Schools. Alexander is the treasury services assistant for Rossford Exempted Schools and sits on the finance committee for the Rossford School Board.

The Value of SERS Benefits

3-YEAR FINAL AVERAGE SALARY (FAS)

Other pension systems have moved to a 5-year FAS. Maintaining a 3-year FAS increases benefits by approximately 2.9%.



SURVIVOR BENEFITS

This ensures that your spouse and/or dependents receive benefits in the event of your premature death. Qualified survivors can receive monthly benefits or the accumulated contributions in your account.

DISABILITY COVERAGE

Eligibility requirements include 5 years of total service credit in a SERS-covered position, while Social Security requires 5 years of work out of the last 10.



DEDICATED CUSTOMER SERVICE

Staff is committed to serving members as evidenced by the more than 125,000 calls processed on average per year.



HEALTH CARE ACCESS

While health care is not guaranteed, SERS provides access to health care coverage for eligible retirees. After 10 years of service, you earn health care eligibility. After 20 years, you are eligible for premium subsidies.



MEMBER EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES

In addition to in-person, phone, and virtual counseling sessions, SERS offers regular member education, including webinars and virtual conferences. Staff also travels throughout the state to speak at benefit fairs and member meetings.

LOWER MEMBER CONTRIBUTION RATES

At 10%, SERS' member contribution rate is one of the lowest of all the Ohio Retirement Systems. This means more money in your pocket.



ONLINE ACCOUNT

With Account Login, you can access your account any time of the day or night, as well as access applications for disability benefits and refunds.



LIFETIME PENSION

You receive a pension for your life. With other plans, like a 401(k), your savings can be depleted, and unlike a pension, you do not receive cost-of-living adjustments.



School Employees Retirement System of Ohio
Serving the People Who Serve Our Schools®
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