Future Matters

Start Thinking About Tomorrow – Today

August 2026

New Executive Director Announced

Ray Higgins has been named executive director of the School Employees Retirement System of Ohio by the Retirement Board.

Higgins previously served as executive director of the Public Employees' Retirement System (PERS) of Mississippi. For the past eight years, he oversaw all facets of the retirement system, which included multiple defined benefit plans that served more than 300,000 members, a state deferred compensation plan, and other programs.

Before joining PERS, he spent almost 20 years working for the State of Georgia in multiple agencies with roles primarily focused on finance, budget, administration, and legislative affairs. This included time serving as deputy director and chief operating officer for the Employees' Retirement System of Georgia.

Higgins earned an associate degree from Reinhardt College, a Bachelor of Business Administration degree in finance from Georgia Southern University, and a Master of Science degree in finance with a specialization in investments from Georgia State University.

Reading Your Annual Statement

Your annual statement shows your total employee contributions and service credit as of June 30, 2026.

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 questions, visit our website at www.ohsers.org and submit your questions 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.

Refunding

Have you left the schools and are no longer working in a SERS-covered position? You may be able to refund.

ELIGIBILITY

You can refund your SERS accumulated contributions if you have terminated your SERS-covered position, and at least three months have passed since your last date of service. If you have less than $5,000 in your account, you may be eligible to apply for an online refund using Account Login.

DIRECT DEPOSIT

SERS requires direct deposit into a financial institution for payments. You must upload either a voided check or a letter from your bank for a checking account, or a letter from your bank for a savings account* pre-printed with:

- Your name, listed as the account owner
- Your address
- Routing and account numbers

*SERS cannot accept deposit slips for any account or a voided check for a savings account.

For your protection, SERS cannot send a direct deposit into payment apps, accounts, or services, including Chime, Robinhood, Venmo, PayPal, Cash App, Apple Pay, Samsung Pay, Meta Pay, and pre-paid cards.

THINGS TO CONSIDER

You may want to leave your money with SERS or rollover the funds into an eligible retirement plan. If you withdraw your account, your SERS membership and all service credit earned under your SERS-covered position will be cancelled, as well as any rights to SERS' retirement, disability, and survivor protections.

Save Today for the Tomorrow You Want

A SERS pension is great, but it may not be enough to carry you into the future. A SERS pension gives you a foundation for retirement, but more than one source of income may be necessary for retirement security. Start boosting your retirement savings now. Every little bit helps.

INVEST IN YOURSELF

OHIO Deferred Compensation *Invest in you.*

You have access to additional retirement savings with Ohio Deferred Compensation. As a public employee, you are eligible to participate in this employer-sponsored 457(b) plan offered exclusively to Ohio public employees.

The plan is unique. Created by state law to provide a supplemental retirement plan administered solely in the interest of public employees, it has become one of the largest supplemental plans in the country, and because of its size, expenses are low.

USE PRE-TAX DOLLARS

The plan allows you to make tax-deferred investments through payroll contributions. You set aside a portion of your salary for retirement on a tax-advantaged basis to help you build a more secure financial future.

For more information, visit Ohio Deferred Compensation's website at **www.ohio457.org**.

Upcoming Board Election

One employee-member seat is up for election with the term beginning July 1, 2027, and ending June 30, 2031. Any member of SERS, other than a disability benefit recipient, is eligible to run. To be considered:

- Obtain signatures of 500 SERS members on a nominating petition provided by SERS with not less than 20 signatures of members from each of at least 10 counties where those members are employed
- Make sure that each member signing the nominating petition indicates his or her employer, county of employment, and last four digits of his or her Social Security number or SERS Member ID number
- Begin gathering signatures on or after August 3, 2026
- Return original petitions with original signatures and completed and required forms to the SERS office, 300 E. Broad St., Suite 100, Columbus, OH 43215-3746 no later than 4:30 p.m., EST, December 4, 2026

For more information, visit SERS' website at **www.ohsers.org.**