



PSPRS Local Board Newsletter

Without deviation from the norm, progress is not possible.
~ Frank Zappa

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UPCOMING LOCAL BOARD TRAINING SEMINARS

The northern region Local Board Conference for Public Safety Local Board members, secretaries and staff will be on June 12, 2009. There will be no charge to the attendees. The location for the class is at the Flagstaff City Hall in the Council Chambers, 211 W. Aspen, Flagstaff, AZ. We will start at 9 am and conclude at 4 pm. If you would like to sign up for the Public Safety Local Board conference in Flagstaff, send an e-mail to don@psprs.com.

We will NOT provide breakfast or lunch

Newsletter News! Newsletter News! Newsletter News! Newsletter News!

DID YOU KNOW...?

Our member's pension is guaranteed by the Arizona State constitution, Article 29, Section 1 stating that...the constitution guarantees the pension right of participants' and prohibits the diminishment or impairment of benefits. Given the economic environment, this information offers great reassurance to our members!

QUESTIONS OF THE MONTH...

Have you and your board viewed the "Local Board Duties and Responsibilities" video on our website? This is available for you to view at your next local board meeting if your board members need training.

http://www.psprs.com/Admin_Training/cato_local_board_training.htm

Q. How often is your attorney present at your board meeting?

A. Your attorney needs to be present as often as needed for advice or guidance.

Q. Are you meeting monthly, quarterly or yearly?

A. Our office would like you to meet at a minimum of once a year to review the annual financial reports of the fund, however you should meet as often as needed to review and approve the participant application process, to approve claims for benefits, and to hold hearings on disputed claims if applicable.

Don Mineer – Local Board Training Coordinator



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A MESSAGE FROM THE PSPRS BENEFITS DEPARTMENT

DROP APPLICATIONS EFFECTIVE JUNE 2009

Our Fiscal Year End, June 30, 2009, is fast approaching. We have set some deadlines for the DROP applications for smooth processing within the administrative office.

The following dates will assist the local boards processing applications to enter the DROP program in the months of May and June. Timeliness is of great importance during the year end process.

- A member who wants to enter the DROP program during the month of May must submit the DROP application by June 10, 2009.
- A member who wants to enter the DROP program during the month of June must submit the DROP application by July 10, 2009.

These time frames pertain to all calculations for those ENTERING DROP during Fiscal Year 2009 which ends June 30th. We appreciate your efforts in meeting the deadlines. If you have any questions please contact Joann Lowey at (602) 255-5575 ext 2002. You may also reach her by email at: joann.lowey@psprs.com

CANCER INSURANCE PROGRAM

The Cancer Insurance Program for Public Safety is available for active and retired members. We suggest that the local boards remind the HR/Benefits staff about the program and its provisions, eligibility, and application deadlines, etc.

Members are eligible for cancer plan benefits on the date of becoming a member of the System or on the beginning of the month following the date the plan holder's employer pays the first premium, whichever is later.

All Covered Persons who are active or retired members of the Public Safety Personnel Retirement System ("System") and serve (or have served) as fire fighters or peace officers and are/were regularly assigned to hazardous duty of the type normally expected of fire fighters or peace officers and who, prior to their membership in the System, have not been medically treated for or diagnosed as having a cancer prior to entering into this program, are eligible for reimbursement of the Covered Expenses referenced in this program, subject to the limitations, exclusions and restrictions under which the program operates.



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Lilian Leung

The Cancer Insurance Program provides a \$6,000 first occurrence payment to members with non-skin cancer. Benefit payments are sent directly to the member. There is other monetary reimbursement for illness-related expenses according to the Schedule of Benefits and they are paid according to a member's out of pocket expenses. The Schedule of Benefits is available at: http://www.psprs.com/Admin_common/insurance/cato_cancerinsurance.htm

Out of pocket expenses are expenses that were incurred due to the member's having to take on the full cost of a procedure. Currently co-pays, co-insurance and deductibles owed by the member after their insurance has paid are not eligible for reimbursement according to the schedule of benefits.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact Annette Jorgensen or Stacey Alcott at 602-255-5575. If you would like to learn more about the program, we have a presentation located at: http://www.psprs.com/Admin_Training/TrainingPowerPoints.htm click on "Cancer Insurance Overview."

FORMS – TAX WITHHOLDING CHANGES

As a result of Senate Bill 1185, which was signed by the Governor on 4/9/2009 and immediately effective, the Arizona income tax withholding rates have changed for amounts paid after 5/1/2009. The new percentages are higher than those currently in effect. For information on the provisions of SB1185, go to www.azleg.gov.

Correspondingly, the Arizona State Tax Withholding A-4P Form is also changing effective May 1, 2009. The new form will be available on both our website and on the retirement spreadsheets as soon as possible. Members may also obtain a copy of the form or find out more about their withholding options at this link to the Arizona Department of Revenue, <http://www.azdor.gov>

For all retirees, we will automatically update their old withholding rate to the closest corresponding new rate. Retirees who want to choose a different rate will need to submit a new A-4P form to our office. The Benefits staff will manually enter the new rate for all new retirements effective in May 2009 if the revised form was not included in the retirement packet. Please use the revised A-4P form for all retirements that will be effective in June (i.e. members who retire in May).

As a reminder, please use forms dated 9/08 or later (U3 Benefits Form is dated 12/08 and the Form 13 is dated 1/09) and spreadsheets which will change to reflect 5/09 (due to tax form change) in the upper right corner. All forms and spreadsheets are located at www.psprs.com. Outdated forms will be sent back and may delay processing of the retirement.



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BENEFITS CYCLE (RETIREMENT PAPERWORK) AND HOW THE PROCESS WORKS EVERY MONTH:

1st -10th - During this time the Benefits staff are working daily with local boards to review estimates and assist with retirement paperwork. The Benefits staff enters in new retirements and adjustments for that month if the paperwork comes in before the 10th.

10th-15th – After the 10th, the Benefits staff must enter all new retirements and adjustments for that month. They also continue to assist local boards in finalizing retirement paperwork so we may close on time.

16th-23rd – The retirement database is closed for that month and the retirements are reviewed and balanced. The Benefits staff cannot enter any changes into the database for up to a week while this process is going on. Copies of the retirement award letters go to the local boards and to the member's file.

24th-30th – The Benefits staff manually prepares the pension payroll mailing for over 12,000 retirees. If there is time, labels are made for the address changes that come in after the 10th. The surepay notices and checks are matched up to the new retirement files and the Benefits staff follow-up with the local boards if the original documents have not been received so that the pension checks will be mailed out on time.

A MESSAGE FROM THE PSPRS FRONT DESK

Last month we notified all employer groups that the Local Board update would be in the mail within a week. All of the CORP and PS updates were sent the first week of April. We thank all of those that have already updated their local board directories. If you have not, please do try to do so by the first of May.

How in the world did we ever function without email? We rely on you to keep us updated on this important information. Our IT department has enhanced our data base and we are not limited to only TWO email contacts per department as in the past. If you would like to include your chairperson, or perhaps HR Director, you may provide their email address to update our database. Remember though, when we send a group local board email, such as the NEWSLETTER, all email addresses on file will receive the information. Finally, the PAYROLL department emails are separate, so any information regarding accounting and payrolls are sent from our Finance Department to the accounting emails that you have provided.



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STAFF PROFILE – CHERYL KILCLINE – LEGAL RESEARCH COORDINATOR

When Cheryl joined PSPRS in the Administrative Department in December 2008, she brought with her 34 years of legal assistant experience. Cheryl was a judicial assistant for ten years at the Arizona State Court of Appeals, where one of her responsibilities was supervising the proof reading and editing of decisions for publication in the Arizona Reports. Cheryl left the Court upon the retirement of the judge for whom she was working. The balance of her experience was with Phoenix law firms working with civil litigation, divorce, and personal injury law. Cheryl enjoys working with the law and with people.

STAFF PROFILE – SHANNON HATCH – LEGAL RESEARCH COORDINATOR

In December 2008, Shannon joined the Public Safety Personnel Retirement System (PSPRS) in the Administrative Department. Having come from the Arizona State Retirement System, she has considerable knowledge of retirement rules, regulations, policies and procedures with regard to divorce, child support, disability, and legislation.