

# Your Online Service Retirement Application

**Disclaimer:** CalPERS is governed by the [Public Employees' Retirement Law](#). The statements in this document are general. The Retirement Law is complex and subject to change. If there is a conflict between the law and this document, any decisions will be based on the law and not this document.

This video, like our previous videos, will be available on our [CalPERS YouTube Channel](#).

## Agenda

Our presentation covers

- Before You Retire
- Online Service Retirement Application
- What Happens Next?

### Before You Retire

There are multiple things you should do to prepare before retiring.

#### Generate Your Retirement Estimates

In [myCalPERS](#), you can run as many estimates as you want using the **Retirement Estimate Calculator**. Choose different retirement dates, final compensation amounts, include beneficiaries or not, and more.

When you're within one year of retirement, you can request a CalPERS-generated estimate either by submitting the [Retirement Allowance Estimate Request \(PDF\)](#) form or you can download an estimate letter in your myCalPERS account. You're allowed to request two CalPERS-generated estimates in a year.

The estimate letter is available on the **Estimate Results** page after you've completed the retirement estimator in myCalPERS. In most cases, you'll be able to download the letter immediately. If your estimate requires further validation, your estimate letter request will remain in a pending status and can take 30 days to process. Once we've completed the determination and calculation, you should expect a notification email that your letter is complete and available for review online.

Watch our video, [Your Retirement Estimate and Payment Options](#), to find out how to use the myCalPERS retirement estimate calculator and generate the estimate letter.

#### Take a Class

Our *Planning Your Retirement* class will provide a deeper understanding of your benefits as you prepare for retirement. You'll learn how your pension is calculated, ways to increase it, retirement payment options available to provide for a beneficiary, and more. *Planning Your Retirement* is for those within 10 years of retirement.

Once you've taken *Planning Your Retirement*, we recommend taking the *Your Retirement Application and Beyond* class. Not only will this class help you fill out your application, but also includes useful post-retirement information.

Both [classes](#) are available as self-paced online classes or led by a Regional Office retirement counselor. To enroll, log in to your [myCalPERS](#) account, select **Education**, then **Classes**.

## Read Retirement Publications

We have two retirement publications designed to help you along your road to retirement.

- [Planning Your Retirement \(PUB 1\) \(PDF\)](#) will help plan your service retirement and provide information you need to consider before retiring. Learn about the retirement eligibility requirements, retirement payment options, retirement date considerations, and more.
- [Service Retirement Election Application \(PUB 43\) \(PDF\)](#) includes the paper service retirement application if you're unable or don't want to submit your retirement application online. It also includes key points to consider before retirement and some other considerations.

## Schedule an Appointment

Once you've generated your estimates, taken classes, and read our publications, you can [schedule an appointment](#). Appointments are offered virtually or at one of our eight [Regional Offices](#). Schedule an appointment in your myCalPERS account by selecting **Education**, then **Appointments**.

## Online Service Retirement Application

There are certain limitations, such as a failure of the knowledge-based authentication security measures, that will prevent you from submitting your application online. If one of these limitations applies, you'll need to submit a paper application.

We can't accept your online or paper retirement application more than 120 days prior to your retirement date.

Once you log in to your myCalPERS account, there are two ways to access your online service retirement application.

1. Select the **Apply for Retirement** link shown in the blue **Retirement** block.
2. Select the **Retirement** dropdown and then select **Apply for Retirement**.

## Before You Begin the Application

There's certain information you'll need to have ready to complete your retirement application. These items include beneficiaries' Social Security numbers, dates of birth, and complete mailing addresses. You'll also need your bank account information to set up your direct deposit. If you don't want a direct deposit, you can fill out and submit a paper application, instead of submitting the online version.

Select the **Start Application** button to begin.

## Step 1 – Type of Application

- Select the radio button for the type of retirement application you wish to submit:
  - **Service Retirement**
  - **Disability Retirement**
  - **Service Retirement pending Disability Retirement**
- Select **Save and Continue**

The **My Application** status box shows where in the application you are. On every step of the application, you can select the **leave the application** link to leave the application and return later.

## Step 2 – Your Information

### Review Your Personal Information

Review your personal information. If it's incorrect, contact your employer as soon as possible so they can correct it.

### Relationship Status

Are you married or in a [registered domestic partnership](#)?

If you are, select **Yes** and enter the **Date of Marriage/Registered Domestic Partnership**.

If you're not, select **No** and select either

- **Never married or in a domestic partnership,**
- **Divorced, or**
- **Widowed.**

Select **Save and Continue**

## Step 3 – Your Retirement Date

Enter your

- **Last Day on Payroll,**
- **Retirement Date, and**
- **Current Position Title** without abbreviations.

Select **Save and Continue**.

Your retirement date must be at least one day after your last day of payroll with your employer.

The **Your Application Progress** page shows your progress for the application and allows you to return to any pages you've visited.

## Step 4 – About Your Retirement

### Reciprocity

If you're a member of another reciprocal California public retirement system, select **Yes** then use the dropdown to select the **Name of Retirement System**.

If your highest pay rate you've earned is with that other retirement system, select **Yes**.

If you're retiring from the other retirement system, select **Yes** and enter your **Retirement Date With Other System**.

Read our publication [When You Change Retirement Systems \(PUB 16\) \(PDF\)](#) for more information about reciprocity.

### Temporary Annuity

Read our publication [Temporary Annuity \(PUB 13\) \(PDF\)](#) **and** get two CalPERS-generated estimates, one that includes a temporary annuity and one without, *before* electing to receive a temporary annuity.

If electing to include a temporary annuity, select **Yes**. Then enter **Age** you want the temporary annuity to end and enter the **Dollar Amount (\$)**.

Once you've completed Section 4, select **Save and Continue**.

### Step 5 – Health Coverage

If you are currently enrolled in [health benefits](#) as the subscriber, you have the option to decline the continuation of your CalPERS health coverage. Only select the check box if you're **declining** your CalPERS health coverage.

Read our publication [Health Program Guide \(HBD-120\) \(PDF\)](#) for more information about health coverage into retirement.

Once you've completed Section 5, select **Save and Continue**.

### Step 6 – Retirement Options

Choose one retirement option in Step 6. Then select **Save and Continue**.

Your retirement options are:

- Unmodified Allowance
- Return of Remaining Contributions Option 1
- 100 Percent Beneficiary Option 2
- 100 Percent Beneficiary Option 2 with Benefit Allowance Increase
- 50 Percent Beneficiary Option 3
- 50 Percent Beneficiary Option 3 with Benefit Allowance Increase
- Flexible Beneficiary Option 4 Specific Percentage
- Flexible Beneficiary Option 4 Specific Dollar Amount

### Step 7 – Beneficiaries

The **Beneficiaries Overview** page shows benefits your named beneficiaries may receive.

Select **Save and Continue**.

#### Select Your Lifetime Beneficiary

You'll see this page if you elected an option that includes a monthly benefit for a lifetime beneficiary.

The system will pre-populate any existing relationships, or you can add a new beneficiary.

If you want to select from your existing relationships, select the beneficiary's name, then select **Continue**.

If you want to name a beneficiary that isn't listed, select the **Add a beneficiary** link.

You'll be required to enter their:

- Relationship to you
- Name
- Date of birth
- Gender
- Full Social Security number
- Complete address

#### Lump Sum Balance of Remaining Contributions Benefit

You'll see this page if you elected an option that includes the return of any unused contributions after your death. You can change your lump sum beneficiaries at any time after your retirement.

Select your beneficiary(ies) for this benefit. You can choose from pre-populated existing relationships or select the **Add Beneficiary** link.

For each beneficiary, select a priority, either **Primary** or **Secondary**. You must have at least one primary beneficiary but can have up to 10.

Your primary beneficiaries are the first to receive the lump sum benefit, upon your death. You can also designate secondary beneficiaries who would be entitled to your lump sum benefit if they survive all your primary beneficiaries.

Once you've made all your selections, select **Continue**.

#### Lump Sum Retired Death Benefit

All employers contract for the Retired Death Benefit, which ranges from \$500 - \$5000. Beginning July 1, 2023, the minimum retired death benefits an employer can contract for changes from \$500 to \$2000.

Select your beneficiary(ies) for this benefit. You can choose from pre-populated existing relationships or select the **Add Beneficiary** link. For each beneficiary, select a priority, either **Primary** or **Secondary**.

If you work for more than one employer under CalPERS and they have contracts for different retired death benefit amounts, we'll pay the highest amount contracted by any employer. If you worked for another California public retirement system after leaving CalPERS-covered employment and a similar benefit is paid by the other retirement system, then we won't pay the Retired Death Benefit.

Once you've made all your selections, select **Continue**.

#### Lump Sum Temporary Annuity Benefit

If you choose to include a temporary annuity but pass away before your temporary annuity ends, we'll pay out the remaining balance to your designated beneficiary.

Select your beneficiary(ies) for this benefit. You can choose from pre-populated existing relationships or select the **Add Beneficiary** link. For each beneficiary, select a priority, either **Primary** or **Secondary**.

Once you've made all your selections, select **Continue**.

### Step 8 – Survivor Continuance

If your employer contracts for survivor continuance, you need to tell us if you have an eligible survivor.

Eligible survivors are:

1. A spouse or registered domestic partner married or registered at least one year prior to your retirement effective date and continuously until your death
2. If no spouse or registered domestic partner, your natural or adopted unmarried children under age 18
3. If none of the above, your unmarried child who was disabled prior to age 18 and whose disability continues without interruption until the disability ends or until marriage
4. If none of the above, a parent or parents that are dependent upon you for 50 percent or more of their support

Select **Save and Continue** once you've answered all questions.

### Step 9 – Tax Withholding

Your pension is taxable, so you'll need to make an election for how you want us to withhold both federal and California state taxes.

#### Tax Residency Status

Answer both questions, then select **Continue**.

- Are you a United States citizen?
- Are you living in the United States?

#### Federal Income Tax Withholding

You have three choices when making a federal income tax withholding election:

1. Don't withhold federal income tax
2. Withhold using tax tables
3. I choose not to make a tax withholding election

If you choose not to make a selection, we're required by law to withhold federal income tax as if you are single with no adjustments.

#### California Income Tax Withholding

You have four choices when making a California state income tax withholding election:

1. Don't withhold California income tax
2. Withhold flat dollar amount per month (\$)
3. Withhold using tax tables
4. I choose not to make a tax withholding election

We cannot withhold other states' taxes.

If you have questions about what you should be withholding, contact a tax professional. We cannot give tax advice.

Select **Save and Continue**.

## Step 10 – Payment Information

### Choose Your Payment Option

[Direct deposit](#) ensures that your monthly payments are automatically and securely deposited at your financial institution. It offers you a reduced risk of loss, theft, or possible forgery of your retirement check, and the immediate availability of funds when you're away from home or unable to receive mail.

Choose how you'd like to receive your retirement direct deposit, either into a personal or trust account.

If you choose a trust account, you'll need to provide:

- Name of trust
- Date the trust was filed
- City and county where the trust was filed
- Federal tax ID
- Address

### Enter Your Account Information

Choose either a **Checking** or **Savings** account and tell us if it's a joint account.

Select **Continue**.

### Enroll in Direct Deposit

Enter your routing number, which is a 9-digit number usually located on the bottom left-hand corner of your check. Do not use a deposit slip.

Enter your account number, which is usually to the right of your routing number. It may appear in a different order depending on your check. You can also obtain this number by speaking to your banking institution.

Re-enter your account number. Don't copy and paste.

Select **Verify & Continue**.

## Step 11 – Review

Review your entire application. If there's anything you want to change, select the blue **Edit** link for that section.

## Step 12 – Sign and Submit

### Spouse/Registered Domestic Partner Signature

We require proof that your spouse or registered domestic partner is aware of your retirement benefit selections when you name someone other than or in addition to them as beneficiary for any of your

benefits. They'll need to complete the **Spousal/Domestic Partner Notification** form within 15 days of submitting your application. Download it from your [myCalPERS](#) account and then upload the completed form or mail it to us.

If we don't receive the completed form within the 15 days, your application will be canceled. This form must be notarized or be witnessed by an authorized CalPERS representative.

If your spouse/registered domestic partner is unavailable to sign the form, select **No** and select the reason they are unable to sign.

#### Electronic Signature Agreement

Read the **Electronic Signature Agreement** and if you agree, select the checkbox "I agree to the following Electronic Signature Agreement." If you don't want to sign and submit online, print the [Service Retirement Election Application \(PDF\)](#) form and mail it to us.

#### Retirement Application Certification

Agree to the **Retirement Application Certification** that says the information you have submitted is true and correct to the best of your knowledge under penalty of perjury.

#### Direct Deposit Authorization

Read the **Direct Deposit Authorization** and if you agree, select the checkbox that says, "I agree to the following Direct Deposit Authorization."

#### Tax Withholding Authorization

Review the **Federal Deduction** and **California State Deduction** and if you agree, select the checkbox that says, "I agree to the following Tax Withholding Authorization."

Once your application is complete, select **Sign & Submit**.

### Step 13 – Submit Documents

You'll receive a message stating that you've successfully submitted your application.

If you need to submit documents, you'll also receive a message stating the due date.

The last box will ask you to take a quick survey to tell us about your experience submitting an online application.

You may need to submit other supporting documents, such as a marriage license or birth certificate. Like the **Spousal/Domestic Partner Notification** form, these can also be uploaded if they appear in the **Document Type** dropdown list.

On the **Apply for Retirement** page, you can view or cancel your application, and is where you'll go to upload any necessary documents. You can also find the link for your *Application Receipt* letter.

### What Happens Next?

After you submit your application, view your *Application Receipt* on the Application Status page.



About two weeks prior to the issuance of your first check, we'll send the First Payment Acknowledgement letter providing the issue date and gross amount of your first check along with tax information.

If you've continued your CalPERS health benefits into retirement, you'll receive two notifications:

- First notification is a notice of health cancellation from your active employer health coverage. This usually occurs around your last day on payroll.
- Second notification is sent after we've finished processing your retirement and set up your health into retirement. This notification confirms your enrollment in retiree health benefits.