



## Revised Benefit Statement

GARS is pleased to provide you with a newly revised annual Retiree/Survivor Benefit Statement which is enclosed with this newsletter and contains specific information about your General Assembly Retirement System (GARS) benefits. It is an important financial record to be used for future reference.

Please review this statement and share it with your family. If you have any questions about your statement, or the benefits you are receiving, contact GARS at 217-782-8500.

### Authorized Deductions

Federal income tax deductions and any other amounts you have deducted from your check are itemized and totaled on this section.

### Group Insurance Information

The Group Insurance section includes a breakdown of your current group insurance coverage and premiums. **This information should be referred to during your Benefit Choice period.**

### Contributions (Retirees Only)

This section shows total contribu-

tions made by the member, as well as the total benefits paid from this account. If the contributions exceed the benefits paid at the time of your death, the balance is payable to your GARS nominated beneficiary if there is no eligible survivor.

### Reciprocal Systems

This section indicates any reciprocal system(s) involved in the calculation of your benefit. After your death, your survivors should contact all systems involved.

### Death Benefits

The Death Benefits section of your statement contains information about lump sum death benefits that may be payable to your beneficiaries or monthly survivor annuity benefits that may be payable if you are a retiree and have an eligible survivor. An eligible survivor is defined as: your spouse age 50 or over to whom you are married for at least one year prior to your death; your spouse at any age if (s)he has custody of your dependent children under age 18, age 22 if full-time student, or over age 18 and disabled.

## Public Act 98-0599 Senate Bill 1

Senate Bill 1, signed into law by the Governor as Public Act 98-0599, was to be effective June 1, 2014.

However, the Circuit Court for the Seventh Judicial Circuit entered an order on May 14, 2014 forbidding the June 1, 2014 implementation of the provisions of Public Act 98-0599 ("Act") until further order of the Court. Based on this order, the General Assembly Retirement System will not implement the change in employee contribution rates, annual COLA amounts, earnings limitation or retirement ages contained in the Act until the System receives further direction from the Courts.

The Act affects active Tier 1 members, inactive Tier 1 members and Tier 1 retirees of GARS. Tier 2 members, those who became General Assembly members after January 1, 2011, are NOT affected by the Act.

*If you would like to receive phone calls, text messages or email announcements from GARS about the latest news/upcoming deadlines, please visit our website at [www.srs.illinois.gov](http://www.srs.illinois.gov), click on General Assembly Retirement System, and click on "SRS Needs Your Contact Information."*

## SRS Member Services Website

The new SRS Member Services website is coming July 1! This new website will allow you to access your personal earnings statement, update your current phone number or email address and so much more. *Based on P.A. 98-235 effective 7/1/14, the Comptroller will no longer mail an earnings statement to you each time your net benefit changes.* Therefore, you must access the new SRS Member Services website to always be aware of your benefits. Instructions on how to register for the SRS Member Services website is on page 4.

## New GARS Board Member

Retired Representative Daniel Pierce was elected as the GARS annuitant trustee for the GARS Board of Trustees. He will serve the remainder of the late Representative Phil Collins term on the Board ending January 31, 2017.

Mr. Pierce is a graduate of Harvard College and Harvard Law School and remains a practicing attorney. He served 20 years in the House of Representatives where he was Minority Whip, Chairman of the House Revenue & Environment Committees and the Economic & Fiscal Commission. After returning from the General Assembly, he served as Mayor of Highland Park for 12 years and President of the North Shore Sanitary District, the second largest water reclamation district in the state.

A veteran of the Korean conflict, Representative Pierce also attended the University of Chicago Graduate School of Business. He resides in Highland Park with his wife Rhoda. They have five adult sons and six grandchildren.

## One-On-One Counseling

*The 2014 One-on-One counseling sessions will be held at the locations below. If you would like to schedule an appointment with Jayne Waldeck during a visit to your city, contact the Court Administrator at that specific location.*

### June 12

Madison County Courthouse  
Edwardsville in the afternoon

### June 13

St. Clair County Building  
Belleville in the morning

### June 19

Peoria County Courthouse  
Peoria in the morning

Tazewell County Courthouse  
Pekin in the afternoon

### June 25

Adams County Courthouse  
Quincy in the morning

McDonough County Courthouse  
Macomb in the afternoon

### June 27

Williamson County Courthouse  
Marion in the morning

Jefferson County Justice Center  
Mt. Vernon in the afternoon

### July 8

Lake County Courthouse  
Waukegan in the afternoon

### July 9

McHenry County Courthouse  
Woodstock in the morning

Winnebago County Courthouse  
Rockford in the afternoon

### July 24

DuPage County Courthouse  
Wheaton in the morning

Kane County Judicial Center  
St. Charles in the afternoon

### August 21

Rock Island County Courthouse  
Rock Island

### September 26

Vermilion County Courthouse  
Danville in the morning

Coles County Courthouse  
Charleston in the afternoon

### October 9

LaSalle County Courthouse  
Ottawa in the morning

Will County Courthouse  
Joliet in the afternoon

### October 10

Kankakee County Courthouse  
Kankakee in the morning

## Member ID Number

Over the last several years the misuse and theft of Social Security numbers (SSNs) and other personal information has become a major problem in private industry and government agencies across the United States.

As a result, State laws have been enacted to safeguard Illinois citizens, including the Identity Protection Act, which is meant to help protect

SSNs and other personal information stored in various state computer systems. Consistent with that aim, the Department of Central Management Services has developed Employee/Member identification (ID) numbers for all State employees, retirees, and survivors to uniquely identify these members without the use of SSNs.

GARS is phasing out the use of SSNs on most reports and member correspondence, thereby protecting

our members' SSNs from possible unintended disclosure and misuse. The enclosed member ID number on your new GARS ID card and annual statement can be used as the primary identifier in your correspondence with GARS. You can still use your SSN when contacting GARS, although we would encourage you to start using your new Member ID number to help protect your SSN and other personal information.

## *Your July Pension Amount May Change*

Effective with your July benefit payment, the group health insurance premiums for all retirees and survivors will increase. The retiree's premium is based on his/her Medicare status and the benefits received from any of the five state-funded retirement systems.

Retirees and survivors who are ineligible for Medicare Part A (Non-Medicare) will be charged 4% of their monthly gross annuity instead of the current 2%.

Retirees and survivors eligible for Medicare Parts A and B will be charged 2% of their monthly gross annuity instead of the current 1%.

The new insurance premium will be deducted from your July 2014 benefit check. The following examples are for member health coverage only.

### *EXAMPLE of Premium for a Medicare Member*

Medicare Prime Retiree with total monthly gross benefit of \$2,000

$$***\$2,000 X 2\% (.02) = \$40 (new monthly premium)***$$

### *EXAMPLE of Premium for a Non-Medicare Member*

Non-Medicare Retiree with total monthly gross benefit of \$2,000

$$***\$2,000 X 4\% (.04) = \$80 (new monthly premium)***$$

Due to the changes in health insurance premiums effective with your July benefit, GARS will send you an earnings statement in mid-July detailing your gross benefit amount, all deductions and your net benefit for July 2014.

*Email Address: [gars@srs.illinois.gov](mailto:gars@srs.illinois.gov)*



The SRS Member Services website provides members with secure interactive access to their membership data. There are several steps for your first visit.

### To sign up for an Illinois Public Id (if you do not have one):

1. From your Internet browser enter <https://memberservices.srs.illinois.gov> or access our Member Services website link from [www.srs.illinois.gov](http://www.srs.illinois.gov).
2. Click the **Sign Up** button and complete the new Account form and click **Register**.
3. Enter your "First Name" and "Last Name".
4. Enter your "Email Address" and again in "Confirm Email Address".
5. Enter your chosen "Password" (be sure to review link for the State of Illinois password requirements).
6. "Confirm Password" by reentering your chosen password.
7. A confirmation email will be sent to your email to complete the signup process. You only need to create this Illinois Public ID once. Now you are ready to sign in!



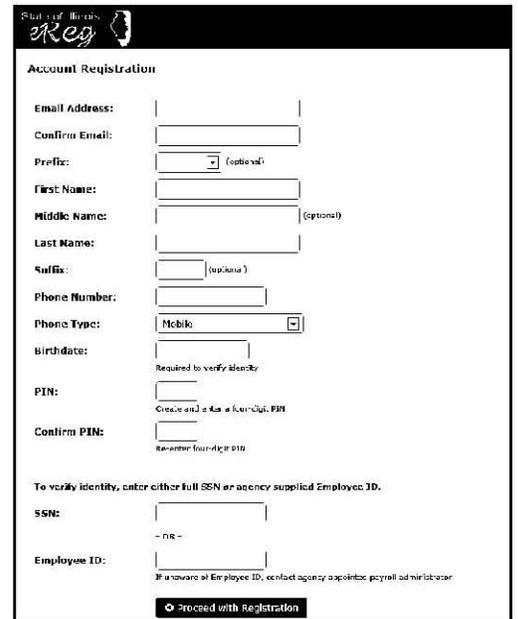
### To sign in after you have an Illinois Public Id:

1. From Internet browser enter <https://memberservices.srs.illinois.gov/>
2. Under Sign In section, enter your Username and Password and then click the **Sign In** button.



### To complete one-time ERegistration on first visit:

1. If it's your first time visiting the website, you will complete a one-time "State of Illinois ERegistration".
2. Enter your "Email Address" and again in "Confirm Email".
3. Enter your name "First", "Middle", "Last" and Suffix if applicable.
4. Enter your Phone Number and type (mobile, home or work).
5. Enter your "Birthdate" as mm/dd/yyyy (example: 01/01/1960).
6. Enter a four-digit Personal Identification Number as your "PIN". This protects your privacy and prevents unauthorized access to your account.
7. Re-enter your "PIN" to confirm it.
8. Enter your "Social Security Number" or "Employee ID". Your employee id is on your most recent member statement or you may contact SRS about it.
9. Click on the **Proceed with Registration** button.
10. Review the registration entry for accuracy. To finalize the registration, again click the **Proceed with Registration** button.



### After registration, you will be redirected to the SRS Member Services website.

On future visits, you will sign in once and be directed to the website automatically.