



State Employees' Retirement System

www.state.il.us/srs

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FINAL ERI STATISTICS

All Retirement Coordinators will receive the Early Retirement Incentive (ERI) statistics as of June 2003, along with this Field Report. These numbers provide an interesting breakdown of the ERI by age, gender, agency, county, etc.

The agencies listed reflect SERS members who purchased time through the ERI. This data is also displayed on our website at www.state.il.us/srs.

If you have any questions about this information, please contact Dave Thompson at 217-785-6975.

UNDER CONSTRUCTION

We are in the process of building a new agency website to conform with CMS guidelines. Our new website will allow you easier access to information with a new layout and several new features:



- Driving directions to our office.

- A 'Contact Us' page with phone numbers and email addresses.
- A link to the other state agencies and reciprocal systems.

Our new website should be up later this summer.

HELP!!!

One casualty of the Early Retirement Incentive (ERI) program was the loss of a significant number of experienced payroll/personnel employees in many state agencies and departments. These long-term employees provided the backbone to one of the most complicated functions within state government.

Familiarity with proper payroll coding and the various combinations of deductions within these systems has become more of a specialty rather than a routine function. Due to this turnover, we are requesting your assistance in monitoring payroll deductions for optional service purchases and accounting arrearages, particularly in the following situations:

1. When an employee opts to purchase optional service (i.e. qualifying period, prior refund, military service, etc.), a letter is sent to the employee's payroll/personnel division to prepare the deductions.

HELP! (continued on back page)

AT THE CAPITOL

During the spring legislative session over 32 bills affecting the State Employees' Retirement System were introduced, but the only legislation that passed allows for the selling of \$10 billion of general obligation bonds. This income will help meet the funding requirements of the five state-funded retirement systems for part of fiscal year '03 and all of fiscal year '04.

The remaining money will be distributed to each fund to reduce their unfunded liabilities. The earnings from this money will reduce the state's required pension contributions in the coming years.

The General Assembly returns for two weeks in November. We will report on any legislation affecting SERS at that time.



Pictured (left to right) are the SERS Claims Division's supervisors. Bob Hicks has been the Disability Supervisor for almost 14 years and has 23 years with SERS. Kathy Welker, who has 18 years with SERS, is our new

Vouchering Supervisor, taking over for Karen Cunningham who retired under the ERI. Brenda Fliagle has been the Pension/Death Supervisor for 3 years and has over 25 years with SERS. Patti Casey, who has 6 years of group insurance experience, was appointed the new Insurance Supervisor on June 1 to replace Pat Boyd who also retired under the ERI.

HELP! (continued)

This letter of notification includes the pay periods to start and stop the deductions, and the amount to be deducted.

Recently, a significant number of these deductions are not being stopped on the requested date, or the final payment is not being adjusted properly. This causes additional work, both to SERS and your agency. SERS typically sends a second notification to agencies when the final payment is approaching.

We ask that agencies try to monitor these critical dates and make the necessary adjustments at the prescribed time.

2. When an employee is making optional service payments on an installment agreement and they leave the payroll, the Service and Refunds Division should be notified (217-785-7167). If any of these employees should return to work, SERS

should also be notified at the same telephone number.

3. When preparing salary reversals for employees who are in the process of purchasing optional service on an installment agreement, you should notify the SERS Service and Refunds Division, so a refund of these tax-deferred deductions can be made to the agency. The Office of the Comptroller won't perform reversals with a pre-tax deduction unless SERS has refunded those monies back to the original agency.

Finally, SERS looks forward to working with the new payroll/personnel employees, as well as continuing our relationship with existing employees. Please contact SERS if you have any questions or matters which you believe need additional attention. Thanks for all of your support and assistance.

BENEFIT FAIRS & SEMINARS

The **Benefit Fairs** held during the month of May were very successful in terms of one-on-one contact with our members. We invite all state agencies who will hold 2004 Benefit Fairs to contact us at 217-785-6979 or 312-814-5853 to request our participation.

Benefit Seminars are conducted throughout the state by request. These one-hour seminars explain SERS benefits and entitlements in detail. If your agency would like to hold a benefit seminar, contact our Springfield office at 217-785-6979 or our Chicago office at 312-814-5853.



SRS has received several new beneficiary forms with different addresses than what is on the member's W-4 form. A new address on a beneficiary form doesn't automatically update the member's address with SERS. Please remind members that if they change their address they need to complete a new W-4 form.

WORKSHOPS

The SERS preretirement workshops for 2003 filled up quickly this year due to the ERI and the rescheduling of 2002 dates.

All employees who received rejection letters for 2003 workshops will automatically be placed in a 2004 workshop date.

We are currently working on next year's schedule, which will be finalized by July. The workshop brochures will be printed in August and mailed to all RCs. The schedule will also appear in the August SERS-O-GRAM.

Registration Process

1. The supervisor gives the name(s) of prospective participants to the RC, who then provides the participants with a Reservation Form.
2. The participant completes the form, has their supervisor sign it, and the supervisor returns the form(s) to the RC for completion of Part 3.
3. The RC keeps form 521 on file and mails form 545 to SERS.
4. The participant receives a confirmation letter from SERS.

RC MEETINGS

The 2003 Retirement Coordinator meetings are tentatively scheduled for the week of November 3. We will notify all RCs of finalized dates, while trying to avoid payroll closing conflicts.

If you have suggestions for speakers or topics you would like to have discussed, contact Vickie at 217-785-6979. We will hand out the new Retirement Coordinator manuals at these meetings.