

Service Retirement & DROP

Normal service retirement provides a lifetime benefit. Your eligibility for a service retirement depends on two factors: your service credit and age.

Normal Service Retirement:

- Age 50 or
- 25 years of eligibility service at any age

When you retire, your monthly benefit will be paid according to one of several payment options. Your payment option will affect the amount of your monthly benefit. It also will determine the type and amount of benefit, if any, your beneficiary(ies) will receive after your death.

If you're married on the date of retirement, you will receive the Basic Allowance. This provides you with the largest monthly allowance during your lifetime that you are entitled to receive. Upon your death following retirement, your spouse will receive 50% of your monthly allowance for the remainder of his or her lifetime. If you have no spouse but have child(ren) under age 26, the child(ren) will receive this benefit until each child is age 26. Disabled children receive a lifetime benefit as long as disabled. If you have no spouse, children under age 26 or disabled children, no survivor's allowance is payable and monthly payments cease at your death.

Unmarried officers may elect the Basic Allowance or one of six additional options which provide varying levels of survivor protection to their beneficiary(ies).

Deferred Retirement Option Program (DROP)

A Deferred Retirement Option Program (DROP) is available for eligible members of the Law Enforcement Officers' Pension System. Under this voluntary program, you can "retire" (and begin accumulating your retirement benefits in a DROP account) while you continue to work (and draw a paycheck) with your same employer. While in DROP, your retirement benefits are deposited in a DROP account within the State

Retirement and Pension System. For DROP accounts established on and after July 1, 2011, these deposits earn tax deferred interest of 4% compounded annually for as long as you remain in DROP.

When your DROP participation ends, you must terminate employment with your employer. You will then begin receiving your monthly retirement allowance plus the accumulated balance in your DROP account as a one-time payment.

During Retirement

As a retiree, once you have been retired one full year as of July 1, your retirement allowance may be adjusted each July to help your benefit payments keep pace with inflation.

If You Leave Employment Before Retirement

If you should leave employment once you have accrued at least 10 years of eligibility service, you are vested and have earned the right to receive a future benefit based on your service at termination. If you withdraw any of your contributions at termination, you will forfeit the right to a future benefit.

If you are not vested at the time of termination and you don't anticipate returning to membership, you should contact the agency to receive a return of any contributions with interest you may have made.

Resources

Visit the State Retirement Agency online at sra.maryland.gov for newsletters, member handbooks, retirement benefit estimators, printable forms and updates on the system's financial performance.

To visit the office or write a letter:

State Retirement Agency
120 East Baltimore Street
Baltimore, MD 21202-6700

Email inquiries to sra@sra.state.md.us

To speak with a retirement benefits specialist:

410-625-5555 or 1-800-492-5909

sra.maryland.gov

sra.maryland.gov

Welcome to the

Law Enforcement Officers' Pension System



Diamondback Terrapin
Maryland State Reptile

Maryland State Retirement
and Pension System
120 East Baltimore Street
Baltimore, MD 21202-6700

410-625-5555
1-800-492-5909

sra.maryland.gov

Welcome!

The Maryland State Retirement and Pension System has a long history of providing retirement benefits to law enforcement officers, employees and teachers of Maryland state and municipal employers.

This overview deals with the highlights of the Law Enforcement Officers' Pension System. Please refer to the pension system handbook on our website at sra.maryland.gov for more details about any of these topics.

A retirement coordinator, usually someone in your human resources department, can help you file enrollment forms and answer basic questions about your benefits. The Maryland State Retirement Agency also maintains a staff of retirement benefits specialists to answer questions from members and retirees.

Enrollment

Membership in the Law Enforcement Officers' Pension System is mandatory. You must enroll by submitting an *Application for Membership* (Form 1), a *Designation of Beneficiary* (Form 4) and a valid proof of birth date. The forms are available from your retirement coordinator.

If you have membership credit in another Maryland state or Maryland local retirement/pension system, you may be able to transfer that service credit to your new plan. To qualify for the transfer, your employment must be continuous and you must apply within one year of becoming a member in your new system. Contact a retirement benefits specialist if this situation applies to you.

Employee Contributions

You contribute seven percent of your annual salary to the Law Enforcement Officers' Pension System.

Service Credit

You earn service credit toward your retirement benefits each day you work and pay your required contribution. Your service credit, and/or your age, determine when you are eligible for retirement and how much your retirement benefit will be.

Eligibility service is used to determine when you are eligible for a benefit. You earn one year of eligibility service during any fiscal year when you work a minimum of 500 regular hours, excluding overtime.

The amount of your retirement benefit is based on creditable service which is determined on the hours you work in a fiscal year. A full-time employee will earn one month of creditable service for each month of employment.

Your Benefits

The Law Enforcement Officers' Pension System provides survivor, disability and service retirement benefits. More information on your benefits is available online at sra.maryland.gov.

Survivor Benefits

The Law Enforcement Officers' Pension System provides valuable beneficiary protection for members who die during active membership.

Death Benefit

If you die after accruing at least one year but less than two years of eligibility service, and death does not occur in the course of duty, your beneficiary(ies) receives a one-time payment of your annual salary plus your accumulated contributions and interest.

Special Death Benefit

If you die out of or in the course of the actual performance of duty and without willful negligence, the following will be paid:

- A monthly benefit for your spouse of two-thirds of your average final compensation. If you have no spouse, your children under age 26 will divide the monthly payment until each attains age 26 or your disabled children receive payment as long as disabled plus
- Your accumulated contributions with interest.

Or, if you have more than two years of eligibility service at the time of death while in active service and

death occurs without willful negligence, the following will be paid:

- A monthly benefit for your spouse of 50% of the ordinary disability retirement allowance. If you have no spouse, your children under 26 years of age will divide this monthly payment until each attains age 26 and your disabled children receive payment as long as disabled plus
- Your accumulated contributions with interest.

If you do not have a spouse or children under age 26 or disabled children, then the Death Benefit is paid to the designated beneficiary(ies).

Disability Benefits

If you are permanently and totally disabled from performing your job duties, as determined by the system's medical board and Board of Trustees, you may be eligible for a lifetime monthly disability retirement benefit.

Two Types of Disability Retirement Benefits:

Ordinary: Any permanently disabling physical or mental condition.

Accidental: Any permanently disabling condition caused by injuries sustained from an accident on the job.

To file for ordinary disability, you must have accrued five years of eligibility service. To be eligible for accidental disability, you must be an active member who is permanently disabled from performing your job duties. Your incapacity for duty must have arisen out of, or in the course of, the actual performance of duty.

Your retirement coordinator can provide you with the necessary forms to file for a disability retirement benefit.