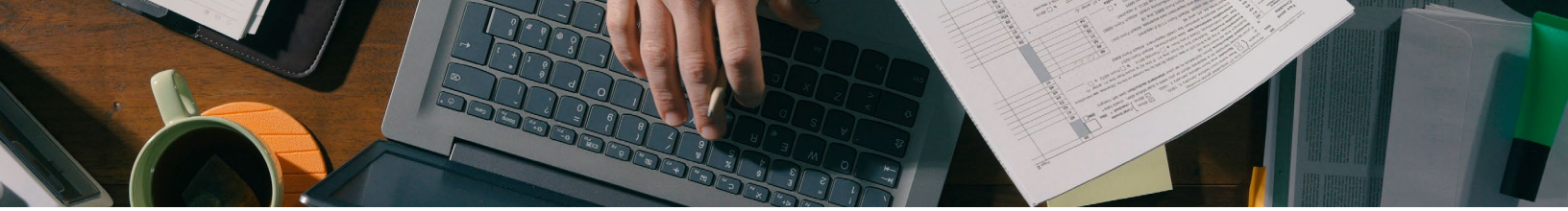
MERS®
Municipal Employees' Retirement System

DEFINED BENEFIT PLAN

Participant Handbook

wwww.mersofmich.com



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WHO IS MERS?

The Municipal Employees' Retirement System (MERS) of Michigan is an independent professional retirement services company that was created to administer the retirement plans for Michigan's local units of government on a not-for-profit basis.

As a MERS Defined Benefit Plan member, you join over 100,000 MERS participants all across the state, many of them your friends and family, your neighbors and coworkers.

The MERS Defined Benefit Plan gives you an important tool to help you reach your retirement goals, with a lifetime benefit from your employer. This handbook will help you understand your retirement plan, and point you to other important resources to help you along your way.

If you need assistance or additional information, our staff is available by phone or personal consultation. Our website, *www.mersofmich.com*, provides you access to your individual account anytime, complete with up-to-date information, important forms, benefit calculators, and helpful tutorials.

MERS Retirement Board

MERS is administered by a nine-member Retirement Board, made up of representatives from municipalities at the employer, employee, and retiree level, and the general public. It has the fiduciary responsibility for the investment of assets and oversees the system. The Board appoints the Chief Executive Officer, who manages and administers MERS under the supervision and direction of the Board. The Board also oversees the MERS Plan Document, which governs the benefit provisions of your plan. Investments, selects the menu of investment options for the MERS programs.

MERS Ivestments

Your financial security is our highest priority. We hold the fiduciary responsibility for the investment of all assets. Your future benefits are invested with MERS, and you benefit from more than 75 years of experience. We understand what drives the markets and offer a disciplined approach to investing. As long-term investors, we maintain a well-diversified portfolio and manage investment activity on a day-to-day basis.

It's important to understand that with a MERS Defined Benefit Plan, your future benefit won't fluctuate due to investment gains or losses in the market. Your benefit is based on the Defined Benefit Formula, which we detail in the next section.

myMERS Online Account Access

With myMERS, you can access your MERS plan(s) 24 hours a day, seven days a week for account details, statements, beneficiary information, publications, forms, calculators and much more.

Join the thousands of MERS participants who are already enjoying the benefits of myMERS. To get started, visit *www.mersofmich.com*.

A CLOSER LOOK AT THE

DEFINED BENEFIT PLAN

Understanding the Defined Benefit Formula

The benefit formula has three parts:

Figure 1

FINAL AVERAGE COMPENSATION	X	SERVICE CREDIT	X	BENEFIT MULTIPLIER	=	$ ANNUAL BENEFIT

Final average compensation (FAC) is the average of the highest consecutive wages you earned over a set period of time. That period of time is determined by your employer and is typically three or five years.

Note: Wages earned (for hours worked) in the month of termination that are paid the month following termination may not be considered when determining your final average compensation and pension benefit.

Service credit is the total amount of qualified time earned under your plan, including any purchased service credit. You earn service credit for each month of work that meets your employer's requirement.

Your employer has defined the minimum number of hours you are required to work (or be paid for as if working) each month to earn service credit. For example, if your employer requires you to work 10 eight-hour days, this would be 80 hours per month.

The **benefit multiplier** is a percentage chosen by your employer and can range from 1.0% to 2.5%. If your plan has a benefit multiplier of 2.25% or higher, your pension benefit will be capped at 80% of your FAC.

View your individual information by logging in to myMERS at *www.mersofmich.com.*

Putting the Formula Into Practice

Mary J. Doe worked for the city full-time for 25 years; she has 25 years of service credit. The benefit multiplier in effect at her retirement was a 2% multiplier. Her final average compensation was $35,000. To figure out what Mary's annual benefit will be, see the calculation.

FAC		$35,000.00
Service Credit	x	25
Multiplier B-2 (2%)	x	.02

Annual Straight Life Benefit:
$17,500.00 ÷ 12 = $1,458.33 (monthly Straight Life benefit)

Eligibility | Vesting

Now that you have a general overview of how your MERS Defined Benefit is calculated, we will take a more in-depth look at how everything else works together.

Vesting occurs when you have earned the required amount of service credit to be eligible for your retirement benefit.

Your employer chooses what the vesting schedule is. The most common options are: 10 years, eight years or six years. More information on retirement eligibility requirements is found on page 12.

There are other ways you can become vested, too:

1. Other MERS Service

Other MERS Service is service you may have earned from another participating municipality. If you have worked with more than one MERS employer, you may be able to coordinate your service credit to help meet your vesting and early retirement eligibility requirements. The following points are general guidelines to keep in mind:

- ***Your service cannot be concurrent***
  If you earn a month of service credit from two employers in the same calendar month, only one of the months of service can be used as eligible service.
- ***You must have a minimum of one year of service credit***
  You must have a minimum of one year of service credit with a MERS employer in order to coordinate that service with any other MERS employers.
- ***Your contributions must remain on deposit***
  If you made employee contributions to your Defined Benefit Plan, they must remain on deposit with MERS. If you have already taken a refund, you may be able to repay it in some cases.
- ***You cannot have a break of more than 20 years between MERS employers***
  A break in service between employments cannot be more than 20 years.

2. Reciprocal Retirement Act – Act 88

In 1961, the State of Michigan enacted the Reciprocal Retirement Act, also known as Act 88. In general, this Act can help you if you have been enrolled in more than one Michigan governmental retirement plan, but fall short of pension eligibility with any or all of them. You can coordinate your service credit to help meet the vesting requirement (and in some situations, the retirement eligibility requirements).

This provision only applies if your employer(s) has adopted Act 88. To find out if you qualify for any benefits, please contact our Service Center. You may also find a complete listing of Act 88 participating municipalities listed on our website at *www.mersofmich.com*.

Released Deferred Obligation

If you have worked for more than one MERS employer, you may request to purchase (transfer) service credit from your former MERS employer to the current one. You may also request that your former employer release their obligation to pay a retirement benefit and transfer the employer assets to your new employer. Certain conditions apply. Please contact us for more information.

Purchasing Additional Service Credit

In addition to Other MERS Service and Act 88 time, you may have the option to purchase service credit to help meet an early retirement eligibility or to increase your pension. Unlike Other MERS Service or Act 88 time, purchased service credit cannot be used to reach vesting.

The cost to purchase service credit for each individual is based on many factors, some of which are age, projected earnings, benefit provisions, expected retirement date, etc. Here are some general points to remember when considering this option:

1. Your employer must allow for service credit purchases.
2. The governing body for your employer must approve all purchases.
3. Minimum purchase is one month.
4. You can purchase service credit any time during your employment, but it can't be used to meet your vesting requirement.
5. You can use the purchased service credit to increase your retirement payment and to meet early retirement eligibility requirements (*see page 16*).
6. You may be eligible to transfer assets from other accounts to make a payment for the purchase such as 457 deferred compensation plans, 401(a) plans, 403(b) plans, and traditional IRAs. No assets from a SIMPLE IRA, Roth IRA, Roth 401(k) or Roth 457 can be used.

To Purchase Service Credit

- Request a free estimate by contacting your Human Resources department
- Your estimate will be mailed to your employer
- Your estimate is good for 2 months

There are two different types of service credit available for purchase; there is no difference in cost:

Other governmental service credit can be purchased if you have worked as a full-time employee for another governmental agency (federal, state, local, or federally recognized Indian Tribal government) and are not going to receive a retirement benefit from that employer.

The following are key points to remember:

- You must provide verification of service from the governmental entity.
- You may purchase the full number of years worked (e.g., if you've worked 10 years, you can purchase 10 years).
- You cannot purchase service credit if there was a break of 20 years or more between your other governmental service employment when you joined MERS.

Generic service credit is service credit that you can purchase without actual "service performed." Please remember:

- You may purchase a maximum of five years, which includes service credit purchased with other MERS employers.

Military Service

If you've been called into active duty or are thinking of joining a United States branch of armed services, we have a provision just for you. As a member of a participating municipality, you may receive service credit while you are on active duty, up to a maximum of five years. Even though you do not purchase this service credit, if your employer requires an employee contribution you must make up those contributions based on wages that would have been earned during your time away. You must also return to the same municipality within 90 days of your discharge date in order to receive this benefit.

Employee Contributions

At many municipalities, employees are also required to contribute to their MERS Defined Benefit Plan. Here are some important points to remember about employee contributions:

- Your contributions don't change your benefit formula, but they do help meet funding needs.
- Your employer sets the mandatory contribution rate.
- If your employer has a cap on its pension obligations, your contribution rate may fluctuate.
- Each calendar year, you'll receive an annual statement detailing your retirement benefits. All the contributions you make are posted to your account and interest is paid each December.

If you terminate employment, you can request a refund of your contributions (*see page 14* for more information).

NAMING YOUR BENEFICIARY

One of the most important things you can do for yourself and your family is to name beneficiaries and keep your information updated.

You can update beneficiary and contact information any time by logging into your myMERS account through the MERS website.

A **Monthly Pension Beneficiary** is one person who would receive a lifetime benefit if you are vested and die before you begin collecting your retirement benefits (or if you die as a result of work duties).

If married, your spouse must be named your Monthly Pension Beneficiary unless they waive this right in writing.

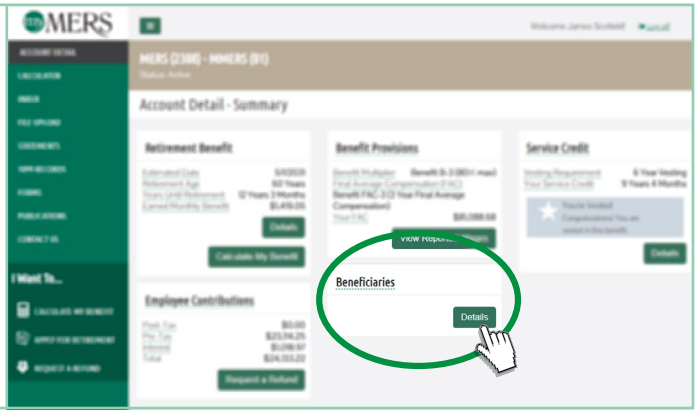
A **Refund Beneficiary** is a person(s), trust, estate or charity that would receive a refund of your employee contributions (plus interest) if you die before you are vested.

If married, your spouse must be named your Primary Refund Beneficiary unless they waive this right in writing.

You'll also be asked to provide a Contingent Refund Beneficiary in case your Primary Refund Beneficiary is deceased.

Your online myMERS account has all the information you need, and shows you the benefits and provisions of your plan.

You can name, update or change your beneficiary designation for any reason in myMERS. Simply log in to your defined benefit account and click on the "Details" button under "Beneficiaries."



DEATH

Death Before Retirement – *Active Employees*

If you should die while you are still working, it can have an impact on your family's financial security. To help ease this burden, it's important to know how your beneficiaries are protected.

If you are still an active member at the time of your death, your beneficiary may be entitled to either a refund of your contributions or a monthly death benefit. There are two terms used when describing death benefits – non-duty death and duty death.

A **non-duty death** is a death that is not due to a work-related condition or incident.

Here are a few points you should know about non-duty death:

- You must be vested for your beneficiary to receive a monthly benefit.
- The surviving spousal beneficiary will receive the greater of a lifetime benefit of at least 85% of the Defined Benefit formula OR the monthly pension benefit payment option.
- If you do not have a surviving spouse or other named Monthly Pension Beneficiary, any children would equally share a total of 50% of the employee's Straight Life benefit until they are age 21.
- If you do not have a surviving spouse, a Monthly Pension Beneficiary would be eligible to receive a percentage of your accrued Straight Life benefit.
- If you are not vested, your beneficiary would receive a refund of your employee contributions. If you did not contribute, there is nothing to refund.

A **duty death** is a death that happens as the direct result of an injury or illness arising out of the actual performance of your assigned work duties.

Here are a few points you should know about duty-death:

- You do not need to be vested.
- Your spouse will automatically receive a minimum of 25% of your final average compensation.
- If you do not have a surviving spouse or other named Monthly Pension Beneficiary, any children would equally share a total of at least 25% of the employee's final average compensation until they are age 21.
- If you are vested, a named Monthly Pension Beneficiary will be eligible to receive a percentage of your accrued Straight Life benefit.
- If you are not vested and do not have a spouse or children under the age of 21, your beneficiary may apply for a refund of your employee contributions. If you did not contribute, there is nothing to refund.

Duty Death – Additional Provision

Program D-2 is an employer-adopted benefit that enhances your retirement allowance in the event of a duty death or duty disability. When adopted, this benefit adds up to an additional 10 years of service credit, not exceeding a maximum of 30 years.

Death

Death Before Retirement – *Terminated & Vested*

If you terminate your employment but die before your retirement benefits start, your beneficiary may be entitled to a monthly benefit.

1. Your spouse or Monthly Pension Beneficiary is eligible to begin receiving benefits when you would have been eligible for a retirement benefit – this is usually age 60.

2. If there is no spouse or named Monthly Pension Beneficiary, children under the age of 21 would be eligible to begin receiving benefits immediately. Each child would equally share a portion of your benefit until age 21.

Death After Retirement – *Additional Provision*

RS 50% is an employer-adopted benefit that allows your spouse to receive 50% of your Straight Life benefit upon your death without your benefit having a reduction. To be eligible, you must be married to your spouse for at least one year before you retire, and still be married at the time of your death.

DISABILITY

If you happen to reach a point in your career where an injury or illness prohibits you from working, you may need to apply for a disability retirement pension. Disability benefits are subject to approval by MERS.

There are two types of disability retirement: Non-duty disability and duty disability. Either you or your employer may apply for disability retirement benefits. If you have terminated employment with your employer, please note that you must have terminated service because of your disability in order to apply for disability retirement. If you terminated employment for reasons unrelated to your disability, your disability application will be denied. Applications must be filed within two years of your "termination" date. Your termination date is your last official day of work at your employer.

Non-Duty Disability

Non-duty disability is an injury or illness that is not caused by a work-related incident. In order to be eligible for this type of disability, you must be vested. The monthly pension payment is calculated using the Defined Benefit formula. *(To review, please see page 4.)*

Duty Disability

Duty disability is an injury or illness that is direct result of a work-related incident. For this type of disability, you do not need to be vested. The annual pension payment will be a minimum of 25% of your final average compensation.

Disability Income Limitation

When you receive a disability pension benefit from MERS, there is an income limitation on the amount of considered income you may earn (in addition to your MERS disability pension) without a reduction to your disability pension. Your income limitation is 100% of your final average compensation (FAC) and is calculated at the time of your retirement. Your considered income is any additional income you receive from other sources. Some examples are Social Security disability benefits; workers' compensation; short and long-term disability benefits; sick and accident benefits; and/or any employment-including self-employment.

If you receive a disability pension benefit, MERS will contact you each year to verify your income. If the money you earn exceeds your income limitation, your pension amount will be reduced dollar-for-dollar in excess of your limitation. This limitation usually stays in effect until you turn age 60. Some key items to keep in mind are:

- You must notify MERS of changes in your income as they occur.
- Failure to notify MERS of income changes may result in a reduction of monthly pension payments and repayment of pension overpayment.

Apply for Disability

To receive disability benefits, you'll need to meet all of the requirements set out in the Plan. Here's how to apply:

01 Complete and submit the *Application for Disability Retirement (F-51)*, available at *www.mersofmich.com*, or by calling the MERS Service Center at 800.767.6377.

When you submit your application to MERS, you will need to include your current medical records along with two separate Physician's Statements. If your illness or injury was a result of work-related cause you will need to include a copy of Employer's Basic Report of Injury and all documents relating to worker's compensation. Please review the instructions on the form for further details.

02 Your application, and any medical documentation, will be evaluated by Managed Medical Review Organization, Inc. (MMRO), MERS' disability vendor. You will be contacted by MMRO within five business days of receiving the application to discuss your next steps in the disability evaluation process. The evaluation process may take up to three months to complete.

03 We will notify you and your employer of the results once the disability evaluation is complete. If your application is approved, your disability approval letter will detail your next steps in order to start collecting your benefit.

DIVORCE

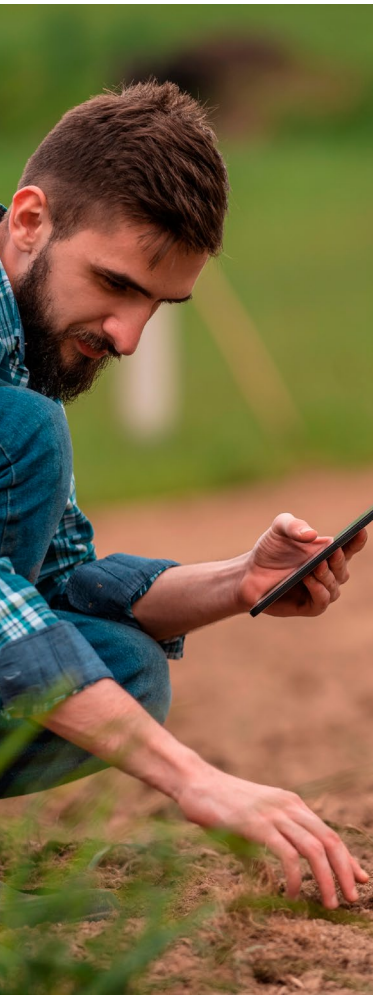
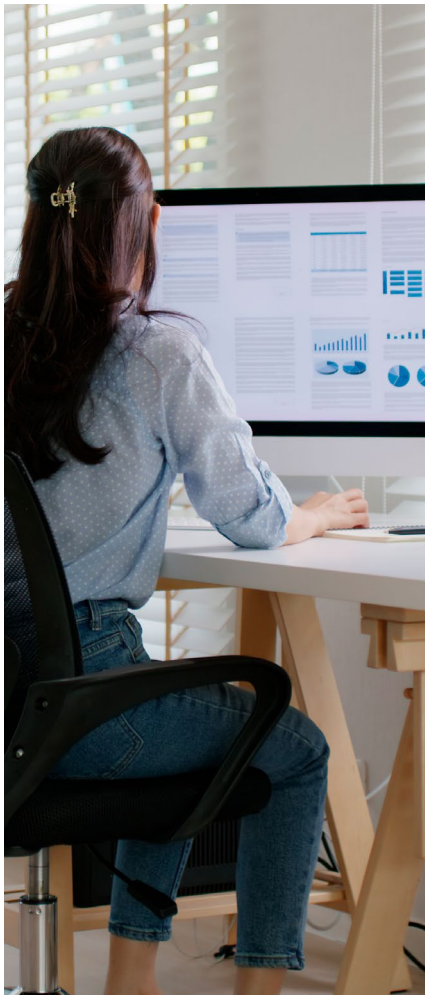
Divorce is a life-changing event that can impact your financial future. Quite often, your retirement benefits can make up a substantial portion of your assets. Retirement benefits earned during the marriage are considered marital property and your spouse may be entitled to a portion of your benefit.

The Eligible Domestic Relations Order Act – also known as the EDRO Act – authorizes the division and assignment of pension benefits earned by public employees upon divorce.

If the court orders an assignment of some or all of your MERS benefit to your former spouse, a domestic relations order is required to be submitted to MERS.

Any designation or status of your former spouse as your beneficiary terminates upon entry of the judgment of divorce, unless otherwise required by law. (Nothing prevents you from designating a former spouse as a beneficiary subsequent to the divorce.)

Please see our website for more information and sample orders: *www.mersofmich.com/Participant/Life-Events/Getting-Divorced/*

LEAVING EMPLOYMENT

BEFORE IT'S TIME TO RETIRE

Now, what happens if leave your employment before you're eligible to retire? Your options depend on whether or not you are vested, and how much service credit you have acquired. Here are a few things to keep in mind:

1. If your employment ends but you are vested, you may defer your benefits until you meet the age/service requirements.

2. If you are not vested when you terminate your employment, you have up to 20 years to go to work for another MERS employer to earn the additional service credit you need to become vested. (See MERS-to-MERS Service and Reciprocal Retirement Act on page 4.)

Your Personal Contributions

If you terminate employment, you may also request a refund. If you take a refund of your accumulated contributions, you will be waiving your right to a monthly benefit, and all vesting service you earned. Requesting a refund means you will receive a refund of your contributions and interest. You do not receive any contributions that were made by your employer. Once you request a refund, you forfeit your service credit and any associated benefits.

You can expect a refund to be processed approximately 30 days after your employer reports your final wages and contributions to MERS. You will also need to fill out a *Refund Application (F-24)*. There may be early withdrawal penalties as well as federal income tax withholding charges.

CHANGING JOBS *AT YOUR MUNICIPALITY*

Standard Transfer Rules

Within MERS, if you transfer from one division at your municipality to another division, you must participate in the open, active plan of the new division. For example, if you're a MERS Defined Benefit member transferring to a division with the MERS Defined Contribution or Hybrid Plans, the new division's plan will become your new retirement plan. Certain conditions apply. If you do change jobs at your municipality, you'll need to complete the appropriate transfer member certification *(Form 35B* and *Form 35C)* and return it to your employer. For more information, please read the Standard Transfer Rules under the Forms section at *www.mersofmich.com*, or call us at 800.767.6377.

Alternative Transfer Rules

Your municipality may have adopted MERS Alternative Transfer Rules, which would offer you a choice to stay in your previous retirement plan, or to join the new plan. Please ask your employer for more information about what transfer rules apply.

RETIREMENT

Eligibility to Retire

You can begin receiving retirement benefits when you reach the age and service requirements under your plan provisions. If you are vested, the most common **retirement age is 60**, but check with your employer as it may differ. Your employer may also have adopted an early retirement provision, which means you may begin receiving your **full, unreduced** benefits **before the standard retirement age** if you meet the requirements.

Early Reduced Retirement

You can retire early without a special provision from your employer, provided you meet certain age and service conditions, which are:

- Age 55 with at least 15 years of service
- Age 50 with at least 25 years of service

However, be aware that doing so will permanently reduce your benefit by 0.5% per month for each month that you are younger than your employer's standard retirement age.

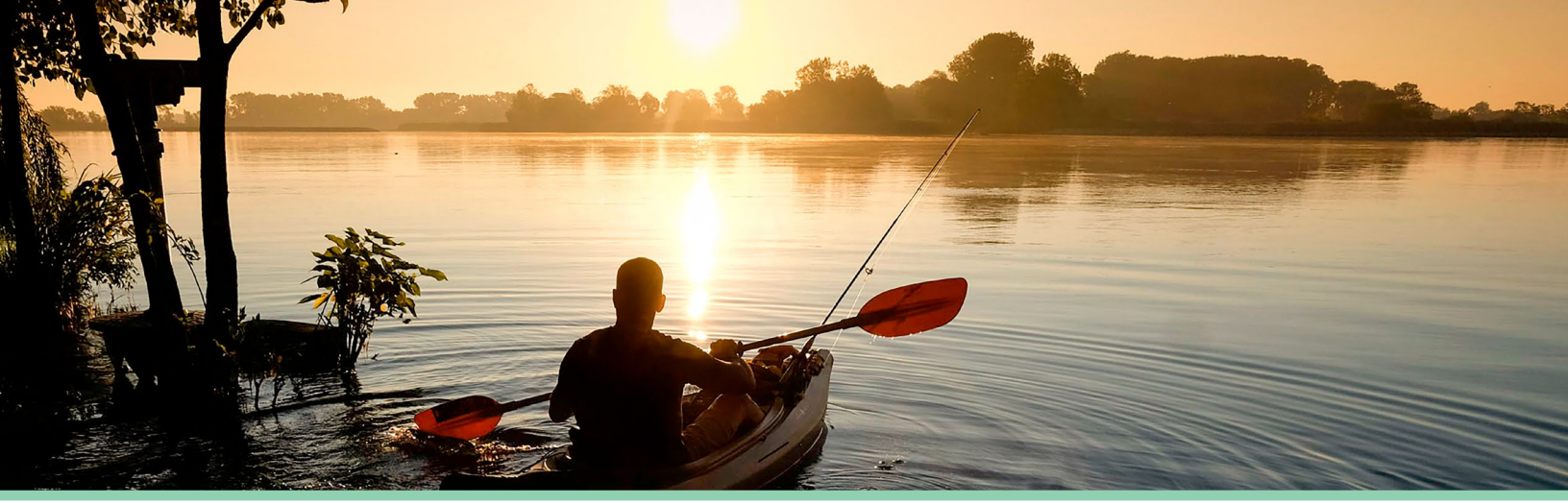
For example, if your employer's standard retirement age is 60, and you retire at age 58½ (18 months early) your benefit will be permanently reduced by 9.0% (0.5% for each of the 18 months).

Early Retirement Benefits

Your employer may also adopt early retirement benefits. These options allow employees to retire before the standard retirement age with a full, unreduced benefit. Ask your employer to see if you qualify.

Get your Benefit Calculation online

Log in to your *myMERS* account at *www.mersofmich.com* and view an estimated Benefit Calculation any time. This may assist you in choosing which payment option is best for you.



Apply for Retirement

When you meet the age and service requirements, you're ready to start the retirement process.

1. **Apply for retirement online.** Submit the online retirement application through your myMERS account **45-90 days** prior to your retirement date.

   You will need to choose your payment option. Log in to your myMERS account and use the Calculator to see estimated monthly defined benefit calculations and how various payment options impact your final pension amount.

2. **We'll begin processing your information.** It can take up to six weeks to review your file and begin processing your information.

3. **Your preliminary benefit calculation is sent.** MERS will send a personalized Retirement Allowance Schedule for you that will provide a preliminary calculation of your expected benefits with a letter confirming your retirement elections.

4. **Enjoy your retirement!** Your retirement date will be the first day of the month following your termination date, or the first day of the month following MERS receipt of your completed retirement forms, whichever is later.

Payments are issued electronically on the 18th of each month, unless it falls on a weekend or holiday, in which case the payment will be issued the business day prior. These pension payments are subject to federal and some state taxes.

Payment Options

When you retire, you will be able to choose the form of payment that works for you. Your available options are:

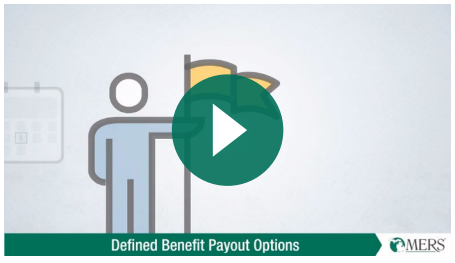
1. **Straight Life** — highest monthly payment paid for your lifetime, with no Monthly Pension Beneficiary.

2. **Life with 100%, 75%, or 50% to survivor** — a reduced benefit that provides a chosen percentage to your beneficiary for life if you die. If your beneficiary predeceases you, your payment reverts to the Straight Life amount for the rest of your life. Your beneficiary cannot be changed after you retire.

3. **Life with 20, 15, 10, or 5 year period certain** — provides a monthly benefit to you as long as you live. If you die before the period certain ends, your beneficiary(ies) receives your payment until the period certain ends.

Note: Please select your payment option carefully; it may not be changed.

Payment Options Video



View a short video explaining the three payment options. (www.mersofmich.com/video-library)

LIFE IN RETIREMENT

Cost-of-Living Adjustments

A cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) is an annual increase that may be applied to your base pension amount each January. Your base pension amount is the monthly benefit payment that was calculated under the payment option you selected at retirement. For example, if you chose the Straight Life payment option and your monthly benefit payment under that option is $575, then $575 is your base pension amount. However, if you chose the Life with 100% to Survivor payment option instead, and your reduced monthly benefit payment under that option is $500, then $500 is your base pension amount.

The COLA can either be an automatic increase that is a part of your retirement benefit package, or something that is annually adopted by your employer. Some common examples include:

COLA Examples	Automatic, Non-Compounding 2.5%	Automatic, Compounding 2.5%	Annually Adopted, Compounding 2%
	Future increases are calculated on the original benefit and are not compounded over the previous year	Future increases are calculated on the previous year's benefit (may include previous COLA increases)	Compounded 2% increase per year back to date of last adoption or retirement
Monthly Base Pension	$500.00	$500.00	$500.00
COLA Amount	$12.50	$12.50	$10.00
1st Year Monthly Pension	$512.50	$512.50	$510.00
COLA Amount	$12.50	$12.81	$10.20
2nd Year Monthly Pension	$525.00	$525.31	$520.20
COLA Amount	$12.50	$13.13	$10.40
3rd Year Monthly Pension	$537.50	$538.44	$530.60

See your employer for specifics if your retirement benefit includes a cost of living adjustment.

If your benefit includes a COLA and the payment option you chose at retirement was anything other than Straight Life, then the COLA would also apply to the monthly pension amount your beneficiary receives. In that case, the amount of the COLA would be based off of the portion of your monthly base pension amount that they are eligible to receive (100%, 75% or 50%). The following example shows how an Automatic, Non-Compounding 2.5% COLA would be applied to the amount that a beneficiary could receive if the participant chose the Life 50% to Survivor payment option.

COLA Example Under Life with 50% to Survivor Payment Option	Monthly Pension Amount received by participant at time of retirement	Monthly Pension Amount received by beneficiary if participant predeceases beneficiary
Monthly Base Pension	$500.00	$250.00
COLA Amount	$12.50	$6.25
1st Year Monthly Pension	$512.50	$256.25
COLA Amount	$12.50	$6.25
2nd Year Monthly Pension	$525.00	$262.50
COLA Amount	$12.50	$6.25
3rd Year Monthly Pension	$537.50	$268.75

*COLA Amounts are calculated in the Pension Administration system every year for all applicable future scenarios

Working in Retirement

If you retire and later decide to return to the workplace, there are restrictions that can affect your MERS pension under certain conditions. These restrictions apply only if you become re-employed by the employer you retired from. There are also different rules for elected officials than regular employees. There are no restrictions if you are hired anywhere other than the employer you retired from.

If you retire and you are returning to a regular (non-elected/appointed) position, the following rules apply:

- You must complete and submit the Working in Retirement Certification form, signed by both you and your employer, to MERS.
- You must have a bona fide termination before returning to work, per IRS rules. Bona fide termination is defined as no formal or informal agreement to return to work prior to retirement.
- You must have 60 days of separation.
- You may work up to 1,000 hours in a calendar year.

If you retire and you are returning to an elected/appointed position, the following rules apply:

- You must complete and submit the appropriate Dual Certification form, signed by both you and your employer, to MERS.
- You must have a bona fide retirement before returning to work, per IRS rules. Bona fide retirement is defined as no formal or informal agreement to return to work prior to retirement.
- If you are re-elected/appointed into the same position, you must have two years of separation.
- If you are elected/appointed into a different position, you must have 60 days of separation.
- You are not subject to any hour limitation.

Taxability of MERS Benefits

Federal income tax and, under certain conditions, state tax is required on your MERS pension. If you made any post-tax employee contributions during your employment, the portion of your benefit that comes from those post-tax contributions will be exempt.

You choose how you want your taxes to be withheld at the time of your first payment. Federal and Michigan state tax withholding information can be updated in your myMERS account at any time after you've retired.

Each January, MERS will mail the 1099-R form necessary to file your income tax. MERS will also place it in the **1099 Records** section of your myMERS account. It will have your gross distribution, taxable amount, federal (and state, if applicable) income tax withheld, employee contributions (if you contributed to your pension), and type of benefit being paid (retirement, disability, beneficiary, refund). First-year retirees will have their total amount of post-tax contributions.

Refunds of employer contributions and other distributions may be taxed differently. Please check with your personal tax adviser for more details.

OTHER RESOURCES

At MERS, we want you to be prepared for retirement, not just ready to retire. Whether you're just getting started in your career, or you're close to retirement already, we offer many tools and resources to help you plan for the years ahead.

myMERS app

The myMERS app gives you fast, free, secure access to your account information anywhere you go.

myMERS **Scan Me**

Statements

You'll receive an annual member statement at the beginning of every year, detailing your retirement account and current service credit.

You can also log in to your myMERS account at *www.mersofmich.com* to find up-to-date information about your MERS retirement.

Educational Opportunities

We offer a variety of ways to help you prepare for retirement, with educational events on important MERS topics throughout the year:

Group presentations and 1-on-1 consultations are available at your municipality or through virtual meetings online.

- Educational events are offered at different times and locations throughout the year.
- Visit *www.mersofmich.com* for up-to-date information.

Regional Teams to Serve You

We pride ourselves in offering excellent customer service. We have teams of specialists dedicated to specific regions in Michigan. We also work with your employer to hold meetings at your work site, at times that are best for you. Our staff can offer guidance and 1-on-1 consultations.

Service Center

MERS Service Center offers friendly, knowledgeable, over-the-phone assistance for a wide variety of benefit questions and issues. The Service Center staff is available weekdays at 800.767.6377.

Social Media

Want to make the most out of your plan and receive tips to help you with your financial future? MERS delivers relevant news articles, helpful resources, tips and videos. Follow us today.

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This publication contains a summary description of MERS benefits, policies or procedures. MERS has made every effort to ensure that the information provided is accurate and up to date. If this publication conflicts with the relevant provisions of the Plan Document, the Plan Document Controls. MERS, as a governmental plan, is exempted by state and federal law from registration with the SEC. However, it employs registered investment advisors to manage the trust fund in compliance with Michigan Public Employee Retirement System Investment Act. Past performance is not a guarantee of future returns. Please make independent investment decisions carefully and seek the assistance of independent experts when appropriate.

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