



## NEARING RETIREMENT? KNOW YOUR NEXT STEPS

---

**Step 1 - Estimate your eligibility.** Pension benefits can only be received if you are eligible, meaning you meet the age and service requirements. Generally, you can retire at:

### **Legacy Tiers (1, 3, A or C)**

- Any age, with 30 (20 for safety members) or more years of service
- Age 50, with 10 or more years of service
- Age 70 or older, regardless of service

### **PEPRA Tiers (4, 5, D or E)**

- Age 52 (50 for safety tiers), with five or more years of service
- Age 70 or older, regardless of service

**Step 2 - Attend a group counseling session.** Sessions are available year-round to all members but are particularly helpful for those planning to retire within five years. Call CCCERA for more information.

**Step 3 - Request a benefit estimate.** An estimate will give you a better idea of your income when you retire. It also gives you the opportunity to purchase or convert any eligible service time, consider your estimated benefit amounts at possible ages, and decide at which age retirement will be most advantageous.

Calculate your own basic estimate for retirement at [cccera.org/pension-calculator](http://cccera.org/pension-calculator).

**Step 4 - Meet with a counselor.** Once you have decided on a retirement date, call CCCERA to make an appointment with a counselor. If you are ready, the counselor may send you an Application to Retire. You can then meet with your counselor to discuss your specific situation and go over your application.

**Step 5 - Submit your Application to Retire.** Your application must be submitted within 60 days of your planned retirement date. By statute, CCCERA cannot accept your application more than 60 days prior to your final day at work. Once you have submitted the application, a notice will be sent to your employer, which states your decision to retire and the effective date.

Your application must include the following documents (please provide copies):

- Application to Retire (at [cccera.org/forms](http://cccera.org/forms))
- Social Security card.
- Beneficiary's Social Security card.
- Birth certificate or passport.
- Beneficiary's birth certificate or passport.
- Marriage certificate or registration if you are currently married or a State of California Registered Domestic Partner.
- If applicable, court order stating whether your former spouse/partner has any entitlement to your benefit if you were married and divorced, or dissolved a registered domestic partnership during your membership.

If you have any service in Tier 2, you will also need to get a Social Security Estimate for your Tier 2 service from the Social Security Administration before your final benefit calculation can be completed.

After CCCERA receives all the necessary documentation, counselors will process your application. Generally, the time frame from your actual retirement date to receipt of your first benefit check is eight to 12 weeks.

If you have reciprocity with another public retirement system(s), you need to file an application to retire with each system. You must retire concurrently (have the same retirement date) from all reciprocal systems. You can streamline the processing of your benefits by having documents on file with CCCERA before you retire.

#### **Step 6 - Choose your benefit payment option.**

An Options Package will be sent for your signature approximately six to 10 weeks after your retirement date. Your option selection must be signed, witnessed, and received by CCCERA before your first pension check can be issued. Please be advised that your option choice is irrevocable. There are five benefit payment options:

- **The Unmodified Allowance** gives you the highest monthly benefit with a 60% continuing benefit after your death to a qualifying beneficiary(ies).
- **Option 1** reduces your benefit but leaves a lump sum amount of the remaining refundable employee contributions, if any, for your beneficiary(ies).
- **Option 2** reduces your benefit, but leaves your beneficiary the same lifetime benefit after your death.
- **Option 3** reduces your benefit and provides a 50% lifetime continuance for your surviving beneficiary.
- **Option 4** reduces your benefit and provides a lifetime continuance for multiple beneficiaries.

More information about reciprocity and retirement benefit options is available at [cccera.org](http://cccera.org).

## Update Your Beneficiary

---

Have you updated your beneficiary since a recent life change, such as a marriage or divorce? You can update your beneficiary by filing the *Beneficiary Designation Form* (Form 102).

This form can be found at [cccera.org/forms](http://cccera.org/forms), in addition to the following:

- *Member Mailing Address Change Form* (Form 301)
- *Electronic Funds Transfer Form* (Form 209)
- *Request for Retirement Estimate* (Form 108)
- *Withholding Certificates for Pension Payments* (Form 210)

CCCERA can only accept original forms. Forms cannot be photocopied or submitted electronically as CCCERA must verify your signature to approve changes or requests.

## Protect Your Survivors

---

What would happen to your survivors in the event of your death prior to retirement? To prepare, consider filing the *Member Election Form for Non-Service Connected Disability in the Event of Death During Active Membership* (Form 104). This form authorizes CCCERA to file a non-service connected disability on your behalf and allows you to pre-select Optional Settlement 2 or 4 in the event of your death during active service. Please note, there is no guarantee that a non-service connected disability will ultimately be granted.

This option results in the largest continuance to your named beneficiary (up to a 100% continuance of the non-service connected disability retirement benefit). In order to receive this allowance, members must have Form 104 (found at [cccera.org/forms](http://cccera.org/forms)) on file with CCCERA on or before the date of death to be valid.

This election is only in effect while you are an active member. When you retire, a new retirement option form is completed. At that time you may change your retirement option to provide the best benefit to you during your retirement.

## Retirement Documents

---

CCCERA requires copies of certain documents that can affect retirement and survivor benefits — having these on file before you retire or terminate employment will streamline your application.

These documents are not public; they are required to process your benefit or lump sum payment at termination. Some examples are: marriage dissolutions, your beneficiary(ies) and your own birth certificate or passport, Social Security cards, and Secretary of State Domestic Partnership Certificates. Please do not send original documents; copies are acceptable.

## Board Election Results

---

The CCCERA Retirement Board (Board) recently underwent an election, which resulted in the re-election of Todd Smithey, Gabe Rodrigues, and William Pigeon. The Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors also appointed a new member, Jay Kwon, and reappointed John Phillips, Candace Andersen and Jerry Holcombe.

## Benefit Statements

---

CCCERA's annual benefit statements were recently mailed to active members. The benefit statement contains a summary of member's account information for the previous years. This includes member's designated beneficiaries, their address, date of birth and membership date. There is also a tally of contributions and interest, any service purchases completed, and estimates of projected retirement benefits at appropriate ages.

The statement is a general guideline to help keep member files current. After reviewing the document, you can submit the data correction form enclosed with the statement, to indicate changes to your information (if needed).

## 2016 Financial Reports Now Available

---

The following reports can be found at [cccera.org](http://cccera.org).

### **Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR)**

The CAFR is published on an annual basis and provides specific information, including assets, liabilities, revenues, and expenditures.

### **Popular Annual Financial Report (PAFR)**

The PAFR is also published annually and is a brief summary of the CAFR.

### **Contribution Rates**

The Board recently adopted proposed employer and employee contribution rates for July 1, 2018, through June 30, 2019, from the December 31, 2016, Valuation Report. The rates have not yet been adopted by the Board of Supervisors.

## CCCERA Business Hours

---

CCCERA's office is open Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.; counselors are available from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. The office is closed daily for lunch, from noon to 12:30 p.m.

Appointments can be made to discuss your specific situation. Group counseling is also available to all members but is particularly helpful for members planning to retire within five years.

## Notice

---

*This newsletter is intended to provide members with general information about the benefits available through CCCERA, but it does not describe every plan provision in detail. CCCERA is governed by the County Employees' Retirement Law of 1937 (CERL, Government Code Section 31450 et. seq.) and the California Public Employees' Pension Reform Act of 2013 (PEPRA). The laws governing public retirement systems are complex. If conflict arises between this newsletter and the law, the law shall govern.*



PRESORTED STANDARD  
 U.S. POSTAGE  
 PAID  
 OAKLAND, CA  
 PERMIT # 3729

1355 Willow Way, Suite 221, Concord, CA 94520  
 Phone: (925) 521-3960 Fax: (925) 521-3969  
 cccera.org

## 2017 CALENDAR DATES

### HOLIDAY SCHEDULE

CCCERA will be closed:

**September 4**  
 Labor Day

**November 10**  
 Veteran's Day

**November 23 & 24**  
 Thanksgiving Holiday

**December 25**  
 Christmas Holiday

### GROUP COUNSELING

**September 26**, 3 p.m. to 5 p.m.  
**October 19**, 9 a.m. to 11 a.m.  
**December 7**, 3 p.m. to 5 p.m.

### UPCOMING BOARD MEETINGS

September 13  
 September 27  
 October 11  
 October 25  
 November 8  
 November 21  
 December 13

### 2018 RETIREE PAYROLL DATES

Month	Pay Date	Month	Pay Date
January	February 1	July	August 1
February	March 1	August	September 4
March	April 2	September	October 1
April	May 1	October	November 1
May	June 1	November	December 3
June	July 2	December	January 1