



Contra Costa County Employees'
Retirement Association

1200 Concord Avenue, Suite 300, Concord, CA 94520
Phone: (925)521-3960 Fax: (925)521-3969 cccera.org

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CORONAVIRUS UPDATE

MARCH 26, 2020

A Message to Our Members

The recent coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and the resulting shelter in place order has caused CCCERA to close its office on a temporary basis but CCCERA continues to perform its essential business functions. CCCERA continues to fulfill its mission to administer pension benefits earned by our members and to be prudent stewards of plan assets. To that end, we would like to provide the following updates for all members.

Retirement Applications

If you have submitted an application for an upcoming retirement, we are processing your application and you will receive your pension payment based on the standard processing time.

Upcoming Retirement Payments

Upcoming pension payments are on schedule. The next benefit payment date is April 1, 2020. Direct deposit transactions will take place on or before this date, and checks will be mailed by this date.

Forms and Appointments

Members are asked to mail all forms to CCCERA. At this time, in-person appointments have been canceled, and future appointments may be delayed.

Retirement Workshops

The pre-retirement and retirement overview workshops have been canceled through April 7, 2020.

Investment Program

The public health response to COVID-19 includes widespread social distancing measures that will restrict economic activity for an unknown period of time. The expected economic contraction has been reflected in sharp and widespread declines in financial assets.

It is important to remember that as a defined benefit plan, payments to retirees are maintained despite any decline in the plan's market value. As a result, the plan is designed to accept volatility in long-term investments while protecting assets designed to fund benefit payments over the next several years. In fact, CCCERA currently has nearly one fourth of the investment program allocated to fund the next three to four years of retiree benefit payments.

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CCCERA staff and investment consultants continue to maintain frequent communications with CCCERA's investment managers. As the situation continues to evolve, we will engage in strategic rebalancing to maintain our long-term asset allocation. Our plan design, diversification and remote working capabilities are designed to allow us to carefully navigate and respond to a stressed market environment, and we are currently doing just that.

Temporary Suspension of State Restrictions on Reemployment of Retirees

In response to the coronavirus (COVID-19) global pandemic, the State of California issued Executive Order N-25-20 on March 12, 2020. The Order has temporarily suspended certain rules that restrict public employers from allowing retirees to temporarily return to government service or employment. As of the start date of the state of emergency, March 4, 2020, consistent with federal law, work hour limitations and wait period requirements for retired annuitants have been suspended, as follows:

1. The 180-day separation requirement has been suspended, to ensure adequate staffing during the state of emergency.
2. The requirement of the governing board's approval of the appointment in a public meeting has been suspended, to ensure adequate staffing during the state of emergency.
3. The 180-day separation requirement for retirees in receipt of a retirement incentive (also known as a golden handshake) has been suspended, to ensure adequate staffing during the state of emergency.
4. The PEPRA 960-hour work limitation has been suspended, to ensure adequate staffing during the state of emergency.

The State's Executive Order does not allow relief from the 90-day break in service requirement nor from the bona fide separation required for those

retiring before the normal age of retirement (55 for general members; 50 for safety members). Pre-retirement arrangements to be reemployed while retired are prohibited under federal law. More information about this requirement can be found in CCCERA's Board of Retirement Regulations, Section VII, at cccera.org/governance-and-policies.

The Executive Order has also not suspended the 12-month separation requirement for employees who received unemployment compensation. This restriction therefore remains in effect.

Employers are required to notify the director of the California Department of Human Resources of any individual employed pursuant to this Executive Order. CCCERA will continue to require employers who employ retirees pursuant to the Executive Order to provide CCCERA with a written certification during this period, evidencing their compliance. Please contact your employer if you have any questions.

How to Contact Us

If you have any questions, please leave us a voicemail at (925) 521-3960 or email us at info@cccera.org. Our response may be delayed, but we will get your message and get back to you as soon as possible.

Thank you for your patience during this time.

Sincerely,



Gail Strohl
Chief Executive Officer

VISIT OUR WEBSITE

For continuing updates, please visit our website at cccera.org/coronavirus.