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**CIVIL SERVICE STATE
EMPLOYEE GUIDE TO
RETIREMENT
BY THE STATE CONTROLLER'S OFFICE**

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INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE

The State Controller's Office Civil Service Employee Guide to Retirement is to aid State of California employees who are preparing for retirement. This guide is to compliment, and does not replace, information provided by CalHR, CalPERS, or Savings Plus. Contact your Personnel Specialist to help you through this process. If you are unsure whom to contact, please use the [California Personnel Office Directory](#) (CPOD) for assistance.

RESOURCES

In this guide, there are several references to CalHR, CalPERS, and Savings Plus. These three resources are important and necessary through the retirement process. Below is the general contact information for all three:

CALHR

Website: [CalHR State Retirees](#)

Other: [CalHR: Preparing for Retirement](#)

CALPERS

Website: <https://www.calpers.ca.gov/>

Phone: 888-225-7377

SAVINGS PLUS

Website: <https://www.savingsplusnow.com/>

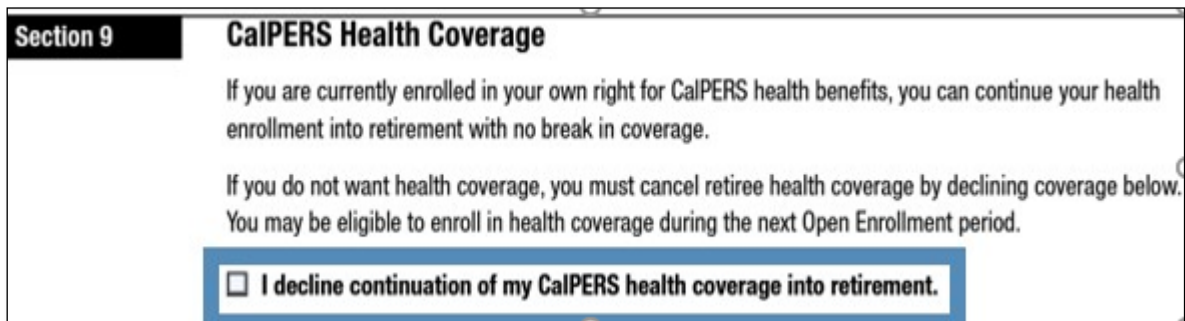
Phone: (855)616-4776

EMPLOYEE GUIDE TO RETIREMENT

STEP 1: FILE FOR RETIREMENT

File your retirement with CalPERS, preferably through their online portal. **Log into [myCalPERS](#)**, go to the **Retirement** tab and select **Apply for Retirement**. CalPERS will allow you to file your application up to 120 days before your retirement date. Call CalPERS at (888)225-7377 for more information.

Important Note: Section 9 on CalPERS Health Coverage



The screenshot shows a form titled "Section 9 CalPERS Health Coverage". It contains two paragraphs of text. The first paragraph states: "If you are currently enrolled in your own right for CalPERS health benefits, you can continue your health enrollment into retirement with no break in coverage." The second paragraph states: "If you do not want health coverage, you must cancel retiree health coverage by declining coverage below. You may be eligible to enroll in health coverage during the next Open Enrollment period." Below the text is a checkbox with the label "I decline continuation of my CalPERS health coverage into retirement." The checkbox is currently unchecked and is highlighted with a blue border.

Section 9 in the CalPERS Retirement Application determines if you want to *decline* continuation of your CalPERS health coverage into retirement (shown below). Do not select the check box (highlighted in blue) if you want to keep your current CalPERS health coverage into retirement.

Review [Step 4: Enroll for Retirement Benefits \(Health, Dental, Vision and Legal\)](#) in this guide or contact your Personnel Specialist to learn more about your Retirement Health Coverage options.

STEP 2: INFORM PERSONNEL SPECIALIST OF RETIREMENT DATE

You must initiate the retirement process with your Personnel Specialist as soon as possible. CalPERS does not inform your Personnel Specialist that you filed for retirement. Your Personnel Specialist processes many of your retirement forms, and they need advance notice.

HOW TO DETERMINE SEPARATION DATE FROM RETIREMENT DATE

Your separation date is different from your retirement date. Your separation date is usually one day before your retirement date. For example, if you retired on May 12, 2023, then your separation date would be May 11, 2023.

You need to know your separation date because many retirement forms have deadlines based on your separation date and not your retirement date. Your Personnel Specialist also has deadlines based on your separation date.

STEP 3: REVIEW OPTIONS FOR UNUSED COMPENSABLE LEAVE CREDITS

If you have an unused leave balance at the time of retirement, you have four options:

1. Run out the Unused Leave Credits,
2. Lump Sum Cash Payment,
3. Lump Sum Deferral into a Savings Plus 401(k)/457(b), or
4. Combination of all three above.

Below is a detailed summary on each option.

RUN OUT UNUSED LEAVE CREDITS

Depending on your Department's policy, you may use some, or all, of your unused leave credits by submitting timesheets up until your separation date. Speak with your Personnel Specialist to see if this option is available for you and if so, on how to proceed.

LUMP SUM CASH PAYMENT

You may cash out unused compensable leave credits and receive a lump sum payment. Your Personnel Specialist can determine the value of your leave balances in dollar form.

If your separation date is between November 1, and December 31, you also have the option to delay receipt of all or some of your funds into the next tax year. Please note, your eligibility is based on your separation date and not retirement date. Refer to [How to Determine Separation Date from Retirement Date](#).

LUMP SUM DEFERRAL INTO SAVINGS PLUS 401(K) AND/OR 457(B)

You may contribute unused compensable leave credits into a Savings Plus 401(k)/457(b) account. Learn more at [Savings Plus Lump Sum Separation Pay Information](#) or contact Savings Plus at (855) 616-4776.

Requirements:

- i. **You must submit the [Savings Plus Lump Sum Pay Election Form](#) no later than five (5) workdays prior to separation date.** This in accordance with California Labor Code sections [201\(b\)](#) and [202\(b\)](#). This deadline is by separation date and not retirement date. In addition, workdays do not include holidays or weekends.

For example, if you retire on November 30, 2023, then your separation date would be November 29, 2023. The last day you can submit the Election Form to your Personnel Specialist is November 20, 2023 (see image below). If you submit after November 20 (such as November 21), the State Controller's Office will not process your request.

November 2023 Calendar Example:

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
19	20 Workday #1 Last Day to Submit Election Form	21 Workday #2	22 Workday #3	23 Holiday	24 Holiday	25 Weekend
26 Weekend	27 Workday #4	28 Workday #5	29 Separation Date	30 Retirement Date	1	2

Due to this deadline, you should submit the Election Form paperwork 30 days prior to your separation date to give your Personnel Specialist time to review for any errors. If you do not submit within the five (5) day threshold, you will instead receive a lump sum cash payment.

- ii. **You must have a final dollar amount on the [Savings Plus Lump Sum Pay Election Form](#).** The State Controller’s Office will only accept a dollar amount in the 401(k) and 457(b) sections of the Election Form. Do not use words, such as “Max” or “Remainder” (example below).

Reach out to your Personnel Specialist to determine final contribution dollar amount.

Plan Year	401(k)		457(b)	
	Pre-tax	Roth	Pre-tax	Roth
2023	\$ 22,500 	\$	\$ MAX 	\$
	\$	\$	\$	\$

Two-Year Deferral Option (Transfer to Savings Plus):

If your separation date is between November 1, and December 31, you have the option to transfer funds for both the current tax year and the next tax year (see example below). This allows for maximum contribution during the current tax year as well as the next tax year.

Please note, that your eligibility is based on your separation date and not your retirement date. Refer to [How to Determine Separation Date from Retirement Date](#).

Plan Year	401(k)		457(b)	
	Pre-tax	Roth	Pre-tax	Roth
2023	\$ 22,500	\$	\$ 22,500	\$
2024	\$ 10,000	\$	\$ 10,000	\$

457(b) Traditional Catch-Up Contributions Option:

You may be eligible to contribute above the yearly maximum contribution through this catch-up option. To learn about the eligibility requirements and the program, review the [HR Manual Section 1802, Savings Plus 457\(b\) Traditional Catch-Up Information](#), or call Savings Plus at (855) 616-4776.

Important Note: You must have an approval letter from Savings Plus to utilize the catchup option.

COMBINATION OF RUN OUT, CASH OUT AND DEFERRAL

You may also use a combination of all three options. Run out a portion of unused leave time, contribute into a Savings Plus account, and cash out of a specific dollar amount.

STEP 4: ENROLL FOR RETIREMENT BENEFITS

HEALTH INSURANCE

- To continue your current health coverage, go to [Step 1: File for Retirement](#) in this guide and review the Important Note about the CalPERS Retirement Election Application Form.
- To enroll or change your health coverage into retirement, complete the [Health Benefits Plan Enrollment Form for Retirees and Survivors](#) and submit to your Personnel Specialist.
- If you are eligible for Medicare and want to continue CalPERS health coverage, there are specific rules that apply. Review [CalPERS Medicare Enrollment Guide](#) or call CalPERS at (888) 225-7377 for more information.

DENTAL INSURANCE

Review [CalHR Retiree Dental Benefits](#) or call CalPERS at (888) 225-7377 to learn more about your options.

- To continue dental coverage into retirement, complete the [Dental Plan Enrollment Authorization form - STD 692](#) and submit to your Personnel Specialist.
- You must stay in the plan you are currently enrolled in as an active employee, except for Delta Dental PPO Plus Premier Enhanced and Metlife Standard. The Delta Dental PPO Premier Enhanced and Metlife Standard plans are not available to retirees, and you will automatically be placed into the Delta Dental PPO Plus Premier Basic or MetLife Enhanced plan respectively. For prepaid plans, DeltaCare USE, MetLife, Premier Access and Western Dental coverage is only available in California.
- If you are adding a spouse or registered domestic partner to your retiree dental plan, you must provide their Social Security Number and a copy of your marriage certificate or declaration of domestic partnership with your STD 692.

- If adding children (natural-born, adopted, placed for adoption, step, or registered domestic partner's children), you must provide a birth certificate, adoption certificate, or court order. If adding other children for whom the employee has assumed a parent-child relationship, an [Affidavit of Parent-Child Relationship - CalHR 025](#) must be submitted along with any other required documents.

VISION INSURANCE

Retirees have the option to enroll into VSP Basic or VSP Premier. Learn more on the [CalHR Retiree Vision Program](#) website. To enroll, complete the [Retiree Vision Plan Enrollment form - CalHR 695](#) and submit the form to your Personnel Specialist. The Retiree Vision Plan Enrollment form must be completed and returned to your personnel office within 60 days of your retirement date. Your Personnel Specialist will submit the completed form to VSP for processing.

Premiums are deducted directly from the state retirement warrant. When a retiree is newly enrolled in the Retiree Vision Plan, they will automatically receive two or three months of direct bills from VSP while CalPERS is setting up the automatic deductions.

GROUP LEGAL SERVICES INSURANCE

Retiree Group Legal Services Insurance is available through ARAG. For more information, check out [CalHR Retiree Group Legal Services Insurance Plan](#) website. You may enroll directly online or submit the [Retiree Enrollment Form](#) to your Personnel Specialist within 60 days of your retirement date.

LIFE INSURANCE – EXCLUDED EMPLOYEES ONLY

Retirees have the option to continue basic life and supplemental life insurance into retirement. You must contact [MetLife](#) at (800) 252-8524 and enroll within 30-days of your retirement date.

STEP 5: SUBMIT FINAL TIMESHEET(S)

You must submit approved timesheet(s) up until the day prior to your retirement date. Work with your Personnel Specialist on your department's timesheet process. The State Controller's Office recommends submission at least 15 days prior to your separation date.

- **Run out Unused Leave Time:** At the Department's discretion, you may receive approval to exhaust your unused leave credits instead of cashing or deferring into a Savings Plus Account. Upon approval, please work with your Personnel Specialist who will provide you with detailed instructions on how to complete your timesheets.
- **Non-Compensable Leave:** You should use non-compensable leave first (e.g., Professional Development Days) as these leave types will not be compensated after retirement. Refer to your [Bargaining Unit MOU](#) as the leave types and durations vary.
- **Sick Leave:** Remaining Sick Leave converts to CalPERS Service Credit. Talk to your Personnel Specialist or contact CalPERS at (888) 225-7377 for more information.

STEP 6: CANCEL DIRECT DEPOSIT

It is strongly advised that you take the necessary steps to cancel your direct deposit before your retirement date. To ensure a smooth transition, contact your Personnel Specialist and request the cancellation of your direct deposit. Once cancelled, you will receive your last paycheck via your mailing address on file. Please ensure your mailing address is up to date with your Personnel Office prior to your separation date.

STEP 7: SUBMIT AN EAR FORM FOR CHANGE OF ADDRESS (OPTIONAL)

If your mailing address will change after retirement, you must submit an updated [Employee Action Request \(EAR\) Form – STD 686](#). This will ensure that you will receive future important documents (e.g., W2's, etc.) through the mail.

EMPLOYEE RETIREMENT CHECKLIST

Action	Reference
<input type="checkbox"/> File Retirement with CalPERS (required)	CalPERS Retirement Checklist CalPERS Retirement Application CalPERS: (888)225-7377
<input type="checkbox"/> Inform Personnel Specialist of Retirement Date (required)	N/A
<input type="checkbox"/> Submit Savings Plus Lump Sum Separation Paperwork (optional) Recommended to complete and submit 30 days prior to your separation date. These must be completed and submitted no later than five (5) workdays prior to your separation according to California Labor Code sections 201(b) and 202(b) . <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Verify Lump Sum Dollar Amount from Personnel Specialist or Savings Plus Must be a dollar amount. Using “Max” or “Remainder” on the Savings Plus Form is not acceptable. <input type="checkbox"/> Receive approval letter from Savings Plus Only applicable for 457(b) Traditional Catch-Up Option <input type="checkbox"/> Submit paperwork to Personnel Specialist 30 days prior to retirement date 	Lump Sum Separation Pay Information Savings Plus Lump Sum Election Form 457(b) Traditional Catch-Up Information Savings Plus: (855)616-4776
<input type="checkbox"/> Enroll in Health Insurance (optional)	CalPERS Health Benefits Enrollment Form for Retirees and Survivors
<input type="checkbox"/> Enroll in Retiree Vision Plan (optional)	VSP Retiree Vision Enrollment Form VSP: (800)400-4569
<input type="checkbox"/> Enroll in Retiree Dental Plan (optional)	Dental Plan Enrollment Form
<input type="checkbox"/> Enroll in Retiree Group Legal Services Insurance (optional)	Legal Services Information
<input type="checkbox"/> Enroll in Retiree Life Insurance (optional) Eligible only for Excluded Employees.	MetLife MetLife: (800)252-8524
<input type="checkbox"/> Submit Final Timesheet(s) (required)	N/A
<input type="checkbox"/> Cancel Direct Deposit (recommended)	Contact your Personnel Specialist
<input type="checkbox"/> Submit Employee Action Request (EAR) Form (optional) Only submit if your mailing address will change.	Employee Action Request Form