

MainePERS' New Executive Director Takes the Helm

Sandy Matheson became the System's Executive Director on April 1st. Ms. Matheson most recently was director of the Washington State Retirement System. The Board of Trustees selected Sandy for her leadership skills and vision. She brings broad-based public pension experience and innovative thinking on design and funding of programs and services that will assist MainePERS to meet future challenges. She holds degrees from Washington State University and Northwestern University.



Contact the Executive Director

Recent news stories about the economic downturn are focusing on states' abilities to meet their pension obligations. Sandy wants to assure retirees that "the current economic downturn is not affecting our ability to pay benefits. We're meeting our obligations to today's retirees and expect to meet them for future retirees."

Sandy also wants to hear about those issues that are most important to members and retirees. "I want to have a clear understanding of these priorities as I work with staff to shape MainePERS into the best-in-class customer service system we all want it to be."

To make it easier to submit questions and suggestions, the MainePERS website has a "Contact the Director" link. Go to MainePERS website at: www.mainepers.org and click on the "Contact Us" tab.

Change in 2009 Federal Tax Withholding

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 creates a new "Making Work Pay" credit by changing the tax tables to decrease the amount of federal tax withheld. The IRS requires MainePERS to apply the new tax tables to retirement benefit payments. However, a retiree with only pension income is not eligible for the "Making Work Pay" credit.

Retirees may want to adjust the amount withheld to a level that will more accurately reflect the amount of taxes they likely will owe. MainePERS suggests you consult with your tax preparer to decide whether to revise your W-4P. MainePERS can assist with how to revise your W-4P.

Another section of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 gives recipients of Social Security, SSI, Railroad Retirement and Veterans Disability Compensation Benefits a one-time payment of \$250. Generally, to be eligible for this payment, an individual must have been entitled to payments in November or December of 2008 or January of 2009. The payments will be automatic, so people receiving benefits do not need to take any action, and they should receive the payment by late May 2009.

Initially, this benefit would not have been available to public employees who were not covered by Social Security. However, during the conference on the legislation, the Senate added a section providing a one-time refundable tax credit of \$250 in 2009 for other government retirees (\$500 in the case of a joint return where both spouses are eligible individuals). Any such credit must be deducted from any allowable "Making Work Pay" credit. The \$250 credit for retirees will be taken at the time you file your taxes for 2009.

Advice on Advices

- Q.** When can I expect to get an Advice from MainePERS?
- A.** MainePERS sends Advices four times during the year - January, June, September and December. You can also expect to get an advice when the "Net Earnings" in the current month changes by more than \$1 from the previous month.
- Q.** Why am I only getting one check when I have two Benefits and I used to get two checks?
- A.** For retirees that have more than one benefit and receive a check, the new payroll system combines the payment of all benefits into one check.
- Q.** The new advice looks different. I used to see more of a breakout in the Earnings area. Why did you change it?
- A.** We simplified the information on the advice to make it easier to read. We also found that most retirees did not need or use the detail on the old advice.

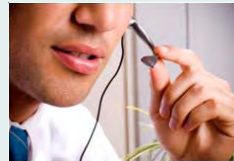
Naming a Beneficiary

If you have named someone as a beneficiary of your MainePERS Group Life Insurance, we may be contacting you by mail in the next few months. MainePERS is checking to make sure that we have all the information needed to process a timely payment to your beneficiary.

If you do receive a beneficiary form from us, please review it, make any corrections needed and return it in the envelope provided. If you have any questions, contact MainePERS Survivor Services Unit at 512-3244.

Retiree Health Insurance

MainePERS processes deductions for retiree health and dental insurance from retiree monthly benefit payments as a courtesy to our retirees. We do not directly administer health or dental insurance for retirees.



For inquiries regarding your health or dental insurance, please contact the following:

State Retirees
State Employee Health
1-800-422-4503

Teacher Retirees
Maine School Management Association
1-800-660-8484

Anthem Blue Cross/Blue Shield
1-888-399-8706 (Press 1)

Teachers with insurance other than Anthem BC/BS - contact employer you retired from.

PLD Retirees
Contact employer you retired from.

Retiree Dental Insurance

Organizations providing retiree dental coverage:

Maine Association of Retirees
1-800-535-6555

Maine Education Association
1-888-942-2907

Maine School Management Association
1-800-660-8484

Maine State Employees Association
1-800-452-8794