

PSERS is Monitoring COVID-19 Health Concerns

In support of our mission to serve our members and stakeholders, the Public School Employees' Retirement System (PSERS) is continuing to monitor the impact across the country from the COVID-19 situation. **Below are some frequently asked questions regarding PSERS' services and the COVID-19 virus.**

Does PSERS anticipate any delays in servicing its members due to the virus?

No. We do not anticipate delays in providing services to our members. Benefits will continue to be paid each month to our annuitants without interruption. Requests for retirement benefits, death benefits, or other transactions are expected to be processed within our published timeframes. PSERS already has plans in place to ensure the continuity of critical operations during events such as this and will continue to review and improve upon these plans.

Will the Foundations for Your Future (FFYF) seminars and Retirement Exit Counseling (REC) sessions still be provided by PSERS?

Yes and no.

Foundations for Your Future Seminars: In the interest of reducing possible exposure and in complying with the Governor's directive to limit non-essential large group meetings, the large group educational sessions which PSERS provides (Foundations for Your Future seminars) are being temporarily cancelled through April 17, 2020.

Retirement Exit Counseling (REC) Sessions: PSERS is continuing to provide the critically important REC sessions. These are small group sessions typically consisting of fewer than ten members. PSERS' research has repeatedly shown that members who do not attend these sessions are more likely to make mistakes or have issues which cause delays in the processing of their retirement benefits. In-person attendance provides the opportunity to learn through relevant examples and audience participation, with PSERS staff available and ready to assist with specific questions and the completion of necessary paperwork.

PSERS staff are working to take steps to help protect our members and staff during REC sessions. Additionally, depending on your location and circumstances, we may be able to accommodate a REC session over the phone. Such requests, however, will be considered based on the ongoing COVID-19 concerns.

If you are unable to attend a live presentation, you may also view the presentation slides and overview on the PSERS website at [FFYF Presentation](#). PSERS staff can be reached via telephone or email, with any questions.

What if a location (school, hotel, etc.) is closed where the REC Session is scheduled to occur?

If a location is closed, the REC Session will be canceled. When possible, these presentations will be rescheduled when these circumstances are no longer an issue.

Because there are important timeframes relating to the submission of retirement paperwork to enable the member to maximize their retirement benefit, PSERS will reach out directly to any members who have signed up to attend a session that is cancelled.

Sessions may also be impacted if the governor closes a specific regional area of state government where these sessions are to occur. More than likely, the location of the REC session will then be closed as well.

Please check the PSERS website for any cancellations before travelling to the meeting site.

What can I do to protect myself if I attend a PSERS group session?

There is no way to guarantee against catching a virus, but it is always ideal to practice safe hygiene and follow CDC and PA Department of Health advice. This includes vigorously washing your hands with soap and water, avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands, avoid unnecessary physical contact, and maintain reasonable personal space where possible.

If you are sick or not feeling well, please do not attend a group meeting or go to a PSERS field office in person. Please wait until you are feeling better. **Contact PSERS via email or phone and we will gladly assist you.**

If my school is closed, how does that impact my service credit?

Unplanned school closings may adversely impact the time necessary to accrue one full year of service credit with PSERS. PSERS determines service credit based on a school year (July 1 – June 30). Salaried or per diem employees must work and be paid for 180 days in a school year, and hourly employees must work and be paid for at least 1,100 hours in a school year, to earn one full year of service credit. Making up school closings must be done prior to June 30 in the school year that the closing occurred.

For example, if a member makes up days after July 1, 2018 for weather-related school closings that occurred during the 2017-2018 school year, the make-up days will be credited by PSERS in the 2018-2019 school year. If a member does not work the 180 days or 1,100 hours required to obtain one full year of service credit from July 1 to June 30, he or she will receive partial service credit for that year.