



MARYLAND  
STATE RETIREMENT  
and PENSION SYSTEM

## Naming your designated beneficiary

**YOU DESIGNATED YOUR BENEFICIARY** when you enrolled in the Maryland State Retirement and Pension System. During your membership, you may have updated this designation. If you die during membership, your beneficiary on record may be eligible to receive a survivor benefit.

Your designated beneficiary(ies) are listed on your annual Personal Statement of Benefits. If you don't remember who you selected as your beneficiary, simply call the State Retirement Agency's automated phone system at 410-625-5555 or toll free 1-800-492-5909 and select option 3 to check your beneficiaries on file.

If you have experienced a change in your life – such as the arrival of a new family member, a marriage or divorce, or the death of a loved one – you may wish to update your beneficiary designation.

Beneficiary changes must be requested in writing. To change your

*See Beneficiary, page 3*

## Trustee election slated for State Police Retirement System in 2010

**ACTIVE MEMBERS AND RETIREES OF THE STATE POLICE RETIREMENT SYSTEM** will elect a

representative to the Board of Trustees of the Maryland State Retirement and Pension System in an election slated for spring/summer 2010.

The Board of Trustees is charged with the fiduciary responsibility for properly administering the retirement and pension allowances of more than 116,007 retirees and beneficiaries as well as the future benefits for more than 251,571 active members.

Candidates for this board seat must be active members or retirees of the State Police Retirement System. The term of office for the successful candidate will be August 1, 2010 through July 31, 2014.



Using an official nomination petition, potential candidates must obtain the signatures and dates of birth of 100 persons who are eligible to vote in this election. Petitions must be returned to the State Retirement Agency by 4:30 p.m. on March 17, 2010.

Nomination petitions and an election schedule are available online at [www.sra.state.md.us](http://www.sra.state.md.us).

These documents may also be requested by phone by calling Charles D. So at (410) 625-5608 or toll free at 1-800-492-5909.

For more information on the Board of Trustees, including member biographies, photos and committee assignments, log on to the State Retirement Agency Web site at [www.sra.state.md.us](http://www.sra.state.md.us) and click on [About SRA](#).

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# Retirement Checklist

**MEMBERS PLANNING TO RETIRE** within the next 12 months should now be taking specific steps toward that goal. The checklist printed below provides a general timetable for retirement preparation for members of the Employees' and Teachers' Retirement and Pension Systems. But it is also useful as a guide for members of other Systems. This schedule shows the best time to begin filing some of the required forms and making the necessary contacts with the Retirement Agency.

## One to three years prior to retirement

- ❑ Attend one of the Retirement Agency's pre-retirement seminars. Registration forms are available online. Seminars are conducted bi-annually in the spring and fall.

## Twelve months prior to retirement

- ❑ Request an *Application for an Estimate of Benefits* (Form 9). Select all of the option choices to obtain information on each of the various payment plans. Keep in mind that this form is not a retirement application. It is designed for planning purposes only.

**Note:** You may request an estimate only during the 12 months prior to your planned retirement date.

**Note:** You are not required to obtain an estimate before retiring. However, it is strongly recommended, as retirees are not permitted to change their option after their first monthly benefit is paid.

- ❑ Apply to purchase any eligible service by submitting a *Request to Purchase Previous Service* (Form 26) along with your request for an estimate.
- ❑ Apply for any eligible military credit using a *Claim of Retirement Credit for Military Service* (Form 43).
- ❑ Contact the nearest Social Security office for an estimate of your Social Security benefits. You can obtain an estimate request form by calling the Social Security Administration at 1-800-772-1213.

## Six months prior to retirement

- ❑ If desired, schedule an appointment with a Retirement Benefits Specialist to review your estimated benefits. It is recommended that you bring a copy

of your latest estimate so you and your Specialist can discuss this information at the meeting.

- ❑ Discuss your estimated benefits/options with your family and financial advisor.
- ❑ Obtain proof of birth for beneficiary (for allowance Option 2, 3, 5 or 6).
- ❑ Contact your personnel office to inquire if you may continue employer-provided benefits, such as health insurance, after retiring.
- ❑ Prepare a retirement budget, estimating your retirement expenses against your State pension benefit, Social Security and any other income.
- ❑ Update or prepare a will and, if desired, a power of attorney.

## Three months prior to retirement

- ❑ Contact Social Security to file for benefits (if age 62 or older).

## Two months prior to retirement

- ❑ Contact your personnel office and file your actual retirement application, *Application for Service or Disability Retirement* (Form 13-23).
- ❑ Provide proof of birth for designated beneficiary (for allowance Option 2, 3, 5 or 6).
- ❑ If eligible, complete authorization forms to continue your health coverage and any other benefits provided by your employer.
- ❑ Complete a *Direct Deposit Electronic Fund Transfer Sign-Up* (Form 85) for the electronic transmission of your payment to your bank, savings institution or credit union.

**Note:** Direct deposit is mandatory for all retirees.

- ❑ Complete *Reemployment After Retirement* (Form 127) to acknowledge an understanding of any consequences of reentering the workforce.
- ❑ Complete a *Federal and Maryland State Tax Withholding Request* (Form 766).

## One month prior to retirement

- ❑ Submit a formal letter of retirement to your employer.

# Planning to retire in the next 12 months? Request an estimate now!

**IF YOU ARE PLANNING TO RETIRE WITHIN THE NEXT 12 MONTHS**, now is the time to submit a Form 9, *Application for an Estimate of Service Retirement Allowances*, to the Retirement Agency. Members of the State Police or Law Enforcement Officers' Systems should submit Form 10 or Form 97, respectively.

If you are more than 12 months from retirement and would like to begin planning, try the Retirement Agency's online benefit estimators located at [www.sra.state.md.us/estimators/index.html](http://www.sra.state.md.us/estimators/index.html).

Once the Retirement Agency

processes your request for an estimate, you will receive information on your service credit and average final compensation as well as your estimated monthly benefits based on the retirement date you choose.

Please check as many boxes as appropriate on the form to receive an estimated monthly retirement amount under each retirement allowance option. This will help you decide which payment option is best suited to you and to those who may rely on you for continuing income after your death.

A retirement benefits specialist cannot provide you with your retire-

ment estimates. You must request one by completing and submitting an estimate application.

You should receive your estimate in the mail approximately three to four weeks after filing your request.

Agency forms, including Forms 9, 10 and 97, are available:

- Online at [www.sra.state.md.us](http://www.sra.state.md.us)
- From your Retirement Coordinator in your employers' personnel department, and
- From the State Retirement Agency at 410-625-5555 or toll-free 1-800-492-5909.

## Governor's Census 2010 Outreach

# The Success of the Census, It's In Our Hands, Maryland!

**Did You Know that Maryland receives billions of dollars in Federal Funds each year for programs and services based on the Decennial Census?**

**Are Schools and Job Training Important to YOU?**

**Is Affordable Housing Important to YOU?**

**Are Transportation and Transit Projects Important to YOU?**

**Are Services for the Elderly Important to YOU?**

**Is Health Care Important to YOU?**

**Answer the Census! It's Important to All of US**

**Census Day April 1, 2010**

A census questionnaire will arrive at your residence in March 2010. Answering the 10 questions means your community gets its fair share.

Federal Funds Distributed On the Basis of Statistics From the Decennial Census, Maryland, FY2007    Total Dollars \$5,820,907,531    Per Capita Dollars \$1,036

[www.census.state.md.us](http://www.census.state.md.us)

*Beneficiary, continued from page 1*

beneficiary(ies), obtain *Beneficiary Designation* (Form 4) from your Retirement Coordinator or from the Retirement Agency Web site at [www.sra.state.md.us](http://www.sra.state.md.us). Your new designation will become effective as soon as your valid and completed form is received by the Retirement Agency.



*Holiday schedule  
announced*

*Maryland State Retirement Agency  
offices will be closed on  
the following dates:  
December 24, 25 and 31, 2009  
and  
January 1, 2010*

# Access your account information anytime from your telephone

**THE MARYLAND STATE RETIREMENT AGENCY'S AUTOMATED TELEPHONE SYSTEM** provides callers with detailed account information at the push of a button.

The convenient system offers members 24-hour access to their retirement account. Simply dial 410-625-5555 or toll-free 1-800-492-5909. After listening to the Agency's hours and latest Agency news, callers may select from the following options:

**1** **Hot Topic:** Select 1 on your touch-tone phone to hear a recorded message with timely announcements from the Retirement Agency.

**ABC**  
**2** **For retirees and beneficiaries:** Selecting 2 provides information for retirees and beneficiaries who are receiving a monthly payment.

**DEF**  
**3** **For current or deferred vested members:** Press 3 to retrieve account information, check your beneficiaries on file and request forms.

**GHI**  
**4** **Appointments:** To schedule a counseling session at our Baltimore office or the regional location nearest you, simply press 4.

**JKL**  
**5** **Survivor Benefits:** Select 5 to report the death of a member or retiree.

**MNO**  
**6** **Dial Direct:** Press 6 if you know the extension of the MSRA representative with whom you'd like to speak.

To protect your privacy, your personal account information can be accessed only with your Social Security number and individual PIN (personal identification number). As a member, your four-digit PIN is usually the month and year of your enrollment. For example, if you joined the State Retirement and Pension System in January of 2003, your PIN would be 0103.

## Your opinion counts

**THE MARYLAND STATE RETIREMENT AGENCY REGULARLY ASKS** randomly selected members and retirees to evaluate our staff's performance. If you recently received a survey form, please return it promptly!

## Expanded disability retirement FAQ now available online

**FOR MEMBERS CONSIDERING APPLYING FOR DISABILITY RETIREMENT BENEFITS**, a new, comprehensive list of answers to frequently asked questions (FAQ) is available online at [www.sra.state.md.us/member\\_faqs.htm](http://www.sra.state.md.us/member_faqs.htm)

Questions like "Who may apply?", "How do I apply?" and "How do I know what my benefit will be?" are answered in plain language in this handy resource.

For a hard copy of the disability FAQ, contact the Maryland State Retirement Agency at 410-625-5555 or toll free at 1-800-492-5909.

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