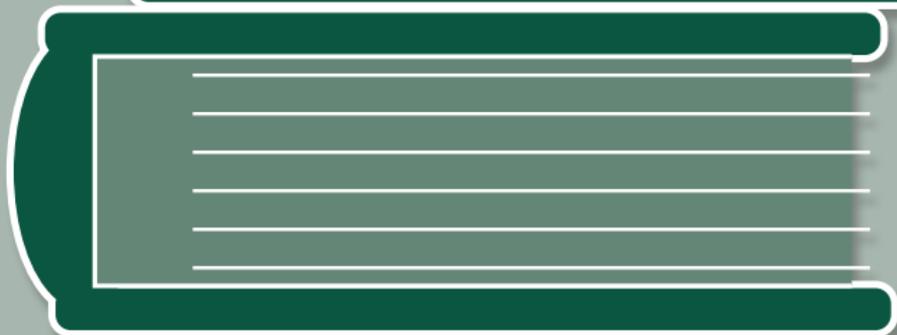
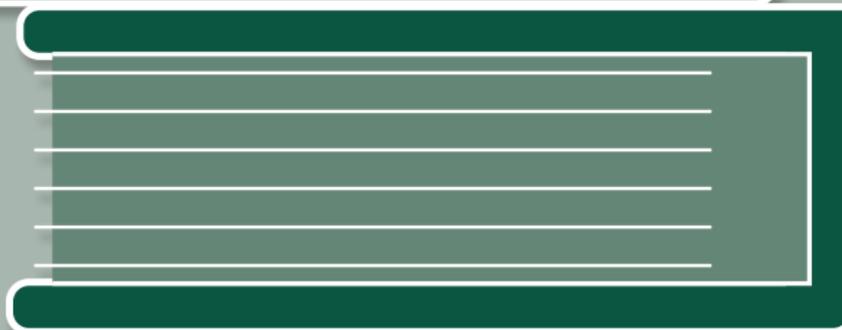
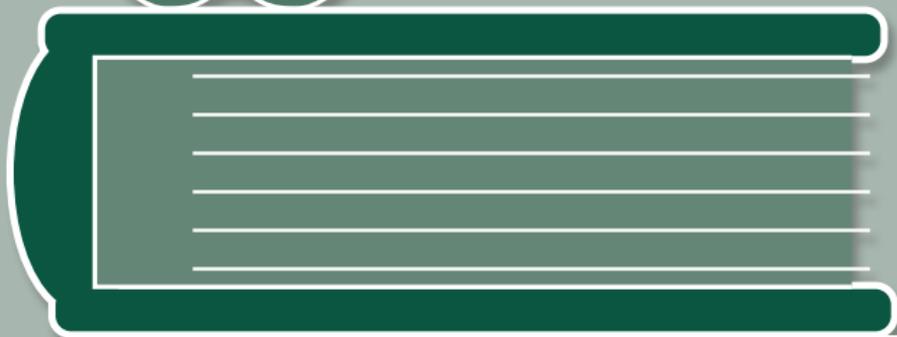


# Employment After Retirement

For members enrolled in the  
**Defined Benefit Plan**  
**Defined Contribution Plan**  
**Combined Plan**



**2020|2021**

## Table of Contents

|  |    |
|--|----|
| <b>Reemployment Overview</b> .....                             | 1  |
| Filing for service retirement .....                            | 1  |
| One-day break in service .....                                 | 1  |
| <b>Returning to Ohio public employment</b> .....               | 2  |
| Single employer .....  | 2  |
| Multiple employers .....                                       | 2  |
| Forfeiting retirement benefits: violations and penalties ..... | 3  |
| <b>Reemployment benefit</b> .....                              | 4  |
| Important tax considerations .....                             | 5  |
| Contributions made during two-month waiting period .....       | 5  |
| Required minimum distribution .....                            | 6  |
| Annual Statement of Account .....                              | 6  |
| Apply for benefits .....                                       | 6  |
| <b>Employed retiree health care</b> .....                      | 7  |
| Verification process .....                                     | 7  |
| Definitions .....  | 7  |
| Scenarios .....  | 8  |
| Employment and Medicare enrollment .....                       | 11 |
| <b>STRS Ohio Resources</b> .....                               | 12 |

STRS Ohio retirees may choose to be reemployed after retirement. This brochure provides information about the rules and regulations associated with reemployment and your service retirement benefit. If you are considering any type of reemployment after retirement, please review this brochure carefully. It explains restrictions on reemployment, potential benefits forfeited, primary and secondary employment, and the reemployment benefit, as well as important information about health care eligibility during employment after retirement.

Ohio law may require public notice if you are returning to a position with the employer from which you retired; please contact your employer for details.

### Filing for service retirement

You must terminate employment from your highest paying Ohio public employer to be eligible for retirement benefits. If you plan to retire with STRS Ohio and return to Ohio public employment, STRS Ohio must receive your *Service Retirement Application* before your reemployment begins.

### One-day break in service

To be eligible for service retirement, there must be a minimum one-day break in service between the last day of employment as an active member and the first day of employment as a reemployed retiree. This one day must be the last workday of the month before the service retirement date or the first workday of the retirement month. The one-day break must be a normal workday and cannot be a Saturday, Sunday or holiday.

- For example, if your service retirement date is July 1 and:
  - Your last paid workday is between June 1 and June 29, the first day you can return to work to be eligible to retire will be July 1 (as long as June 30 is a normal workday).
  - Your last paid workday is June 30, the first day you can return to work to be eligible to retire will be July 2 (as long as July 1 is a normal workday).

Working during the first two months of retirement may cause you to lose retirement benefits. See the next section for additional details.

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This brochure is a summary written in plain language for use by STRS Ohio members. It is not intended as a substitute for the Ohio Revised Code or the Ohio Administrative Code or for any state or federal law or regulation, nor will its interpretation prevail should a conflict arise between it and any law or regulation. More information may be obtained by contacting STRS Ohio toll-free at 888-227-7877.

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## Returning to Ohio public employment

### *Single employer*

If you are employed by only one Ohio public employer at the time of retirement, you must wait two months after your retirement date to return to public employment. Public employment during the first two months will result in the loss of one or two months of retirement benefits.

If you are reemployed within the first two months of retirement or continue in the same position as a nonpaid volunteer, you will be in violation of the two-month waiting period and will forfeit monthly benefits for any month in which you are in violation. If you volunteer, you may never be paid for the services rendered during the volunteer period. Simply deferring payment until later will not eliminate the violation. Please review the section “Forfeiting retirement benefits: violations and penalties” on Page 3 for further information.

### *Multiple employers*

#### **(Defined Benefit Plan members only)**

If you are employed at the time of retirement by more than one employer covered by STRS Ohio, Ohio Public Employees Retirement System (OPERS) or School Employees Retirement System (SERS), you may retire with the highest paying (primary) employer and continue to work with one or all of the lower paying (secondary) employers with no waiting period. To be eligible to continue to work with a secondary employer, you must have worked and earned compensation from that employer for each of the 12 months before and in the month of retirement.

For example, if your retirement date is July 1, 2021, you must be working in your secondary position in July 2020 and continue to work in each of the next 12 months into July 2021.

A secondary employer is defined as any STRS Ohio, OPERS or SERS employer with which you earned less compensation than you earned with your highest paying employer (in that fiscal year or in the previous 12-month period) and you are continuing employment with that employer in the first month of retirement.

If your secondary employer is covered by OPERS or SERS, then you must also combine that account with your STRS Ohio account at retirement to avoid a forfeiture of benefits. You may have more than one secondary employer. The “one-day break in service” referenced on Page 1 does not apply to employment with a secondary employer.

### *Forfeiting retirement benefits: violations and penalties*

If you choose to work in a public position with your primary employer or a new employer within the first two months of retirement, you will forfeit your monthly retirement benefits for the months worked. The amount a Defined Benefit Plan or Combined Plan participant forfeits by violating the two-month waiting period is the Single Life Annuity monthly benefit calculated before the reduction for a Partial Lump-Sum Option Plan (PLOP) payment and a Joint and Survivor Annuity or Annuity Certain (if selected). The amount a Defined Contribution Plan participant forfeits is the Single Life Annuity benefit calculated before the reduction for a Joint and Survivor Annuity or Annuity Certain (if selected). The difference between the actual plan of payment selected and the Single Life Annuity (or pre-PLOP Single Life Annuity) will be deducted from future monthly benefits.

Retirees who work during the two-month waiting period may still be eligible for health care coverage during the period benefits are forfeited. (See Page 7 for information regarding “Employed retiree health care.”) If you are enrolled in medical/prescription, dental or vision coverage, monthly premiums will be billed to you directly. Monthly premiums for the optional retiree-funded death benefit will be deducted from a future benefit payment.

## Reemployment benefit

Members continuing public employment after retirement and their employers both contribute to the applicable Ohio public retirement system. These contributions fund a benefit that you may collect as a lump-sum payment the first of the month following your last day of service or 12 months after the payment of a previous reemployed retiree benefit payment, whichever is later. Before benefits are payable, you must terminate employment.

Interest begins to accrue in the fiscal year following deposit. For example, interest on 2020–2021 contributions would begin accruing July 2021 and would be payable August 2021 or later. No interest is payable if a member withdraws his or her account in July and contributed for only the year just ended. Interest is calculated only for the time contributions were on deposit and terminates at age 65, your last day of service or 12 months after payment of a prior benefit, whichever is applicable.

If you elect a benefit *before age 65*, you will receive your contributions and interest on your contributions. This benefit is paid as a lump sum.

If you elect a benefit *at age 65 or after*, you will receive your contributions and interest on your contributions, and possibly a matching amount and interest depending on when the work was performed.

Interest is calculated at 6.5% through June 1982; 7.75% from July 1982 through June 30, 1994; 6.0% from July 1, 1994, through June 30, 1999; 5.0% from July 1, 1999, through June 30, 2012; and 4.0% beginning July 1, 2012. Interest rates are subject to change.

- Member contributions made before July 1, 2005, are matched at 100%.
- Member contributions made July 1, 2005, through June 30, 2013, are matched at 50%.
- Member contributions made July 1, 2013, and after are not matched.

You may elect to receive the benefit as a lump-sum payment or a monthly annuity, provided the monthly annuity is \$25 or greater. (The matching amount and interest rates are subject to change.)

Lump-sum payments can be:

- Paid directly to you, or
- Rolled over to a qualified plan.

Upon your death, survivors receive a lump-sum payment of any unpaid funds. Individuals continuing employment after retirement are not eligible for any other benefits.

## Important tax considerations

If you choose to withdraw your STRS Ohio account, there are important tax implications.

If you choose to have your withdrawal paid directly to you:

- Your payment will be taxed in the year in which it is issued.
- STRS Ohio will withhold federal tax at a rate of 20%.
- If you receive the payment before age 59-1/2, you may have to pay a 10% tax penalty for an early withdrawal.

You may roll over your withdrawal amount to an eligible retirement account that will accept your rollover and:

- Your payment will not be taxed in the current year and no taxes will be withheld.
- The rolled over funds will be taxed when removed from the account to which they were deposited.

There are other tax implications if you withdraw your STRS Ohio account. Review the *Special Tax Notice Regarding Lump-Sum Payments* found within the *Application For Lump-Sum Payment* and consult a professional tax advisor for more information. STRS Ohio cannot provide tax advice.

## Contributions made during two-month waiting period

Contributions made during the two-month waiting period (see Page 2) are not eligible for matching funds or interest. You may request a refund of these contributions at any age when employment with this employer terminates. These contributions may be withdrawn separately from other contributions.

## Required minimum distribution

Federal tax law requires you to take a minimum distribution from your retirement plan by April 1 of the year that follows the latter of: the year in which you reach age 72 or the calendar year in which you stop working in an Ohio public position. Failure to begin benefit payments by such date may subject you or your heirs to a federal tax penalty of 50% on the income that you should have taken.

If you do not apply for your monthly benefit payments or an account withdrawal by the required beginning date, a lump-sum payment will automatically be made to you, beginning with a retirement effective date of Jan. 1 of the year following the year you reach age 72.

It is important that you review your options with an STRS Ohio benefits counselor before making a decision. A benefits counseling appointment can be scheduled at [www.strsoh.org](http://www.strsoh.org) using your Online Personal Account or by calling STRS Ohio toll-free at 888-227-7877.

## Annual Statement of Account

Each fall, reemployed retirees receive an *Annual Statement of Account* as of the preceding June 30. This statement, which can be obtained through your Online Personal Account or mailed to your home, serves as a history of your earnings and deposits. It reflects your total account balance and account withdrawal value.

## Apply for benefits

When you terminate employment, you can apply online for reemployed benefits in the Reemployed section of your Online Personal Account. You may also obtain a paper application by downloading and printing a copy through the STRS Ohio website or by calling STRS Ohio toll-free at 888-227-7877.

## Employed retiree health care

### (Defined Benefit and Combined Plan members only)

Coverage under the STRS Ohio Health Care Program\* is limited for individuals not eligible for Medicare who are employed in a public or private position. Employed retirees are eligible for only secondary health care coverage through STRS Ohio's Basic Plan if they:

- Are eligible for medical and prescription drug coverage through their employer, or
- Hold a position for which other similarly situated employees are eligible for medical and prescription drug coverage at the same cost as full-time employees.

**Note:** The determination of similarly situated employee is based on position and employment status (part time/full time), not retirement status.

The rule applies to all employed enrollees who are not eligible for Medicare, regardless of hire date or type of employment. Please see "Scenarios" on Pages 8–11 for situation and eligibility examples.

### Verification process

STRS Ohio requires enrollees not eligible for Medicare to verify their employment status and access to employer health care coverage. If you are employed and not eligible for Medicare, it is your responsibility to provide verification through your Online Personal Account or submit a *Verification of Employment and Employer Health Care Access* form (available on the STRS Ohio website or upon request).

### Definitions

**Similarly situated position** — Individuals performing the same duties and tasks on a part-time or full-time basis. Retirement status is not considered a factor that differentiates one position from another.

**Primary coverage** — Medical plan that pays first on a claim when a person is covered by more than one insurance plan.

\*The STRS Ohio Health Care Program is not guaranteed. STRS Ohio may change or discontinue all or part of the program for all or a class of eligible benefit recipients and covered dependents at any time. Currently, members must have at least 15 years of service credit (or 20 years of service credit for retirement on or after Aug. 1, 2023) to qualify for access to the STRS Ohio Health Care Program (medical/prescription, dental and vision).

**Secondary coverage** — Applies only when a person is enrolled in more than one medical plan. The secondary medical plan will not pay on a claim until the primary medical plan has first processed the claim. Many enrollees, unless chronically ill, do not see the financial benefit of purchasing secondary health care coverage. You may find it beneficial to discuss the purchasing decision with your financial planner.

### **Scenarios** *(All names are fictitious.)*

The following scenarios relate to health care for STRS Ohio retirees who are employed. In the examples that use a teacher position, the same results would apply for administrators or retirees employed in the private sector. Terminology used in the scenarios is defined starting on Page 7.

#### **Scenario 1**

STRS Ohio retiree Jane Doe, a teacher, is precluded by the collective bargaining agreement from participating in district-provided health insurance.

- Jane is not eligible for Medicare.
- Jane is employed by a board of education as a full-time teacher.
- The collective bargaining agreement between the board and the nonexempt, certificated/licensed teachers provides that all full-time teachers are entitled to health care coverage (which includes prescription drug coverage) for which the board pays 90% and the employee pays 10% of the premium.
- The collective bargaining agreement between the board and the teachers provides that an STRS Ohio retiree employed by the board shall not be eligible to participate in district-provided health insurance.

**Eligibility** — Jane would not be eligible for primary coverage through STRS Ohio since employees in other similarly situated positions (teachers) are eligible for health care coverage through the employer. The collective bargaining agreement's treatment of reemployed teachers is irrelevant since the comparison is to other employees in similarly situated positions.

#### **Scenario 2**

STRS Ohio retiree Jane Miller is employed in a nonteaching position full time and is eligible for the same health insurance and prescription drug benefits at the same cost as other similarly situated employees.

- Jane is not eligible for Medicare.

**Eligibility** — Jane would not be eligible for primary coverage through STRS Ohio since employees in similarly situated positions are eligible for health care coverage through the employer.

#### **Scenario 3**

STRS Ohio retiree John Doe, a teacher, is employed part time and is eligible for the same health insurance and prescription drug benefits as other teachers employed by the board; however, exactly like part-time nonretired teachers employed by the board, the STRS Ohio retiree must pay a higher percentage of the health insurance premium than full-time teachers.

**Eligibility** — John would be eligible for primary coverage from STRS Ohio because other employees in similarly situated positions are not eligible for coverage at the cost available to full-time employees.

#### **Scenario 4**

STRS Ohio retiree Bob Miller is employed in a nonteaching position part time and is eligible for the same health insurance and prescription drug benefits as other similarly situated employees.

- Bob is not eligible for Medicare.
- The employer offers health care at a cost equal to that offered to full-time employees.

**Eligibility** — Bob would not be eligible for primary coverage through STRS Ohio since employees in similarly situated positions are eligible for health care coverage through the employer at a cost equal to that offered to full-time employees.

#### **Scenario 5**

STRS Ohio retiree Betty Smith, a teacher, is employed part time and, by reason of a collective bargaining agreement provision applicable only to employed retirees, is not eligible for the same health

insurance and prescription drug benefits as other teachers employed by the board.

- Betty is not eligible for Medicare.
- Part-time teachers pay 50% of the premium as compared to full-time teachers who pay 10% of the premium.
- The collective bargaining agreement between the board and the teachers provides that an STRS Ohio retiree employed by the board shall not be eligible to participate in the district-provided health insurance, but must take health insurance provided by STRS Ohio.

**Eligibility** — Betty would be eligible for primary coverage from STRS Ohio. This scenario is exactly the same as scenario 3: the employed retiree is in a position for which other similarly situated positions (part-time teachers) are not eligible for coverage at the cost available to full-time employees. It is irrelevant how the collective bargaining agreement treats the employed retiree. The relevant fact is that Betty is employed as a part-time teacher and other part-time teachers (regardless of their retirement status) are not eligible for health care coverage at the cost available to full-time employees.

### Scenario 6

STRS Ohio retiree Joe Jones, a teacher, is employed full time and is eligible for the same health insurance and prescription drug benefits as other teachers employed by the board; however, the STRS Ohio retiree must pay a higher percentage of the health insurance premium than full-time nonretired teachers employed by the board.

- Joe is not eligible for Medicare.
- The collective bargaining agreement provides that full-time teachers who are STRS Ohio retirees employed by the board are entitled to health insurance benefits for which the retiree must pay 50% of the premium.

**Eligibility** — This is the same situation as scenario 1. Joe would not be eligible for primary coverage through STRS Ohio since employees in other similarly situated positions (teachers) are eligible for health care coverage through the employer. The collective bargaining agreement's treatment of reemployed

teachers is irrelevant, since the comparison is to other employees in similarly situated positions.

### Employment and Medicare enrollment

STRS Ohio requires all medical plan participants to enroll in Medicare Parts A & B at age 65 or when eligible. If Medicare Part A (hospital insurance) is not premium-free, you do not need to enroll in Part A. However, Medicare Part B (medical insurance) is required. If you decline Medicare coverage, you will not be eligible for an STRS Ohio medical plan.\* Most people age 65 or older qualify for premium-free Medicare Part A based on their own or their current or former spouse's employment history. If you or your spouse is still employed and covered by a group health plan through the employer, you may choose to delay your enrollment in Medicare. However, if you delay your enrollment, you should be aware of the following:

- You have an eight-month special enrollment period in which to sign up for Medicare after the employer health coverage ends or employment ends (whichever comes first). You will not be subject to a late enrollment penalty if you sign up during this special enrollment period.
- If you miss the eight-month special enrollment period, you can enroll during the general enrollment period from Jan. 1 through March 31. However, coverage is not effective until July 1 and a lifetime late enrollment penalty will apply.
- If your employer has more than 20 employees, your employer health plan will be the primary payer of covered hospital and medical expenses. Your STRS Ohio plan will be the secondary payer.

When you enroll in Medicare, you must submit your Medicare information through your Online Personal Account or send STRS Ohio a copy of your Medicare card. If you send a copy of your card, write your STRS Ohio account number on the copy you submit.

If you discontinue your employer health care coverage and fail to enroll in Medicare, you will not be eligible for an STRS Ohio medical plan.

\*The STRS Ohio Health Care Program is not guaranteed. STRS Ohio may change or discontinue all or part of the program for all or a class of eligible benefit recipients and covered dependents at any time. Currently, members must have at least 15 years of service credit (or 20 years of service credit for retirement on or after Aug. 1, 2023) to qualify for access to the STRS Ohio Health Care Program (medical/prescription, dental and vision).

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## By phone: **888-227-7877 (toll-free)**

Our dedicated team of member service representatives is available to answer your questions when you need them.

- Call Monday–Friday, 8 a.m.–5 p.m.

When you need more detailed information, our benefits counselors can provide you with one-on-one consultation in our Columbus office, through a teleconference or during field counseling sessions.

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## On the Internet: **www.strsoh.org**

A quick way to access information is through STRS Ohio’s website, where you will find the items below and much more.

- Benefit information (while teaching and in retirement)
- Online Personal Account information
- Videos and on-demand webinars
- Counseling and seminar information
- STRS Ohio publications and forms
- Benefit calculators

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## By email: **contactus@strsoh.org**

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## Email news service

STRS Ohio updates members about legislation, benefits and other issues affecting the STRS Ohio membership through our email news service — *eUPDATE*. All members with an email on file receive the *eUPDATE*.

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## Publications available

The following STRS Ohio publications are available on the STRS Ohio website at [www.strsoh.org](http://www.strsoh.org) or by calling toll-free 888-227-7877.

- *Account Withdrawal*
- *Comprehensive Annual Financial Report*
- *Death Benefits*
- *Disability Allowance*
- *Disability Benefits (Combined Plan)*
- *Disability Retirement*
- *Educational Opportunities*
- *Employment After Retirement*
- *Preparing for Retirement*
- *Purchasing Service Credit*
- *Service Credit Guidelines*
- *Service Retirement and Plans of Payment*
- *Survivor Benefits*
- *Understanding Your STRS Ohio Benefits — Plan Summary*



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