



MONTGOMERY COUNTY RETIREMENT FOCUS

July 2024

Montgomery County Retired Employees' Association, Inc.

Are you a member? MCREA represents retirees before the County Executive, County Council, Office of Human Resources and the Montgomery County Employee Retirement Plans on issues such as your health benefits and pension.

When you retire from County service, a connection continues with the County for your insurance, pension, survivor benefits, and deferred compensation.

MCREA keeps members informed about important issues via our newsletters, MCREA's website and general membership meeting.

Join them by completing the membership application by going to their website www.mcreaonline.com and enclosing \$5.

Join one of their general membership meetings that are being held virtually every June and October.

Are your beneficiaries up to date?

Do you remember who your beneficiaries are? Do you need to update your beneficiaries but just haven't gotten around to it? Well now it's easier than ever.

Fidelity houses the beneficiary information for the **County DCP** account. You can log into your online account, click *profile* and then select *beneficiaries* at www.NetBenefits.com/MCG to review your beneficiary elections or to add them to your plan.

As **ERS** participants, OHR still houses the beneficiary forms. If you would like to review your elections, please contact OHR Records at records.ohr@montgomerycountymd.gov or visit their website to submit a new form: <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/HR/Benefits/Beneficiary.html>

ERS Cost-of-Living-Adjustment (COLA)

The Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) is an annual adjustment to your monthly retirement benefit which reflects the impact of inflation for the prior year. The amount of the adjustment is based on the change in the Consumer Price Index-All Urban Consumers, Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-WVA (CPI-U) from May 2023 to May 2024 as defined in the County Code, Section 33-44(c)(3).

July 1, 2024 eligible retirees and others receiving annuity payments from the ERS, will receive a Cost-of-Living-Adjustment (COLA). If you are a new retiree and retired on/or after August 1, 2023, you will receive your first COLA increase. Retirees who retired on/after July 1, 2024 will receive their first COLA July 1, 2025.

The change in the CPI-U for this period is 3.289%, however, the increase you will receive will be based on the member's retirement group, birth date, hire date, retirement date and/or disability date. These factors may result in the COLA you receive being lower than 3.289%.

You should have received your COLA letter explaining your adjustment amount and percentage you received.

ERS Retirees Frequently Asked Questions

We Are Here For You! MCERP is not only providing customer service for our employees but for our retired members as well. You might not be aware of some of the services available, so we have highlighted a few below:



If I am a retiree, who do I contact to make changes to my health insurance?

The Office of Human Resources (OHR) handles all insurance related matters for employees and retirees. Please contact OHR at (240) 777-0311, option 1.

If I need an income verification letter, stating how much my monthly annuity is, how can I obtain this information?

Contact a retirement analyst at (240) 777-8230 or email us at retirement@montgomerycountymd.gov and we will provide a letter outlining your annuity benefits.

If I am in the ERS pension plan, when would my Direct Deposit or Tax Change form need to be submitted so it will be updated by the next annuity payment?

MCERP needs to receive all change forms before the 15th of the month for the change to be effective on the first of the following month.

If I moved outside the state of Maryland, will you withhold taxes for my new state?

No, MCERP only withholds taxes for the state of Maryland. You will need to contact the Comptroller of your new state to see if there is a tax implication for your new state.

How can I find out if my monthly benefit will be reduced in the future?

MCERP will send you a letter 3 months before the reduction date or you can call (240) 777-8230.

If I picked a Joint & Survivor option when I retired, and I have remarried, can I change my Joint Annuitant?

No, the election made at your retirement is a one-time irrevocable election and cannot be changed.

If I am receiving ERS disability payment, how often am I medically reevaluated?

You are medically reevaluated every year for the first 5 years after receiving your benefit, and then once every 3 years until age 60 for Groups A & H or until age 55 for Groups E, F & G.

If you are receiving and LTD2 disability benefit, you will be medically reevaluated at your 3-year anniversary and then annually until age 85.

If I need a copy of my pay advice, how can I obtain another copy?

If you have not created a retiree account in our extranet, please contact the Retirement department at 240-777-8230 or retirement@montgomerycountymd.gov and we will send you your login credentials.