

PSERS Definition of Full-Time

Issue

Some positions currently reported in the Public Safety Employees' Retirement System (PSERS) do not require enough hours of work to qualify as full-time for purposes of PSERS eligibility. Stakeholders are seeking to lower the number of hours required for a position to qualify as full-time and be included in PSERS.

Background

Generally, participation in PSERS requires an employee to be:

- ❖ Engaged in PSERS duties.
- ❖ Employed by a PSERS employer.
- ❖ Employed full-time.

"Full-time" is defined in [WAC](#) as being 160 hours per month.

Recently, some employees who have been participating in PSERS were transferred to Public Employees' Retirement System (PERS) because they worked less than 160 hours per month (consistent with their employment contracts). These employees had been reported in PSERS, and they and their employers had been contributing at PSERS rates. Employees who were transferred to PERS received a refund of the difference in their member contributions. In light of this, the SCPP was asked to consider whether or not the definition of "full-time" should be changed to include fewer hours.

Highlights of Analysis

- ❖ Some plan members believed they were in PSERS, and were reported as such, and they (and their employers) contributed at PSERS rates.
- ❖ Are there people in similar circumstances who were reported correctly under current law, and thus have been in PERS – should they be eligible for PSERS?
- ❖ Could be considered an expansion of PSERS.
- ❖ PSERS expansion has been discussed many times over last several years.

Committee Activity

The SCPP studied this issue at the December meeting, and made a recommendation.

Recommendation to the 2017 Legislature

Allow employees who have been, or will be moved from PSERS to PERS (as described above) to stay in, or return to PSERS.

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