



State Employees' Retirement System

2101 S. Veterans Parkway  
P. O. Box 19255  
Springfield, IL 62794-9255  
217-785-7444

# The Informer



The newsletter for annuitants of the State Employees' Retirement System of Illinois

 [srs.illinois.gov](http://srs.illinois.gov)

FEBRUARY 2019



Keep your Member Services contact information up to date to receive the latest news, announcements or deadlines by email, letter or call.

## Your benefit statement

Enclosed with this Informer is your current benefit statement. This statement contains detailed information about your SERS benefits.

You may change your beneficiaries at any time by completing and filing Form 101 (Death Benefit Beneficiary Designation) with SERS.

Remember, your group life insurance beneficiaries are separate from your SERS beneficiaries. The Minnesota Life Insurance Company, a Securian Company, maintains your life insurance beneficiary information. To update your life insurance beneficiaries, contact the Springfield branch at 888-202-5525. Their office hours are Monday – Friday, 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.

If you have questions about your statement, call us at 217-785-7444.

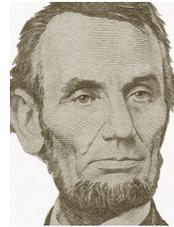
## Back wages for SERS benefit recipients

When back wages are paid to a SERS retiree, whether for frozen wages in 2011 and 2012 or step increases since July 2015, the SERS retirement benefit may also increase. If you retired on or before July 1, 2015 and received back wages representing frozen wages from 2011 and 2012, SERS will determine the impact on your monthly benefit and adjust accordingly, including any retroactive benefits. The review of frozen wages information and the benefit recalculations will require a significant amount of staff time and your patience is greatly appreciated.

Please note that if you retired on or after August 1, 2015, your benefit amount will be reviewed after the back wages for step increases are paid to you, even if you received back wages for 2011 and 2012 frozen wages.

## Did you know?

Retirees and survivors, you can view and print your own income verification letter from the Member Services website. Log in to [memberservices.srs.illinois.gov](http://memberservices.srs.illinois.gov) and select "Member Services Tab" from the left navigation bar. These letters can be used for loan applications and financial needs.



“Let us have faith that right makes might, and in that faith, let us, to the end, dare to do our duty as we understand it.”

## 2019 Tax withholding tables

The new tax tables went into effect on January 1, 2019. Please note that your federal tax withholding may cause your benefit payment to increase or decrease, based on your filing status.

If you would like to change your withholding, you must complete a new Form W-4P. You may want to consult with your tax advisor before changing your elections.

## Do you have a qualifying survivor?

If you did not have an eligible survivor when you retired you probably received a survivor contribution refund. If you did receive this refund, a survivor benefit is not payable upon your death, even if you are married at the time of your death. The Death or Survivor Benefits section of the enclosed Statement of Account provides information on the amount of survivor benefits payable in the event of your death, or **lets you know that you took the survivor contribution refund.**

If you received the survivor contribution refund at retirement you may repay this refund in order to establish survivor benefits for your eligible survivor. This repayment option is only available to retirees. A survivor does not have the option to repay this refund after the death of the retiree. If you received the survivor contribution refund and would like to repay in order to reestablish a survivor benefit, please call us at 217-785-7444 for details.



## 1099-R

In January, the Office of the Comptroller mails IRS Form 1099-R for 2018 SERS benefit payments to all annuitants and survivors. These payments must be reported on IRS Form 1040 under the Income section (Pensions and annuities).

## W2GI+

If you carry non-IRS dependent(s) on your state health/dental insurance, you should receive a Form W2GI+ from the Comptroller's office. Under federal tax law, the premium paid by the state must be added to your annual gross income if a covered dependent does not qualify as your tax dependent because it is subject to federal income tax.

The Form W2GI+ is also issued for all annuitants who carry a group term life insurance policy of \$50,000 or more through the state. Form W2GI+ information is reported on IRS Form 1040 under the Other Taxes section.

We recommend you securely view your monthly check stubs through the SRS Member Services website at [memberservices.srs.illinois.gov](http://memberservices.srs.illinois.gov) to see the details of your deductions and history of transactions.

If you need to change the amount of your federal tax withholding, you can submit a new W-4P to SERS at any time. The W-4P is available at [srs.illinois.gov](http://srs.illinois.gov), under the Forms link. *Note – SERS is unable to withhold state tax for any state other than Illinois.*

You should contact a qualified tax advisor or an IRS representative at 800-829-1040 with questions about your taxes, including withholdings.

**Be smart about your retirement information. Come to the source.**

**Visit [srs.illinois.gov](http://srs.illinois.gov) for more information.**

## How do other states tax your pension?

Many annuitants move to warmer states or to places where their families live. Illinois does not tax retirement or survivor benefits, but each state has differing tax laws regarding retirement income. Visit [retirementliving.com](http://retirementliving.com) or check with the specific state's department of revenue for more information.

### States that do not tax Illinois pensions

Alabama	New Hampshire
Alaska	South Dakota
Florida	Tennessee
Hawaii	Texas
Massachusetts	Washington
Nevada	Wyoming

### States exempting pension income entirely for qualified individuals

Illinois	Pennsylvania
Mississippi	

### States that exempt or provide a credit for a portion of pension income

Arkansas	Montana
Colorado	New Jersey
Delaware	New Mexico
Georgia	New York
Idaho	Ohio
Iowa	Oklahoma
Kentucky	Oregon
Louisiana	South Carolina
Maine	Utah
Michigan	Virginia
Missouri	West Virginia

### States where Illinois pensions are taxed

*Arizona	Minnesota
California	Nebraska
Connecticut	North Carolina
D.C.	North Dakota
Indiana	Rhode Island
Kansas	Vermont
Maryland	Wisconsin

*\*Out of state pensions are taxed; other types of retirement income are exempt.*



## Visit us online

Did you know you could access a copy of all publications on our website? This includes the newsletters, handbooks and brochures. You can also find helpful information regarding your insurance, any news about upcoming legislation, survivor benefit information and much more. Check us out at [srs.illinois.gov](http://srs.illinois.gov).

## Returning to employment after retirement

If you return to state employment on a contractual basis, or to the private sector, your SERS retirement benefit is not affected. However, if you return to state employment after retirement, you must notify the SERS Pension Section immediately.

## SERS employee retirements

Please join us in congratulating the following SERS' employees who have retired:

**Janice Weathers**, *Refunds/QILDRO*  
Retired 4/1/18

**Kevin Rademacher**, *Information Technology*  
Retired 5/1/18

**Barbara Baird**, *Chicago office*  
Retired 6/1/18

**Kelley Gray**, *Personnel*  
Retired 10/1/18

**Kathy Yemm**, *Claims*  
Retired 11/1/18

**Charles Ketchum**, *Service*  
Retired 1/1/19

## Do you feel protected against cyber crimes?

Whether you're a person who adopts technology easily, or you're a new(er) user, we can all benefit from brushing up on our knowledge of how to protect ourselves from online scams, cyber attacks and more. Home Instead Senior Care's *Protect Seniors Online* is a great resource to help with those topics and more. Don't let the name fool you; internet users of all ages could benefit from this information.

Visit [protectseniorsonline.com/resources](http://protectseniorsonline.com/resources) to find more information, including a quiz to see how likely you are to spot a scam.



## Moved recently? Update your address.

Updating your address is easy. Fill out the Change of Information Form 501 and mail it to us or email it to [sers@srs.illinois.gov](mailto:sers@srs.illinois.gov).

You can find Form 501 on our website under the Forms link or on the Member Services website.

**Check out our Member Services website**  
[memberservices.srs.illinois.gov](http://memberservices.srs.illinois.gov)



## I want to register to attend the Myths & Realities of Retirement workshop:

on \_\_\_\_\_  
Date/Location

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name (please print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
City Zip

(\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone number Date of birth

\_\_\_\_\_  
Last 4 numbers of SSN **OR** Member ID

\_\_\_\_\_  
Email address

Bringing a guest?  Yes  No

***Send this completed registration form only if you're registering for a workshop (and you haven't already done so online).***

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## 2019 Myths & Realities of Retirement Workshop

To register, visit ***srs.illinois.gov*** and follow the instructions. After you register, you will receive confirmation and email reminders.

If you don't have access to a computer, you can complete and return the registration form to us or call our office to register. After you're registered, we will send a reminder letter two weeks prior to the respective workshop.

*The MRR is a free, one-day workshop examining various issues affecting retirees.*

Mar. 19 Bloomington	Aug. 6 Effingham
Mar. 19 Carol Stream	Aug. 7 Bradley
Mar. 26 Orland Park	Aug. 13 Mt. Vernon
Apr. 2 Marion	Aug. 13 Schaumburg
*Apr. 9 Carol Stream	Aug. 21 Dixon
Apr. 16 Collinsville	Sept. 10 Springfield
Apr. 23 Springfield	*Sept. 17 Chicago
May 7 Chicago	Oct. 1 Quincy
May 21 Springfield	Oct. 15 Collinsville
June 18 E. Peoria	Oct. 22 E. Peoria
June 18 Rockford	Oct. 22 Utica
June 25 Springfield	Nov. 12 Springfield
*June 25 Orland Park	Dec. 3 Chicago
July 9 Springfield	Dec. 10 Joliet
July 23 Galesburg	

 These events are full.

\*Added since 2/1/19.