

# The PERSpective

Official Newsletter of the Parochial Employees' Retirement System of Louisiana

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## The Director's Dispatch

**By: Kristi Garcia Spinoza  
Administrative Director/General Counsel**

Welcome to THE PERSpective—the new quarterly newsletter of the Parochial Employees' Retirement System of Louisiana.



I am pleased to introduce this publication to our members, retirees, and participating employers across the state. PERS exists to safeguard the retirement security you've earned through public service.

Each quarter, we will share timely updates on retirement laws and policies, Board actions that affect the System, administrative changes, and reminders that help you make sound decisions—whether you are actively working, nearing retirement, already retired, or managing retirement reporting and contributions on behalf of your employees. We will also highlight key deadlines, answer common questions, and point you to resources that can prevent avoidable delays. Paper copies of the newsletter will be mailed the first quarter of each year only. Other newsletters will be emailed and posted on our website.

For employers, we recognize that accurate and consistent reporting is the backbone of a well-run retirement system. This newsletter will support your work by providing practical guidance, clarifying requirements, and flagging issues we commonly see—so problems can be corrected quickly or avoided.

For members and retirees, our goal is simple: fewer surprises, faster answers, and confidence that you understand how your benefits work. Retirement systems function best when the information is accurate, consistent, and shared before issues arise.

Thank you for your service to your communities and for your partnership with PERS. We welcome your feedback and suggestions as we launch The PERSpective and continue strengthening communication and operations across the System.

# Modernization Minute

## NEW! **Monthly** Electronic Contribution Reporting and Payment for Employers

Contribution reports must be submitted on the PERS-provided form on a **MONTHLY** (not quarterly) basis. Contribution reports must be submitted in the required PERS Excel format; these files are data-sensitive, and unauthorized edits can corrupt the report. We encourage employers to submit reports electronically via a secure link provided UPON REQUEST. PERS now also accepts ACH payments using a vendor ID number assigned to each employer. Paper checks will no longer be accepted later this year.

Before submission, please review and proofread your report and confirm key items, including:

- Salaries
- Employee and employer contribution amounts
- Social Security numbers
- Check/total payment amounts

Errors in contribution reporting delay the confirmation and processing of retirement benefits and often result in the assessment of late fees to the employer. PERS must receive all final earnings and contributions before any member may retire.

Please email [RETIREMENT@PERSLA.ORG](mailto:RETIREMENT@PERSLA.ORG) to obtain the secure link and instructions, or if you have a special circumstance that prevents electronic submission and payment.

## Mandatory Direct Deposit for Retirees

**Direct deposit is now mandatory for all PERS retirees.**

This requirement improves efficiency and helps combat fraud by reducing the risks associated with paper checks. The Direct Deposit Authorization Form is attached to this newsletter. Please complete and return the form as instructed.

If you need a special exemption, contact [RETIREMENT@PERSLA.ORG](mailto:RETIREMENT@PERSLA.ORG) or call our office.

## Form Updates

PERS has implemented a suite of new, modern fillable forms to make submissions faster and easier for members, employers, and retirees. Many of these forms can now be completed electronically and sent directly to PERS via email, reducing delays and paperwork. The only exception is any form that requires notarization—those must still be submitted with an original, wet-ink signed and notarized document. This is especially important for retirement and disability applications.

When submitting forms, it is important that you utilize the forms that have been generated by PERS. Our forms are designed to include all necessary information required for processing. You can find all approved forms in the forms section of our website. Older versions of forms will not be accepted.



# NOTICE: CONTRIBUTION RATES REMAIN UNCHANGED FOR 2026

THE CONTRIBUTION PERCENTAGES FOR THE 2026 PLAN A AND PLAN B WILL REMAIN CONSISTENT WITH THOSE ESTABLISHED FOR 2025.

## PLAN A

EMPLOYER CONTRIBUTION RATE: 11.00%  
EMPLOYEE CONTRIBUTION RATE: 9.50%

## PLAN B

EMPLOYER CONTRIBUTION RATE: 7.00%  
EMPLOYEE CONTRIBUTION RATE: 3.00%

## 2025 Form 1099-R

Retirees will soon receive a letter explaining how 2025 gross income figures reflect PERS moving from an arrears-based benefit payment structure to contemporaneous monthly payments. 2026 monthly benefit amounts will also be included for those needing an updated award letter.

## COST OF LIVING ADJUSTMENTS (COLAs)

Under Louisiana law, the PERS Board of Trustees may grant an annual COLA only if specific conditions are met. A COLA is allowed only when the prior year's investment earnings exceed expected earnings by enough to cover the cost of the COLA, and the statutory timing limits are satisfied. Since the Board approved a COLA effective January 1, 2025, it cannot approve another COLA until at least 2026.

## STAY CONNECTED: UPDATE EMAIL AND DIRECT DEPOSIT INFORMATION

A direct deposit form and the newly revised personal history update form are included with this newsletter. It is very important to keep your account information current! The new form includes a space to add or update your email address. We are actively gathering email addresses for future electronic communications.

Providing an email address is one of the best ways to stay informed because it allows PERS to send time-sensitive updates, newsletters, and important notices quickly and securely (if needed). This reduces costs and mail delays, and helps ensure you receive communications even if your mailing address changes.

## COPIES OF AUDIT AND ACTUARIAL REPORTS ONLINE

The Audit and Actuarial reports for the year ending 12/31/2024 are posted on the retirement system's website ([www.persla.org](http://www.persla.org)). Each employer should download the reports or share our website with your auditors as needed. Hard copies of these reports will not be mailed, but will remain available on our website. 2025 will be added this summer.

# IMPORTANT TAX NOTICES

Each year PERS mails **1099-R** forms by January 31. These forms are issued for refunded service credit, monthly pension benefits, “rollovers” out of the system, and DROP withdrawals. If any of these situations apply, and you have not received a 1099-R form by February 28, 2026, please reach out to our office at [RETIREMENT@PERSLA.ORG](mailto:RETIREMENT@PERSLA.ORG) or call (225)928-1361.

If you have any questions about the proper amount to withhold from your pension, we recommend that you consult a tax advisor or visit the IRS website. You can find a tax estimator online at <https://www.irs.gov/individuals/taxwithholding-estimator>.

To change your federal income tax withholding amount, the most recent **IRS W-4P** form can be found in the forms section of our website.

## REFUND OF EMPLOYEE CONTRIBUTIONS

Refund requests from former members must be handled directly by PERS. Employers should not discuss refunds with former employees or provide guidance on eligibility, tax consequences, timelines, or required documentation. We request that employers remove any reference to refunds from post-employment letters or other separation communications in order to avoid confusion and ensure former members receive accurate information. Former members with refund questions should be directed to the designated email address, [REFUNDS@PERSLA.ORG](mailto:REFUNDS@PERSLA.ORG).

A refund is a serious, often irreversible financial decision. Inactive members should consider potential negative tax consequences and proceed with caution. This is particularly precarious for Plan A members who do not pay into Social Security.

PERS will not accept refund requests until at least 60 days after termination of service and after PERS has received all required contributions. Refunds are not mandatory, and funds left on deposit with PERS are not at risk.



Need training for your employees?

PERS conducted more than two dozen member trainings in 2025! To request a session, simply email [RETIREMENT@PERSLA.ORG](mailto:RETIREMENT@PERSLA.ORG) and include your agency name, preferred dates/times, estimated attendance, and whether you want an in-person or virtual presentation.