



RETIREMENT SAVINGS PLAN MEMBER GUIDE

Mission Statement

To secure and deliver the retirement benefits promised to our members.

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The benefits in this booklet pertain to the Retirement Savings Plan (RSP). Traditional Benefit Package and Portable Benefit Package guides are also available as separate publications to explain the benefits pertaining to those options.

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This booklet is intended to serve only as a brief summary of the provisions of the law governing the State Universities Retirement System. It should not be considered a substitute for the provisions of the law, which are set forth in Articles 1, 15, and 20 of the “Illinois Pension Code.” The provisions of the law prevail over any statements, errors, or omissions of this booklet.

CHANGES IN THE LAW

Generally, changes in the retirement law are applicable only to persons who are contributing members on or after the effective date of legislation. If you terminated your employment status before the effective date of the legislation, the changes will not be applicable to you unless the legislation specifically provides for retroactive application.

INTRODUCTION

The State Universities Retirement System of Illinois (SURS) provides retirement, disability, death and survivors' benefits to eligible SURS participants and annuitants. SURS covers faculty and support staff of Illinois public higher education including universities, colleges, Class I community colleges, scientific surveys and other related agencies.

SURS ELIGIBILITY

Your SURS-covered employer will determine your eligibility to participate in SURS. Generally, you are eligible if your position requires you to work continuously for at least one academic term or four months, whichever is less, and your employment is not temporary, intermittent, or irregular. Your SURS participation ends on the date you retire or end your employment with a SURS-covered employer.

You are not eligible to be covered by SURS if any of the following apply:

- You are a student regularly attending classes at a college or university that participates in SURS and are employed on a part-time, temporary basis.
- You were employed under the Comprehensive Employment Training Act on or after July 1, 1979.
- You hold a J-1 or F-1 visa and have not yet established residency status.
- You are currently receiving a retirement annuity from SURS or from funds contributed to the RSP.

PART-TIME EMPLOYMENT

Part-time employment with a SURS-covered employer does not affect your eligibility to qualify for benefits.

SURS PLAN OPTIONS

New SURS members must choose one of three retirement plan options within the first six months of employment:

1. Traditional Pension Plan
2. Portable Pension Plan
3. Retirement Savings Plan

This guide focuses on the Retirement Savings Plan. A brief summary of the three plans is below. Additional information about the three retirement options can be found at surs.org.

TRADITIONAL PENSION PLAN

This is the historical SURS defined benefit retirement plan. Until 1998, it was the only SURS plan available. It provides lifetime retirement benefits and provides for a survivor benefit at no additional cost. However, the separation refund feature is not as generous as the Portable Pension Plan.

PORTABLE PENSION PLAN

This is also a defined benefit retirement plan that has much in common with the Traditional Pension Plan. It provides a more generous separation refund if you leave the System. However, the provisions for survivor benefits require a reduction to the retirement and death benefits.

RETIREMENT SAVINGS PLAN (RSP)

This is a defined contribution plan that establishes an account in your name into which your contributions and the employer (state of Illinois) matching contributions are placed. You have the flexibility to choose where to invest your money within the SURS investment options and when to make adjustments as your needs change. Both hands-off and hands-on options are available.

RETIREMENT SAVINGS PLAN FEATURES

Enrollment	Ready to enroll? Go to surs.org and then click the Member Website log in button in the upper right-hand corner of the homepage. Then, click Register and follow the prompts to select RSP as your SURS retirement plan.
Contributions	Total contributions to the RSP equal 15.6% of your earnings. You contribute 8.0% of earnings and the state contributes 7.6%. Member contributions are made automatically through convenient payroll deductions.
Investment Options	SURS is committed to offering high quality, diversified, cost-effective investment options. RSP members have the option of investing in the default investment option, SURS Lifetime Income Strategy, or creating and managing their own portfolio of SURS core investment options.
Vesting	When you are “vested” in your savings, it effectively means the money is yours to keep. You are always 100% vested in the contributions you make to your RSP account, as well as any earnings on them. You become vested in state of Illinois contributions upon completion of five years of service with a SURS-covered employer.
Beneficiaries	Your beneficiary or beneficiaries will inherit your account in the event of your death. You should consider identifying a beneficiary when you enroll in the plan and update the information if you experience a life-changing event such as marriage, divorce, the birth of a child, or a death in the family. You will have the option to name beneficiaries online during your initial plan choice. To name your beneficiary at a later time, or to update your beneficiaries, log in to the Member Website at surs.org . You may also call SURS at 800-275-7877 and request that the Beneficiary Designation form be mailed to you.
Withdrawals	Withdrawals from the RSP are permitted when you end your employment or retire. Please call SURS at 800-275-7877 to obtain more information about withdrawals.
Confidential Consultations	Now is a great time to schedule a confidential consultation to discuss your retirement planning goals. For confidential consultations with a SURS Defined Contribution Account Representative, call 800-613-9543 or schedule online at sursrsp.timetap.com .

INVESTMENT OPTIONS

Within the RSP there are two different paths for retirement savings. Members can choose the default investment option, SURS Lifetime Income Strategy (LIS) or create their portfolio by selecting individual funds from SURS core fund lineup. It is important to keep your goals for this retirement plan in mind when selecting your investments. Is your goal for this plan to meet basic needs in retirement by receiving lifetime monthly income? Or, maybe you have other sources of post-retirement income, and your goal for this plan is to supplement your monthly income or save for a significant retirement purchase? Another important consideration is whether you will qualify for and participate in the retiree health insurance program. In order to participate in the health insurance program after retirement, you must be receiving lifetime income.



THE SURS LIFETIME INCOME STRATEGY (LIS)

The SURS LIS is designed to help members meet their basic income needs in retirement. The LIS is a carefully designed, professionally managed target date portfolio that automatically adjusts its investment mix as you age. As you approach retirement, you have the option to start regularly allocating a portion of your money to a Secure Income Portfolio that will provide guaranteed monthly retirement income that you cannot outlive. Here's how it works:



BUILDING RETIREMENT WEALTH

During your saving years, when you're building your retirement wealth, the SURS LIS invests in a diversified mix of stocks, bonds and other investments, and automatically adjusts them over time to maintain an appropriate investment mix (just like a target-date fund). As you move toward retirement, the strategy gradually becomes more conservative to protect against market fluctuations. These non-secured portfolios are not backed by insurance.

The SURS LIS, invests your money during your saving years in up to four non-secured investment portfolios:

- **SURS LIS Stock Portfolio:** The portfolio targets a mix of U.S. large-cap stocks, U.S. small/mid-cap stocks and non-U.S. stocks.
- **SURS LIS Bond Portfolio:** The portfolio targets a mix of U.S. core bonds and U.S. Treasury Inflation Protected Securities (TIPS).
- **SURS LIS Cash Portfolio:** This portfolio invests in U.S. cash-equivalent, short duration government securities.
- **SURS LIS Real Asset Portfolio:** This portfolio invests in real estate investment trusts (REITs)—companies that generate income from investing and managing office buildings, hotels and other real estate property.



SECURING GUARANTEED RETIREMENT INCOME

When retirement is approximately 15 years away and, if you are vested, your account will start regularly and gradually moving your money into the Secure Income Portfolio. This insured portfolio starts building a secure annual income for your retirement years. The Secure Income Portfolio is designed to capture market growth potential, while preserving your lifetime income. The Secure Income Portfolio uses multiple group-insurance contracts to guarantee your annual lifetime income, which is based on the high water mark of the annual secure income portfolio balance.

SURS LIS Secure Income Portfolio: This portfolio invests in a mix of passively managed stocks (50%) and bonds (50%).



RECEIVING YOUR GUARANTEED INCOME

In your retirement years, SURS LIS uses your balance in the Secure Income Portfolio to generate guaranteed lifetime income that you will receive for the rest of your life. The guaranteed annual income amount is protected by insurers and will never run out—even if a downturn affects the market value of your account or if you outlive the money in your Secure Income Portfolio. Your monthly income can also increase if markets rise and increase the value of your Secure Income Portfolio. As with any investment portfolio, the value of your account is subject to market fluctuations. You benefit from gains in rising markets, while the value of your monthly retirement income is protected in down markets.

One of the most attractive features of the SURS LIS is that it allows you to maintain access to retiree health benefits (if eligible) without giving up access to your entire account balance. In other words, you can convert a portion of your account balance at retirement to monthly lifetime income and qualify for health benefits. Both the money allocated to lifetime income (secured balance) and the non-secured account balance remain invested in the market. You retain complete control over the non-secured portion of your account. Maintaining eligibility for health insurance is discussed further on Page 27.

The SURS LIS is an investment option available to anyone in the Retirement Savings Plan. It is designed to help members meet their basic retirement needs by securing guaranteed income. However, if your goal for this plan is not to generate retirement income, the SURS LIS can be used as a target date fund without the secure income feature. To deactivate the secure income feature, access your RSP account at surs.org and set the Secure Income Level percentage to zero.

For more information regarding the SURS Lifetime Income Strategy, see the [SURS LIS brochure](#) or the [SURS LIS FAQs](#) at surs.org/rsp.

HOW TO ACCESS YOUR SURS LIS ACCOUNT

Step 1: From surs.org, click on Member Website button.

Step 2: Log in, and click on the View/Manage RSP Account.

Step 3: Click on SURS Lifetime Income Strategy.



Step 4: From the SURS LIS website, you can access the Income Estimator or Account Settings.



SURS CORE INVESTMENT OPTIONS

The [SURS core fund lineup](#) consists of 16 different investment options from best-in-class fund managers and diverse asset classes. SURS reviews the investments on an ongoing basis.

You will choose among funds in the major asset classes from conservative to aggressive investment risk. The funds' investment objectives, strategies and potential risks and returns vary. The funds are named to describe their different roles in a portfolio. For example, the SURS U.S. Core Bond Index Fund invests primarily in U.S. bonds. This makes it easier for you to choose a well-diversified investment mix based on your objectives and asset allocation strategy. It is very important for you to review the fund fact sheets to get the full picture of the role of each fund and the associated fees. In the notes section of each fact sheet the name of the underlying investment fund is provided. The fact sheets are provided in the [Investment Options Guide](#). More detailed fund information, including a prospectus for the specific fund, can be found by doing an online search of investment company websites.

Should I invest in the core funds?

Read more if you:

- Have your retirement income needs met elsewhere.
- Are able to monitor and rebalance your portfolio at least once a year.
- Want control to build your own investment portfolio.

The SURS Board of Trustees is responsible for the selection, retention, monitoring, and termination of the investment options, but considers recommendations from the Investment Committee. The Investment Committee has established a prudent process for reviewing and monitoring the plan's investment lineup to ensure it is compliant with the Defined Contribution Investment Policy Statement. The Investment Committee works with an independent external consultant to assist in its responsibilities, review the performance of the plan's investment options and review the administrative and operational elements.

MAKING YOUR INVESTMENT CHOICES AND MANAGING YOUR ACCOUNT

To manage your account, visit the Retirement Savings Plan website at surs.org. Log in through the Member Website login button. Then, click View/Manage Your RSP Account.

The RSP website is easy to use and allows you to:

- Make your initial SURS RSP investment selections.
- Manage / change your fund allocations at any time.
- Access the SURS LIS website where you can run income estimates or change account settings.
- View SURS RSP details, including access to real time statement (through previous day market close).
- Use interactive tools and calculators to help you set financial goals.

NEW MEMBERS/FIRST-TIME ENROLLEES



You must first choose the RSP as your SURS retirement plan by logging into your SURS member account at surs.org. Once you have chosen the RSP, you will be prompted to select your investment allocations.

The SURS RSP website is hosted by Voya Financial who serves as the Plan's recordkeeper. Access to the RSP website is available through single sign on capability through surs.org. A separate username and password is not necessary. However, if you access your RSP account through the Voya Mobile App, you will need a Personal Identification Number (PIN) which is issued to new members by Voya. The PIN is also necessary to manage your account through the SURS Defined Contribution Contact Center at (800) 613-9543.

UPDATING INVESTMENT OPTIONS

Step 1: Visit surs.org and click on the Member Website login button at the top of the page to log in to your SURS member website.

Step 2: Select View/Manage Your RSP Account link. From the Account tab, click on Manage Investments. Or, you can also click on the Manage Investments button under the Investment Details section of your RSP homepage.

If you prefer to make your selections via phone, you may also access your account by calling the SURS Defined Contribution Contact Center toll free at 800-613-9543. You will need your Voya-issued PIN to access your account by telephone.

DAILY ACCOUNT ADJUSTMENTS

Your RSP account will be credited with contributions that SURS receives on your behalf. Your account will also be charged for any distributions or expenses and adjusted to reflect the investment of your designated investment funds.

STATEMENTS

The RSP website provides 24/7 access to a real-time statement based on information as of market close on the previous business day. In addition, you can generate an online statement for a customized time period at any time. Generated statements can be printed or saved for your personal records. To generate an online statement, click on the Account tab, and then select Statement. In addition to online access, you will receive a quarterly unified statement from the recordkeeper. Quarterly statements are mailed to the home address on file and made available online. You should receive a notification in your Message Center notifying you that the online quarterly statement is available. Quarterly statements are typically available about one month after quarter end. If you prefer to "go green" and forgo the mailed version of the statement, click on My Profile from your RSP homepage and select Paperless or Mail Options under the Communication Preferences heading.

WITHDRAWAL OPTIONS

Should you end your employment, SURS will inform the recordkeeper. Your unvested employer contributions and earnings/losses will be forfeited immediately. You will receive a letter from SURS advising you of your options as a non-contributing member. If you are not retirement eligible (meeting age and vesting requirements) you must contact SURS if you would like to initiate a refund. If you are eligible for retirement, withdrawal forms are available at surs.org/rsp. After the original forms are returned to SURS, they will be used to coordinate your withdrawal instructions among the investment providers.

You also have the option to leave your money in the account so it can continue to earn investment returns until you are ready to retire or take a distribution. Contributions can be left on file until you reach the Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) age, which is as follows: born on or before 6/30/49, RMD age is 70 ½; born between 7/1/49-12/31/50, RMD age is 72; born on or after 1/1/51, RMD age is 73. The RMD age is scheduled to increase to age 75 for distributions after the year 2033.

If you end your employment and are later rehired, SURS will continue to use your current investment allocations unless you initiate a change. After you end employment, you can continue to make investment allocation changes on the RSP website.

In the event of your death, the beneficiaries on file at SURS will be contacted by SURS. A beneficiary designation form specific to the RSP must have been completed by you and be on file at SURS. If there is not a beneficiary designation form on file, your account balance will be payable to your estate.

Employment Ending?

If you are retirement eligible, forms are available at surs.org/rsp. If you are not retirement eligible, contact SURS if you would like to initiate a refund. Please refer to Page 31 for contact information.



CONTRIBUTIONS

EMPLOYEE CONTRIBUTIONS

Because SURS is a contributory system, you must contribute a percentage of your earnings to receive benefits. Your contributions are equal to 8% of your gross earnings, including earnings for overtime and summer sessions. Also, 8% will be deducted from any vacation payments you may receive from your employer — if you are paid for unused vacation days when you terminate employment. Police and firefighters also contribute at the rate of 8%.

Full-time community college employees (except City Colleges of Chicago) pay an additional 0.5% of earnings to fund a health insurance plan designed for community college retirees. This contribution is forwarded to the Department of Central Management Services and is not part of your SURS account.

Your employer is required to forward your contributions to SURS as soon as feasible. SURS then transfers these contributions to the recordkeeper.

TIMING OF CONTRIBUTIONS

The RSP website allows you to monitor the contributions to your RSP account, including the amount of the contribution and when these amounts were deposited. You will also be able to see whether they are employee or employer contributions, and to which payroll they apply.

There will be a delay between the end of the payroll period and the date of the contribution deposit. This is due to the time it takes the employer to process the payroll information and remit the contribution data and funds to SURS. This delay varies between employers according to their payroll processing schedules, and ranges from five to 30 days. Once the information and funds reach SURS and their accuracy is verified, they are forwarded to your account within three to five business days.

EXCLUSIVE BENEFIT OF PLAN PARTICIPANTS

All contributions to the Retirement Savings Plan are for the exclusive benefit of RSP participants.

SOCIAL SECURITY

Because SURS participants are not eligible for Social Security coverage, no Social Security taxes will be withheld from your earnings. However, if you began working for a SURS-covered employer on or after April 1, 1986, Medicare contributions will be withheld from gross earnings. Currently this contribution equals 1.45% of gross earnings.

EMPLOYER CONTRIBUTIONS

The state of Illinois shares the cost of providing benefits to SURS participants. These contributions equal 7.6% of your earnings. Currently, the entire 7.6% is invested in your retirement ac-

count. However, up to 1% of your earnings, as determined by the SURS Board of Trustees, can be set aside to finance your SURS disability benefits. An experience study is conducted every three years for purposes of adjusting this rate.

The state will forward the employer contributions to SURS monthly. The money will be sent to your investment service provider(s) along with your own contributions. The employer funds begin with your first full payroll period starting after SURS receives your election choosing the RSP. State funds do not accumulate on your behalf prior to that time.

EMPLOYEE ROLLOVER CONTRIBUTIONS

If you receive a lump-sum distribution from another employer's qualified retirement plan, you may deposit any or all of it to the RSP within 60 days of receipt, subject to the procedures established by the SURS Board of Trustees. In general, you can roll over amounts into the RSP from:

1. A tax qualified retirement plan
2. A Traditional or Roth IRA
3. A 403(b) plan
4. A 457 plan

Rollover contributions will be allocated to and become part of your RSP account and will be fully vested at all times. These rollover contributions are not accessible until you terminate your employment in the SURS system. You will not receive a state match on the rollover contributions. To make a rollover contribution, you should print and complete the RSP Roll-in form found on the SURS website.



SERVICE CREDIT

Although service credit is important when calculating Traditional and Portable benefit amounts, its effect on RSP participants is mainly in determining eligibility for benefits. For example, your employer contributions will be forfeited and sent back to SURS if you have not reached five years of service credit upon ending your employment.

The period used to calculate service credit begins Sept. 1 and ends Aug. 31. During this period, you may receive no more than one year of service credit. You can earn service credit for a fractional year of service, as shown in the chart at right.

SERVICE CREDIT	
Length of Employment	Service Credit Earned
15 or more calendar days in a month	1 month
1 or 2 months	1/4 year
3 to 5 months	1/2 year
6 to 7 months	3/4 year
8 to 12 months	1 year

QUALIFYING FOR MORE SERVICE CREDIT

The following sections explain how you may qualify for service credit in addition to your regular SURS employment. These possibilities include deferred leaves of absence, disability leave, unused sick leave, prior service, military service, other public employment (OPE), Illinois reciprocal system service and repayment of a refund. You must be currently employed by a SURS-covered employer to purchase service credit, unless you are repaying a refund.

If you think you may qualify for additional service, contact SURS as early in your career as possible. SURS can help you determine how to verify any additional service for which you may be eligible, and help you understand how this service may increase your retirement benefit.

DEFERRED LEAVES OF ABSENCE

Leaves With Pay

If you are granted a leave of absence with pay, you are protected under SURS. To receive full earnings credit, however, you must make the 8% employee contribution on any portion of your salary that you are forfeiting during the leave.

When the leave expires, you must return to work at a percentage of time equal to or greater than that immediately preceding the leave for at least eight consecutive months or a period of time equal to the leave, whichever is less. If you do not fulfill the return-from-leave requirement you will not be allowed to make contributions.

You will receive service credit even if you do not make these contributions. However, if your leave continues for more than three years and you do not make the leave contributions, your service credit may be adjusted.

Leaves Without Pay

To receive service and earnings credit for an unpaid leave, you must pay the employee contri-

Contributions on the salary you are forfeiting during the leave. This payment may be made as a lump sum later. Payment will require the payment of interest, which is compounded annually based on the effective rates.

Service credit provided by the leave contributions may not exceed three years in any 10-year period. When the leave expires, you must return to work at a percentage of time equal to or greater than that immediately preceding the leave for at least eight consecutive months or a period of time equal to the leave, whichever is less. SURS can calculate the cost for payment of the deferred leave after you have fulfilled this requirement.

DISABILITY LEAVE

You continue to receive full protection during the first 60 days of disability leave and while receiving disability or worker's compensation benefits, even though you do not make contributions. When your retirement annuity is calculated, for the purpose of determining final average earnings, SURS will assume your earnings are equal to the basic compensation on the date the disability occurs or the average earnings during the 24 months immediately preceding the month in which the disability occurs, whichever is greater. This applies only when retiring under the Illinois Retirement Systems Reciprocal Act.

UNUSED SICK LEAVE

You will receive additional service credit for any unused and unpaid sick leave earned in accordance with an employer's generally applicable sick leave policy if your retirement annuity begins within 60 days after you terminate your employment covered by SURS or one of the other systems subject to the Illinois Retirement Systems Reciprocal Act.

Your employer may pay you for a portion of your unused sick leave when you end employment. If so, you will receive additional service credit only for any unpaid portion.

Any payment you receive from your employer for sick leave is not earnings for retirement purposes and will not increase your retirement benefit.

However, if the sick leave payment has been collectively bargained between the employer and the recognized collective bargaining agent pursuant to the Illinois Educational Labor Relations Act, payment received during a period of up to two academic years for unused sick leave may be considered as earnings in accordance with the applicable collective bargaining agreement, subject to the 20% increase limitation in the final average earnings. Any unused sick leave considered as earnings in the final average earnings shall not be taken into account in calculating service credit.

Under this type of agreement, employer payment for unused sick leave received during any one or two of the four final average earnings (FAE) years would have the appropriate amount of SURS contributions deducted and would be considered earnings for SURS purposes. This applies only when retiring under the Illinois Retirement Systems Reciprocal Act.

UNUSED, UNPAID SICK LEAVE	
Additional Full Work Days	Service Credit
20 - 59 days	1/4 year
60 - 119 days	1/2 year
120 - 179 days	3/4 year
180 or more days	1 year

PRIOR SERVICE WITH ANOTHER SURS-COVERED EMPLOYER

You may purchase service credit for employment with another SURS-covered employer. This employment must have been at least 50% time and have been before you began SURS participation. The payment of this service credit is based on your full-time (or full-time equivalent) rate of pay on the date you began SURS participation and the contribution rate that was in effect during your prior employment. Your payment will also include interest. The interest is calculated as follows:

- 6% compounding annually from the date you began SURS participation through Aug. 31, 1982.
- Beginning Sept. 1, 1982, the interest compounds annually based on the effective rates. Interest compounds through the month in which the payment is made, regardless of the day of the month the payment is received (see Effective Interest Rate table at right).

MILITARY SERVICE

Military Leave

If you take a leave of absence for active duty military service that interrupts your SURS-covered employment, you will receive up to five years of service credit if both of the following are true:

- You enter military service immediately following a period of employment with a SURS-covered employer.
- You return to work with a SURS-covered employer within one year of receiving an honorable discharge.

In accordance with the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act of 1994 (USERRA), you may be eligible to make up any missing SURS contribution during your active duty military service. For more information, visit surs.org.

Purchase of Military Service Credit

If your military service occurred before you began SURS participation, and if you were a SURS participant on or before Sept. 1, 1974, you may be eligible to purchase active duty military service under the provision of SURS Other Public Employment (see next section). If your military service does not qualify as other public employment, you can purchase up to two years of service credit for your active duty military service.

You will pay both employee and employer contributions for the service based on your full-time (or full-time equivalent) rate of pay on the date you began SURS participation. Your payment will also include interest compounded annually based on the effective rates. This military service may be used to meet SURS minimum vesting requirements, but not to fulfill the five years of service credit required to receive employer contributions.

PRIOR SERVICE EFFECTIVE INTEREST RATE	
9/1/41 – 8/31/82	6.0%
9/1/82 – 8/31/88	8.0%
9/1/88 – 8/31/89	7.5%
9/1/89 – 8/31/96	8.0%
9/1/96 – 8/31/97	8.5%
9/1/97 – 8/31/98	9.0%
9/1/98 – 8/31/99	9.5%
9/1/99 – 8/31/00	10.0%
9/1/00 – 8/31/02	10.0%
9/1/02 – 8/31/03	9.0%
9/1/03 – 8/31/04	8.0%
9/1/04 – 6/30/05	8.0%
7/1/05 – 6/30/09	8.5%
7/1/09 – 6/30/10	8.0%
7/1/10 – 6/30/13	7.5%
7/1/13 – 6/30/17	7.0%
7/1/17 – 6/30/21	6.5%
7/1/21 – 6/30/22	6.0%
7/1/22 – 6/30/23	6.5%
7/1/23 – 6/30/24	6.5%
7/1/24 – 6/30/25	7.0%

To determine your eligibility for military service credit, submit a copy of your military separation papers to SURS (in many cases this is federal form DD-214). If you do not have a copy of your military separation papers, contact your local Veterans' Affairs office.

OTHER PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT (OPE)

If you were employed by another public agency before your SURS participation began, your eligibility to qualify for purchase of additional service credit depends in part on when you became a SURS participant.

The payment required to purchase each year of service credit is 8% of your full-time (or full-time equivalent) rate of pay on the date you began SURS participation. Your payment will also include interest which, as with prior service, is calculated as follows:

- 6% compounding annually from the date you began SURS participation through Aug. 31, 1982.
- Beginning Sept. 1, 1982, the interest compounds annually based on the effective rates. Interest compounds through the month in which the payment is made, regardless of the day of the month the payment is received (see Effective Interest Rate table on Page 14).

Eligibility

- You must contribute to SURS at least five years following the public employment. The five years may include service with the Teachers' Retirement System (TRS) or the Chicago Teachers' Pension Fund (CTPF).
- Other public employment (OPE) must be with a public school, college, or university in the U.S. If you began SURS participation on or before Sept. 1, 1974, you may also purchase employment with the U.S. government, a state government, a political subdivision of a state, or any agency or instrumentality of the foregoing.
- You may purchase up to 10 years of OPE, but not more than 2/3 of your direct SURS service credit. This 10-year maximum includes any out-of-state employment purchased with TRS or CTPF.
- If you began SURS participation on or after Sept. 5, 1975, the OPE must be full time, except under the following conditions:
 - If SURS participation terminated prior to Aug. 18, 1965, you are not eligible to purchase OPE.
 - If SURS participation terminated between Aug. 18, 1965, and June 30, 1967, the OPE must be full time.
 - If you were a SURS member between July 1, 1967, and Sept. 4, 1975, the OPE must be at least 50% time.
- You cannot qualify for a retirement pension or other benefit based on employer contributions from another retirement system (excluding Social Security) for the period of OPE you wish to purchase with SURS.
- Military service may be purchased as OPE if you began SURS participation on or before Sept. 1, 1974.
- OPE may not be used to meet SURS minimum vesting requirements.

RECIPROCITY WITH OTHER SYSTEMS

SURS has reciprocity only with other Illinois public retirement systems in determining your eligibility for, and amount of, SURS retirement and survivor benefits. These other systems are:

- Chicago Teachers' Pension Fund
- County Employees' Annuity and Benefit Fund of Cook County
- Forest Preserve District Employees' Annuity and Benefit Fund of Cook County
- General Assembly Retirement System
- Illinois Municipal Retirement Fund
- Judges' Retirement System of Illinois
- Laborers' Annuity and Benefit Fund of Chicago
- Metropolitan Water Reclamation District Retirement Fund
- Municipal Employees' Annuity and Benefit Fund of Chicago
- Park Employees' Annuity and Benefit Fund of Chicago
- State Employees' Retirement System of Illinois
- Teachers' Retirement System

The Illinois Retirement Systems Reciprocal Act ensures that pension credits remain in the system in which they are earned. You may not transfer your credits from one system to another. You will be entitled to a retirement annuity from each system, and your survivor(s) will qualify for a survivors annuity, if:

- You have at least one year of credit in more than one of the retirement systems; and
- Your combined service credits are equal to the longest minimum service requirement of any of the systems in which you have credit.

How Your Benefit Will Be Calculated Under Reciprocity

Each system will abide by its own law in calculating your retirement or survivor annuity. Your salary from all systems will be used to determine your average earnings. Each system will apply the benefit formula in effect on the date you last ended employment with an employer covered by the Reciprocal Act. Each system is responsible for calculating their proportionate share of the reciprocal benefit in accordance with applicable statutes and rules. As a member of the RSP, the SURS portion of your reciprocal retirement benefit will be calculated and paid by either Principal Financial Group or Alliance Bernstein (SURS LIS), except in the case of a lump-sum.

If you wish to apply for benefits under the Illinois Retirement Systems Reciprocal Act, you should request an application from each employing system at least 90 days before your planned retirement date. For more information, see the When Benefits Are Paid section, starting on Page 21.

REPAYMENT OF A SEPARATION REFUND

If you previously participated in SURS and accepted a separation refund, you may reinstate that service credit if you again become a participating employee of SURS or another retirement system covered by the Illinois Retirement Systems Reciprocal Act and continue as such for at least two years subsequent to the date of the refund.

DISABILITY BENEFITS

You may claim a disability benefit if, after you have at least two years of service credit, you are sick or injured and unable to work. If you become disabled due to an accident, however, there is no minimum service credit required to claim a disability benefit. Pregnancy and childbirth are treated as a disability. The same rules apply.

WHEN DISABILITY PAYMENTS BEGIN

If you qualify for disability payments, there is a 60-day waiting period before you are eligible to receive a payment from SURS. During this 60-day period you may be eligible to receive sick pay from your employer. Your benefits will begin on the later of:

- The date you have been disabled for 60 continuous calendar days, or
- The date your salary or sick leave payments end.

You need not use vacation pay before receiving disability benefits. However, if you think your disability is permanent, you may want to remain on full salary using vacation payments before your disability benefit begins. Your benefit cannot begin more than 30 days before the date SURS receives your application, unless the SURS Board of Trustees determines there was good cause for missing the filing deadline. If it has been determined that you are disabled, your payment will be processed on the last working day of the month. Your payment will be prorated if you become disabled after the first of the month.

For example, if you become disabled Nov. 7, the benefit would begin 60 days later on Jan. 6 assuming you were not eligible for sick leave or vacation pay beyond Jan. 6. Your benefit will begin to accrue Jan. 6 and will be a prorated benefit for the period between Jan. 6 and Jan. 31. Future payments will also be mailed at the end of each month and will include a benefit for the full month.

IF YOU RETURN TO WORK AND BECOME DISABLED AGAIN

If you have returned to work for less than 30 calendar days and have another disability due to the same cause, it will be considered a recurrence of the previous disability. In this case, you will not be required to meet another 60-day waiting period before benefits begin, but you will need to file a new disability application.

HOW TO APPLY FOR BENEFITS

If it appears you will be disabled for more than 60 days and your disability will extend beyond the period you are eligible for sick pay, you should request that your employer initiate a disability application on your behalf. The Application for Disability is a three-section application consisting of an Employer section, an Employee section and a Physician section. The Employer section is completed and submitted by the employer online. The Employee and Physician sections are provided to you by the employer.

When you and your employer have completed the required sections of the Disability Application, you should see your physician. Your physician should review the Employer Section concerning job requirements, complete the Attending Physician's Initial Statement of Disability, and attach any appropriate documentation. To avoid unnecessary delays, be sure all parts of the application

are completed according to the instructions. Incomplete applications will be returned to you. You may also be required to see a special examining physician selected by SURS.

You must submit continuing evidence of your disability as often as required. When your physician determines you are able to return to work, you must notify SURS immediately. Your employer will submit an Employer's Report of Disability that contains information including the last day you worked, the date your salary and sick leave payments will expire, and whether you will be eligible for workers' compensation or disability income insurance.

POLICE OFFICER LINE OF DUTY DISABILITY

If you are a police officer with a SURS-covered employer, you may be eligible for this benefit. For more information please call SURS.

YOUR DISABILITY BENEFIT AMOUNT

The amount of your benefit depends on how much you were earning when you became disabled. You will receive the greater of:

- 50% of your basic compensation on the day you became disabled, or
- 50% of your average earnings for the 24 months prior to the date you became disabled.

Basic compensation is your normal contract salary; it does not include your earnings for summer sessions or overtime. Your disability benefit is considered income and is subject to federal income taxes. Disability benefits are not subject to Illinois state income taxes.

BENEFIT REDUCTIONS AND OTHER LIMITATIONS

While receiving a disability benefit, you may receive other income, such as workers' compensation or disability income insurance. Your disability benefit will be reduced for:

- Workers' compensation or occupational disease payments for an on-the-job accident or occupational illness. Some exceptions apply.
- Disability income insurance payments under a policy paid for in whole or in part by your employer.

While you are disabled, your physician may allow you to return to work part time. Your payment will be reduced by the amount you earn in excess of the amount of your disability benefit. This ensures that your combined earnings and disability benefit do not exceed your earnings prior to your disability.

Example: Assume you are receiving a disability benefit of \$800 a month. Through part-time employment you earn an additional \$900 a month. Your disability benefit would be reduced by \$100, so that your total monthly income is \$1,600, or 100% of your earnings prior to your disability.

HOW RECIPROCAL SYSTEM PARTICIPATION AFFECTS DISABILITY

There is no reciprocity for disability benefits between SURS and other systems covered by the Illinois Retirement Systems Reciprocal Act. However, if you have service credit for employment in

either the Teachers' Retirement System (TRS) or the State Employees' Retirement System (SERS), it will be considered in determining your eligibility for disability benefits and how long they can be paid.

In addition, if you were "involuntarily transferred" by law to SURS from another system covered by the Reciprocal Act, your combined earnings and service are considered in determining your eligibility for disability benefits and how long they can be paid. You are considered to be involuntarily transferred if:

- You were an employee of the transferring government unit on the date your employer was transferred to coverage under SURS; or
- You accepted employment with the employer within six months after the transfer date.

HOW LONG YOUR DISABILITY BENEFIT LASTS

Your disability benefit will continue until the earlier of the following:

- You no longer meet the definition of disabled.
- You refuse to submit to reasonable physical examinations.
- You refuse to accept a position offered by your employer, even though your disability would not preclude you from performing the duties of that position.
- You have received 50% of your total earnings while a participant of SURS, TRS, or SERS.
- Sept. 1 of the year following your 70th birthday. However, if you become disabled after age 65, you may receive a benefit for up to five years, assuming you continue to be disabled and have not reached the maximum earnings amount described above.
- You apply for retirement or refund, or you pass away.

OPTIONS AVAILABLE AFTER YOUR DISABILITY BENEFIT STOPS

If you are still disabled when your disability benefit stops, you have three options:

1. Resign your position and apply for a refund of your account value.
2. Leave your contributions on deposit; the money continues to gain any investment growth earned and can be withdrawn later or be paid to your beneficiary if you die. Ultimately, it must be paid by April 1 following the year you reach age 72
3. Apply for a retirement annuity to begin at age 62 if you have at least five years, but less than eight years of service. If you have eight or more years of service, you may begin receiving an annuity as early as age 55.

ELIGIBILITY FOR OTHER BENEFITS

You continue to earn service credit while on disability.

MEDICAL INSURANCE PREMIUM PAYMENTS

During the first four months of your disability, contact your employer's insurance office for information about medical premium payments. After you have been continuously disabled for four months, MyBenefits will bill you directly.

BENEFITS PAID AFTER YOUR DEATH

YOUR DESIGNATED BENEFICIARY

As a general rule, your designated beneficiary is your surviving spouse or civil union partner. If you are not married, or if your spouse consents to the designation of another beneficiary, your beneficiary will be the person you designate to receive any lump-sum benefits payable upon your death. To designate, revoke or change your beneficiary, you must file an RSP Beneficiary Designation form with SURS. You may designate both primary and contingent beneficiaries. If you are married, your spouse must consent to your designation of a different beneficiary.

If your spouse had consented to your designation of a different beneficiary, and the beneficiary dies before you or before receiving complete payment of your benefits, your beneficiary will be your surviving spouse. If you do not designate a beneficiary, your beneficiary will be your surviving spouse. If you do not have a surviving spouse, your beneficiary will be your estate.

DEATH BEFORE RETIREMENT

If you pass away before retirement, a lump-sum death benefit will be payable to your spouse, civil union partner or alternate designated beneficiary. A surviving spouse or civil union partner may elect to use the lump-sum death benefit to purchase an annuity contract through the annuity provider, Principal Financial Group. If you do not have a spouse or civil union partner, your designated beneficiaries must receive the death benefit in a lump sum.

It is important to note that the surviving spouse must be receiving lifetime income in order to continue participation in the health insurance program (if eligible).

Lump-Sum Death Benefit Amount

Active Members

- If your death occurs while actively employed and before establishing one and a half years of service credit, the death benefit is the current value of employee accumulations.
- If your death occurs while actively employed and after establishing one and a half years of service credit, the death benefit is the current value of employee and employer accumulations.

Terminated Members

- If your employment terminates prior to your death and you had established less than five years of service credit, the death benefit is the current value of employee accumulations.
- If your employment terminates prior to your death and you had established *at least five years* of service credit, the death benefit is the current value of employee and employer accumulations.

DEATH AFTER RETIREMENT

If your death occurs after you have retired, benefits payable to your spouse, civil union partner or designated beneficiaries will be determined based on the form of distribution selected at the time of your retirement.

WHEN BENEFITS ARE PAID

Your vested plan benefit becomes payable when you retire or when you terminate employment. You cannot receive plan benefits while actively employed by a SURS-covered employer. The plan does not allow for “hardship withdrawals” or loans. If you are invested in the SURS LIS, partial withdrawals are permitted after you have activated your benefit.

DISTRIBUTION OPTIONS

Distributions Prior to Normal Retirement Age

If you have at least five years of service credit and you leave your job, you may choose one of the following options:

- Take a lump-sum taxable distribution of your account.
- Leave your account balance in the plan until you reach normal retirement age, assuming you have the required years of service and wish to receive a lifetime monthly benefit.
- Leave your account balance in the plan and take a lump-sum distribution at a later date.

If you leave your vested account balance in the plan until you reach normal retirement age, your benefit will be paid as described below.

Distributions After Normal Retirement Age

In the Retirement Savings Plan, there are three different distribution options available at retirement time. You can choose to receive guaranteed lifetime income from the SURS Lifetime Income Strategy (LIS) or a lifetime annuity. Both of these income options allow you to participate in the retiree health insurance program if you are eligible. In addition to the lifetime income distribution options, there is also a lump-sum option available for members who have other income sources in place to meet basic retirement needs.

You qualify for lifetime monthly income:

- If you are at least age 55 and have eight or more years of service.
- If you are at least age 62 and have five or more years of service.
- At any age when you achieve 30 years of service.
- At age 50 with at least 25 years of service as a police officer or firefighter covered by SURS.

Lump Sum

Receive a total lump-sum payment of your account value (including the employer matching contributions). Please note: if you choose to take a lump sum, you give up your right to retiree health insurance offered through SURS. You do not have to elect your distribution type until you retire. These options are reviewed in detail during preretirement counseling sessions. In order to maintain eligibility for retiree health insurance, you must be receiving lifetime monthly income.

The lifetime income options are explained in detail on the next few pages.

Who to Contact

The process for initiating a retirement distribution starts with SURS. Please refer to Page 31 for contact information.



LIFETIME INCOME DISTRIBUTION FROM SURS LIFETIME INCOME STRATEGY (LIS)

The SURS LIS offers a lifetime income option for RSP members. The SURS LIS is a flexible income solution that can be customized to fit your retirement needs. For example, you can:

- Convert 100% of your account balance to lifetime income with SURS LIS. With this option, you will maintain eligibility for retiree health insurance, if you are eligible.
- Convert a portion of your account balance to lifetime income with SURS LIS. If at least 50% of the LIS balance is in the LIS Secure Income Portfolio and converted to lifetime income at retirement, you will maintain eligibility for retiree health insurance, if eligible. You will continue to have control over the remaining non-secured portion of your account. After your retirement has been activated, the non-secured portion can remain invested in the LIS non-secure portfolio, be transferred to any of the funds within the SURS core fund lineup or taken as a partial lump-sum distribution as needed.

The SURS LIS offers single-life and joint and survivor forms of income, depending on your marital status at retirement time:

- If you are married, the normal form of income distribution in the Lifetime Income Strategy is a 100% joint and survivor benefit. If you pass away, your survivor would continue to receive 100% of your monthly income for the rest of his/her life. You have the option of taking a single-life income option with spousal consent.
- If you are not married when you retire, you must take a single-life income option. If you pass away, any existing account balance will be paid as a death benefit to your named beneficiary.

What does it mean to “activate” my benefit?

Activation = the administrative process of arranging for receipt of your lifetime income (Guaranteed Income Withdrawal Amount) at retirement. To activate, you must be terminated from employment and be at least 60 years of age. You cannot take ad hoc distributions from the LIS or make changes to your investments until you have activated your benefit.

For more information on the SURS Lifetime Income Strategy, please see Page 5.

LIFETIME ANNUITY — PRINCIPAL FINANCIAL GROUP

You may purchase a lifetime annuity with 100% of your account value at retirement. Taking a lifetime monthly benefit in the form of an annuity will maintain your eligibility for retiree health insurance, if you meet eligibility requirements.

Normal Form of Payment

With a lifetime annuity, the normal form of payment is based on your marital status as of your distribution date.

- If you are single on your distribution date, you will receive a single life benefit that provides monthly payments for your life. This form of payment does not provide survivor benefits.
- If you are married, your benefit will be in the form of a Joint & Survivor benefit. This form provides monthly payments for life for you, and after you die, your surviving spouse may receive continued monthly payments for his/her life.

Optional Form of Payment

To choose an optional form of payment, you must file a written election with SURS during the 90-day election period before your distribution date. You may revoke any previous election for an optional form of payment and reinstate the normal form of payment at any time during this 90-day period.

If you are married and wish to choose a form of payment that designates a beneficiary other than your surviving spouse, your spouse must consent to this in writing. Your spouse's consent must acknowledge your election and must be witnessed by a Notary Public. Spousal consent is not required if:

- You and your spouse are legally separated or you have been abandoned (within the meaning of local law) and you have a court order to that effect;
- You provide satisfactory proof that the spouse's consent cannot be obtained because there is no spouse, or your spouse cannot be located or due to some other approved circumstance.

Your spouse's consent to one of the optional forms of payment described above is irrevocable.

Before your distribution date, you will receive a written explanation of all available forms of payment, as well as your right to choose one of the plan's optional forms of payment, and your spouse's rights.

PRINCIPAL FINANCIAL GROUP'S LIFETIME ANNUITY OPTIONS

Single-Life Annuity	You receive monthly payments for life. This is an option for married participants.
Single-Life Annuity with a Guaranteed Period	You receive monthly payments for life. If you die before the end of your chosen guaranteed period of 10, 15, or 20 years, monthly payments will continue to your designated beneficiary until the end of the guaranteed period.
50% or 100% Joint & Survivor Annuity	You receive monthly payments for life, with continued monthly payments equal to 50% or 100% of your monthly benefit paid to your designated beneficiary for life.
50% or 100% Joint & Survivor Annuity with a Guaranteed Period	As with the regular Joint & Survivor Annuity, you receive monthly payments for life. If you pass away within the chosen guarantee period (10, 15 or 20 years), the full monthly benefit will continue to be paid to your designated beneficiary (or contingent beneficiary) through the end of the guarantee period. If your originally designated beneficiary is still living at the end of the guarantee period, the joint and survivor benefit of 50% or 100% will be paid for the remainder of his or her life.

Hybrid Options

If you choose to invest in the Lifetime Income Strategy and receive LIS income in retirement, you have some additional flexibility.

For example, you can elect to convert a portion of your account balance to lifetime income from the LIS Secure Income Portfolio and leave the remaining assets invested in the non-secure portfolio. After you have activated your LIS income and have reached age 60, you will have control over the remaining assets in the portfolio. You will have the option to leave your money invested in the non-secure portfolio, or you can also move the assets into the core fund investments. You can take ad-hoc distributions as needed. With this hybrid option, you must convert at least 50% of your SURS LIS account balance to secure income in order to retain eligibility for health insurance.

You also have the option to convert at least 50% of your LIS account balance to lifetime income, and purchase an annuity with 100% of the remaining assets in your account.

TIAA's Lifetime Annuity Option

An annuity option with TIAA is available for members holding assets in the individually controlled Group Annuity (GRA) contracts or in the TIAA Traditional fund. The TIAA annuity option is limited to assets held in these specific accounts prior to transition to Voya in 2020. If you have assets in these specific TIAA investments, please contact TIAA for additional information. Contact information is on Page 31.

COMPARISON: LIS VS. ANNUITY

It is important to understand the differences between the two income options offered in the Retirement Savings Plan, the SURS LIS and a lifetime annuity.

SURS LIS

- Custom flexible investment strategy that automatically adjusts as you age. Investments become more conservative and begin to secure lifetime income as you near your target retirement age.
- Option to secure income over time protects against point-in-time risk
- At retirement time, you receive lifetime monthly income (Guaranteed Income Withdrawal Amount) based on the amount of money you have secured (or the amount you convert at retirement time) in the LIS Secure Income Portfolio.

Lifetime Annuity

- Account balance is converted to a lifetime monthly benefit. The amount of income you receive is based on your account balance and annuity payout rates on the day you retire. You receive the determined amount each month as long as you live.

	SURS Lifetime Income Strategy (LIS) – Lifetime Monthly Income	Lifetime Annuity – Principal Financial
Guaranteed Lifetime Income?	YES	YES
Do I give up entire account balance?	NO – can convert all or a portion to income while maintaining access to all or a portion of account balance.	YES – must purchase annuity with 100% of account balance.*
Will my monthly benefit increase?	POSSIBLY – with market gains monthly benefit has potential to increase over time.	NO
Are survivor benefits available?	YES – 100% Joint and Survivor option available to spouse only. Monthly benefit reduced to provide benefit.	YES – 50% or 100% Joint and Survivor option available to spouse or named survivor with spouse consent. Monthly benefit reduced to provide benefit.
Is there a death benefit? (lump sum)	YES – after member and joint & survivor payments end due to death, the market value, if any remains, is paid to beneficiary	NO – benefit ends after member and survivor pass away

REINSTATEMENT OF SERVICE

If you do not take a distribution of your vested account when you leave your job, you will retain all service credit earned. However, if you have less than five years of service credit, any employer (state) contributions in your account will be forfeited. If you are later reemployed by a SURS-covered employer, any employer (state) contributions you previously forfeited will be reinstated as soon as practicable. The employer contributions that are reinstated include earnings accumulated while originally in the member's account. There are no additional earnings/interest credited for the period that these contributions were not in the member's account.

If you **do** take a distribution of your vested account when you leave your job, and are later reemployed by a SURS-covered employer or reciprocal system for at least two years, you may restore your forfeited service and contributions if you remain reemployed and repay the amount of your refund.

If you are reemployed after receiving a refund under the Traditional Benefit Plan, you may repay the amount of your distribution to the RSP and have your prior service restored after you have remained reemployed for at least two years. This assumes you withdrew prior to the date the retirement plan choice was available (in general, prior to April 1, 1998) and that, upon your return, you chose the RSP as your permanent option.

ROLLOVERS

To defer taxes on your refund, you may want to "roll over" or transfer your refund directly into a Traditional Individual Retirement Account (IRA) or other qualifying 401(a), 403(b) or 457(b) plan within 60 days of receiving it. If you do not make a direct transfer or roll over your refund, federal law requires your investment service provider to withhold 20% and may require you to pay an additional federal tax penalty of 10% if you are under the age of 59 1/2. Previously taxed contributions can be rolled over. Consult your tax advisor if you have questions about rolling over your refund.

INCOME TAX INFORMATION

Federal Income Taxes

Generally, most of your monthly benefit will be taxable as ordinary income for federal income tax purposes, beginning with the first payment you receive. If you previously paid federal income taxes on some contributions, such as those made before 1981, they will not be taxed again. Instead these contributions will be prorated over your future monthly benefit payments according to Internal Revenue Service (IRS) procedures. IRS Form 1099-R, which you will receive each January, shows the gross and taxable portions of your annuity and the amount of federal income taxes withheld.

State of Illinois Income Taxes

Your retirement benefit from SURS is not subject to Illinois income tax. However, SURS benefits may be taxable by other states. If you do not live in Illinois, or you plan to move after retirement, check with your state's Department of Revenue to find out if your benefit is taxable.

HEALTH INSURANCE

AT RETIREMENT

Certain SURS retirees and their survivors may qualify for health insurance benefits through their former employment. While no universal health coverage is offered to all retirees, SURS helps administer the benefits for some of these programs.

RSP members who are entitled to receive health insurance benefits in retirement, and wish to do so, must be receiving lifetime income and do the following at retirement:

1. If you have assets in the SURS Lifetime Income Strategy, convert at least 50% of your SURS LIS account balance to secure income.
2. If you have assets in the core funds, annuitize 100% of those assets or move them to the SURS LIS to be used in the SURS LIS calculation.

A combination of 1 and 2 is also permitted. You may convert at least 50% of your SURS LIS account balance to secure income and purchase an annuity with 100% of your assets that are invested in the SURS core funds.

This information is discussed in detail during pre-retirement counseling.

COMMUNITY COLLEGE RETIREE HEALTH INSURANCE

Full-time active community college employees* pay 0.5% of gross earnings to help fund a health plan for retirees of community colleges called the College Insurance Program (CIP). SURS acts as agent in this regard by forwarding the 0.5% payment to Central Management Services (CMS), a division of Illinois state government that oversees such benefits.

SURS community college retirees may be eligible for the CIP if their employment was considered to be full time and eligible for benefits.

Enrollment for eligible community college retirees is part of the retirement process, and decisions about participation may be made at retirement time. Any premiums for you or your dependents will be billed to you. Details about this coverage may be obtained by visiting [MyBenefits.illinois.gov](https://mybenefits.illinois.gov).

*Note that employees of the City Colleges of Chicago do not participate in the CIP. If you retire from the City Colleges of Chicago, contact their insurance office for information about health insurance benefits available to you.

STATE OF ILLINOIS RETIREE HEALTH INSURANCE

SURS retirees who have at least five years of service with a SURS-covered university or state agency are eligible to participate in the State of Illinois Group Insurance Program at the time of retirement if they annuitize.

Once the initial five-year eligibility requirement is met, additional qualified service years will help decrease the premium cost to the member.

The following service qualifies towards the insurance years used to determine the cost of health insurance premiums:

- Service earned in the course of employment with a SURS-covered employer, including community colleges.
- Service credit purchased with SURS prior to retirement, including:
 - Service prior to certification with SURS (prior service)
 - Military service
 - Repayment of a refund
 - Other public employment
 - Service with the State Employees' Retirement System of Illinois (SRS) if retiring under the Retirement Systems Reciprocal Act.
 - The state of Illinois contributes 5% of the premium cost for each year of qualified service the retiree has attained.

For example, Richard retires through SURS with 12 years of qualified service. The state will pay 60% of his monthly health insurance premium (5% x 12 years of service). Richard will pay the remaining 40%.

State insurance eligible members who retire with 20 or more years of qualified service will receive premium free health insurance. Members who were actively employed on July 7, 1997, may also qualify for premium-free health insurance with less than 20 years of service under special provisions of Public Act 91-395.

Premiums for eligible dependent coverage will be billed to the member. Should a dependent become a survivor benefit recipient when the member dies, the health insurance will transfer to them as long as they continue to receive a monthly survivor benefit. Survivor benefit recipients of retirees who had state insurance are eligible for state insurance at the same rate as the original member.

Health insurance benefits available to retirees under the State of Illinois Insurance Program and College Insurance Program (CIP) are administered by the Department of Central Management Services (CMS). Current benefit details may be obtained by accessing MyBenefits at [MyBenefits.illinois.gov](https://mybenefits.illinois.gov). If you have questions, please contact MyBenefits service center toll free at 1-844-251-1777 or TTY toll free at 1-844-251-1778.

OTHER INFORMATION

PLAN SPONSOR

SURS is the official Plan Sponsor of the RSP. In that capacity, SURS enrolls plan participants, sends contributions to the recordkeeper, and performs other required duties. You must notify SURS to change a beneficiary designation or to change your address. You must also notify SURS to elect a distribution method.

SURS has discretionary and final authority to determine all questions concerning eligibility and contributions to the plan, to make factual findings, to interpret and construe all plan terms, and to render decisions on disputes arising under the plan and all questions concerning plan administration.

TOTAL PLAN CONTRIBUTION

All employee contributions will be forwarded to SURS prior to being forwarded to the investment service providers. The total contribution made on behalf of each plan participant, including employer contributions, will be determined by SURS law. This determination by SURS is final and binding on all plan participants, as well as their beneficiaries or contingent beneficiaries, and any other person claiming an interest in the plan.

PLAN AMENDMENT AND/OR TERMINATION

SURS expects to continue this plan indefinitely, but retains the right to amend, modify, or terminate it. Employers may discontinue contributions under the plan. Although SURS retains the right to amend this plan, no amendments can be made that would reduce your account balance.

If the plan is terminated, you will become 100% vested in all contributions and will have the right to participate in the other retirement programs offered by SURS.

LOANS, GARNISHMENT, BANKRUPTCY

Your creditors generally may not attach, garnish, or otherwise interfere with your plan account. Your interests in your account may not be sold, used as collateral for a loan, given away, or be otherwise transferred until you are entitled to take a distribution. They are also protected from seizure in bankruptcy and other court proceedings.

DIVORCE

Under state law, SURS benefits may not be paid to anyone other than the member, except to an alternate payee named in a Qualified Illinois Domestic Relations Order (QILDRO). SURS can accept QILDROs as of July 1, 1999. It is the member's obligation to honor a divorce decree that directs payments to an ex-spouse. You or your attorney may contact SURS two to three months prior to a divorce court proceeding to receive the informational packet regarding QILDROs.

WITHHOLDING ORDERS

Once disability or retirement benefits become payable to you, the court may issue a withholding order directing SURS to pay the court clerk certain amounts to cover any delinquency in support payments to your spouse or children.

APPEAL PROCEDURE

If your claim for disability, retirement, or refund benefits is denied, or if you disagree with the amount of the benefit, you or your attorney may file a petition for written appeal and a hearing before the Claims Committee of the SURS Board of Trustees. You should also request a copy of the Hearing Rule established by the board.

SURS will notify you of the trustees' final decision. If you are not satisfied with this decision, you may file a petition with the Circuit Court of Champaign County, Ill., requesting that the court review the trustees' decision under the Illinois Administrative Review Law. You must file this petition within 35 days after the trustees' decision has been served upon you.

COUNSELING REQUESTS

With a SURS retirement counselor

Members who are within four years of retirement can schedule a private appointment with a SURS retirement counselor. These meetings are 45 minutes in length and are specific to the member's personal SURS history. Retirement income distribution options, death and survivor benefits, insurance, and many other topics are reviewed. Members are limited to one counseling session every 12 months.

These meetings are conducted at your institution, at the SURS office, by telephone, or virtually through Microsoft Teams. Log in to the SURS Member Website or call SURS to schedule an appointment. Retirement projection illustrations are provided during pre-retirement counseling appointments.

With your investment service provider(s)

Members at any point in their career may schedule an appointment for a confidential consultation with a SURS Defined Contribution representative to discuss retirement planning goals and receive guidance on investment options. To schedule an appointment, go to sursrsp.timetap.com.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Our employees are required to follow procedures with respect to maintaining the confidentiality of our members' non-public personal information. Additionally, we maintain physical, electronic and procedural safeguards to protect information. Information stored, processed, given to and created by the State Universities Retirement System may be determined to be a matter of public record and may be subject to the state of Illinois Freedom of Information Act (IL FOIA)(5 ILCS 140/1).

WHO TO CONTACT

SURS: 800-275-7877 OR SURS.ORG

- Changes to address and other personal information.
- Changes in designated beneficiaries.
- Initiating/coordinating withdrawals.
- Guidance preparing for retirement.
- Initiate retirement benefit or distribution.

Visit surs.org

- Access secure member account by clicking on Member Website button.
- Pre-retirement counseling appointments can be made on Member Website.
- Click on View/Manage My RSP Account. Monitor account, make investment allocation changes, access Retirement Calculator and other tools.

SURS LIFETIME INCOME STRATEGY WEBSITE

- From surs.org, click on Member Website button. Log in, and click on the View/Manage RSP Account. Click on SURS Lifetime Income Strategy.
- From the SURS LIS website, you can access the Income Estimator or Account Settings.

SURS DEFINED CONTRIBUTION CONTACT CENTER: 800-613-9543

- General questions regarding SURS RSP or SURS Deferred Compensation Plan.
- Request retirement projections if you have assets in the SURS Lifetime Income Strategy.
- Make investment allocation changes (you must have your PIN to make changes via telephone).
- Questions about investment options or investment guidance.
- Request retirement projections if you have assets in the SURS Lifetime Income Strategy.
- To schedule an individual session with a SURS Defined Contribution representative, go to sursrsp.timetap.com.

PRINCIPAL FINANCIAL GROUP

- Provider of monthly annuities
- Annuity illustrations are provided by SURS counselors during pre-retirement counseling. To request an additional illustration, please send a secure email by logging in to your SURS Member Website. Annuity illustrations can only be generated one to two months into the future.

TIAA: 800-842-2776 OR TIAA.ORG

- Provider of monthly annuities only available for members who had frozen assets with TIAA prior to the September 2020 conversion.
- Request illustrations for annuity options at retirement.

730 3rd Avenue, New York, NY 10017-3206
888-219-8310

ABOUT SURS

SURS office is located at 1901 Fox Dr., Champaign, IL 61820. Office hours are 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday. Thursday hours are 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

MAILING ADDRESS

SURS
1901 Fox Drive
Champaign, IL 61820-7333

Please include your SURS Member ID or the last four digits of your Social Security number with all correspondence.

TELEPHONE

Toll free: 800-275-7877
Direct: 217-378-8800
Fax: 217-378-9800

SURS WEBSITE

surs.org

For the most up-to-date information about SURS, visit our website. Updates to this site ensure timely communication of newly proposed legislation, recent newsletters, important information about benefits, various forms, and other topics pertaining to SURS members.

Register for the SURS Member Website to check on your summary of benefits, view your employment history, view your earnings history, and update your personal information. To register, visit surs.org and click on Member Login in the top right. Follow registration instructions.

NEWSLETTER

SURS publishes the Advocate to inform benefit recipients about legislation, funding, insurance, federal income tax withholding notification and other relevant information. This newsletter may be viewed online at surs.org.

CURRENT SURS-COVERED EMPLOYERS

Black Hawk College (Moline)
Carl Sandburg College (Galesburg)
Chicago State University
City Colleges of Chicago
College of DuPage (Glen Ellyn)
College of Lake County (Grayslake)
Danville Area Community College
Eastern Illinois University (Charleston)
Elgin Community College
Governors State University (University Park)
Heartland Community College (Normal)
Highland Community College (Freeport)
ILCS Section 15-107(c) Members (Springfield)
ILCS Section 15-107(l) Members (Springfield)
Illinois Board of Examiners (Naperville)
Illinois Board of Higher Education (Springfield)
Illinois Central College (Peoria)
Illinois Department of Innovation and Technology (Springfield)
Illinois Community College Board (Springfield)
Illinois Community College Trustee Association (Springfield)
Illinois Eastern Community Colleges
Illinois Mathematics & Science Academy (Aurora)
Illinois State University (Normal)
Illinois Valley Community College (Oglesby)
John A Logan College (Carterville)
John Wood Community College (Quincy)
Joliet Junior College
Kankakee Community College
Kaskaskia College (Centralia)
Kishwaukee College (Malta)
Lake Land College (Mattoon)
Lewis & Clark Community College (Godfrey)
Lincoln Land Community College (Springfield)
McHenry County College (Crystal Lake)
Moraine Valley Community College (Palos Hills)
Morton College (Cicero)
Northeastern Illinois University (Chicago)
Northern Illinois University (DeKalb)
Northern Illinois University Foundation (DeKalb)
Oakton College (Des Plaines)
Parkland College (Champaign)
Prairie State College (Chicago Heights)
Rend Lake College (Ina)
Richland Community College (Decatur)
Rock Valley College (Rockford)
Sauk Valley College (Dixon)
Shawnee College (Ullin)
South Suburban College (South Holland)
Southeastern Illinois College (Harrisburg)
Southern Illinois University - Carbondale
Southern Illinois University - Edwardsville
Southwestern Illinois College (Belleville)
Spoon River College (Canton)
State Universities Civil Service System (Urbana)
State Universities Retirement System (Champaign)
Triton College (River Grove)
University of Illinois - Chicago
University of Illinois - Springfield
University of Illinois - Urbana-Champaign
University of Illinois Alumni Association (Urbana)
University of Illinois Foundation (Urbana)
Waubonsee Community College (Sugar Grove)
Western Illinois University (Macomb)
William Rainey Harper College (Palatine)

LOCATION MAP

The State Universities Retirement System office is located at 1901 Fox Drive, Champaign, IL. Be sure to schedule an appointment if you plan to visit us.



State Universities Retirement System of Illinois

1901 Fox Drive
Champaign, IL 61820-7333

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