

News for Active & Retired Members of the Baltimore City Employees' Retirement System

Retirement *Today*

Spring 2025



A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Dear Active Members, Retirees, and Beneficiaries,

Welcome to the Spring edition of Retirement Today!

Since our newsletter last fall, we've seen significant shifts in the political and economic landscape. During times of change, it's natural to have questions about your financial future—but I want to reassure you that ERS remains steadfast in our mission to protect your retirement assets and work toward the best outcomes for all of our members.

If you have any concerns about your retirement plan or want to make sure you're on track for a secure future, I encourage you to schedule a one-on-one appointment with one of our retirement analysts or attend one of the educational sessions listed in this newsletter. We now offer both in-person and virtual options to meet your needs, and we're here to help you make the most informed decisions possible.

As we move through tax season, it's also a great time to review your beneficiary information and ensure your records are up to date. Keeping your information current is an important step in protecting your benefits and planning with peace of mind.

In the fall, we launched our first electronic edition of Retirement Today. If you haven't yet provided us with your email address, we encourage you to do so. By sharing your email, you'll receive important updates more quickly and conveniently than by mail alone. If you'd prefer to receive the newsletter electronically instead of by mail, please follow the instructions in this issue to opt out of print delivery.

Thank you for being a valued member of the ERS community. We appreciate your trust and look forward to continuing to support your retirement journey.

Warm regards,

David A. Randall
Executive Director

BENEFIT PAYDATES
2025

- May: 05/01/25
- June: 05/30/25
- July: 07/01/25
- August: 08/01/25
- September: 09/01/25
- October: 10/01/25
- November: 10/31/25
- December: 12/01/2025

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Making the Most of Mid-Year:
4 Ways to Refocus, Recharge, and Plan Ahead

It's hard to believe, but we're already approaching the halfway mark of the year. Spring offers a great opportunity to pause, reflect, and re-engage with your long-term goals. Whether you're just getting started in your career or preparing for retirement in the next few years, this is the perfect time to do a light mid-year check-in on your financial well-being. Here are four simple ways to make the most of this moment and set yourself up for success in the months ahead:



1. Revisit Your Retirement Goals

Have your retirement plans shifted in the past few months? Have you changed jobs, added new responsibilities, or started thinking differently about your future timeline?

Take this opportunity to look at your projected retirement date and consider whether it still feels aligned with your current circumstances and future plans. Our team is available if you'd like to talk through your options or get a better understanding of what to expect when retirement approaches.

2. Review Your Retirement Contributions

For many people, a pay increase or tax refund this time of year offers a great opportunity to reassess their contributions. Even a small increase can make a meaningful impact on your long-term retirement benefit.

This is also a good time to double-check that you understand your plan's structure, benefits, and how contributions are calculated. If you're unsure, consider attending one of our upcoming workshops (see p. 6). We're here to help you make informed choices that match your goals.

3. Check Your Progress Toward Financial Milestones

In addition to retirement savings, consider doing a quick review of your broader financial picture. Are you working toward paying down debt? Saving for a home or college tuition? Building an emergency fund? Revisiting your financial milestones—even briefly—can help you stay grounded and motivated. Use this time to acknowledge your progress, even if you're still far from your end goal. Small steps still count.

4. Take Advantage of Educational Resources

One of the best ways to feel empowered about your retirement future is to stay informed. Whether you prefer to learn through in-person workshops, webinars, one-on-one counseling, or written materials, our team offers a range of resources to support your journey.

Don't wait until the end of the year to get organized or ask questions. Mid-year is a great time to lean into your future planning while there's still plenty of time left to act.

We're Here to Help

This season, give yourself the gift of clarity. A few small steps now can help you feel more confident and prepared, no matter where you are in your retirement journey.

Ready to learn more? See our list of upcoming workshops and events on p. 6 or contact us directly if you'd like to schedule time with a retirement specialist at 443. 984.3200 or contacters@bcers.org.

Spring Retirement Check-In: 3 Ways to Refresh Your Financial Life This Season

As the days grow longer and the weather begins to warm, many of us take time to refresh our homes, schedules, and routines. But spring isn't just for cleaning closets—it's also a great opportunity to check in on your financial well-being and make sure your retirement plans are organized and up to date.

Just like decluttering your home helps create peace of mind, reviewing your retirement records and organizing key information can reduce stress and set you up for a smoother, more confident future. Whether retirement is years away or just around the corner, here are three simple but impactful steps you can take this spring to make sure everything is in order.



1. Update Your Contact Information and Beneficiaries

Life moves quickly—and sometimes, our records don't keep up. If you've changed your address, phone number, or email in the last year, take a few minutes to make sure your retirement system has your most current contact information on file. This ensures you'll receive important updates, statements, and correspondence about your account.

It's also a good time to review your beneficiary designations. These are the individuals who will receive your retirement benefits in the event of your passing. Because beneficiary designations take legal precedence over what's written in your will, it's essential that they're kept up to date. If you've recently married, divorced, or experienced any other life change, you may want to confirm that your listed beneficiaries reflect your current wishes.

2. Log In to Your Retirement Portal and Explore the Tools

Have you logged into the Member Self-Service (MSS) portal? Spring is a great time to check in. Once logged in, you can:

- Review your contribution history
- Access or print statements
- Run a retirement estimate
- Update your contact or beneficiary information

If you haven't set up your online account yet, consider doing it now. It's a quick and easy way to stay connected to your retirement benefits and gives you access to important tools and resources 24/7.

3. Get Your Documents Organized

Just like paper clutter builds up at home, retirement-related documents can pile up over time. Take a few moments to sort through your files and shred any outdated paperwork you no longer need. Keep your current statements, plan documents, and any correspondence in a designated folder—whether physical or digital.

Having a simple system in place now will make it easier to locate documents when you need them. It also helps your loved ones in the event they need to step in and assist you. If you're not sure what to keep or toss, a general rule is to hang on to your most recent statements, your summary plan description, and any important correspondence or legal documents related to your account.

A Small Refresh, A Big Step Toward Peace of Mind

Spring is the season of renewal—and while organizing retirement information may not be as satisfying as scrubbing baseboards, it's an investment in your future self. These small steps can prevent major issues down the line and keep your financial life running smoothly.

If you need help updating your information or accessing your retirement account, we're here for you. Visit www.bcers.org to log in to the Member Self-Service portal or call us at 443.984.3200. You can also email us at contacters@bcers.org. A little effort now can bring peace of mind for years to come.

Spring Retirement Check-In: 3 Ways to Refresh Your Financial Life This Season

Use this seasonal checklist to make sure your retirement information is accurate, your documents are organized, and you're staying on track for the future. Just 10–15 minutes can make a big difference.

Checklist

Update Your Info

- ☐ Confirm your current mailing address, phone number, and email are correct
- ☐ Review and update your beneficiary designations if needed

Log In to Your Retirement Account

- ☐ Sign into the Member Self-Service Portal
- ☐ Run a retirement estimate
- ☐ Explore available tools and retirement planning resources

Organize Your Retirement Paperwork

- ☐ Shred outdated documents or duplicates
- ☐ Store current statements, plan summaries, and key contacts in one place
- ☐ Create a simple digital folder or backup for essential files
- ☐ Make sure your loved ones know how to access these records if needed



EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEMS

2025 SEMINARS



CLASS C UNDERSTANDING RETIREMENT

Class C Understanding Retirement Seminars are for employees hired prior to July 1, 2014. Topics include:

- Retirement eligibility requirements
- Disability and death benefits
- Military and transfer time
- Beneficiary designation
- Health benefits in retirement
- 457b Deferred Compensation Plan

Dates: Jan 21, Feb 18, Mar 18, **Apr 15 (in-person)**, May 20, Jun 17, **Jul 15 (in-person)**, Aug 19, Sept 16, **Oct 21 (in-person)**, Nov 18, Dec 16

Time: 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

RETIREMENT SAVINGS PLAN- KNOW YOUR PLAN

Retirement Savings Plan (RSP) Seminars are for employees hired on or after July 1, 2014. Topics include:

- Overview of the Hybrid/Non-Hybrid plans including benefits for each plan
- Retirement eligibility requirements
- Military and transfer time
- Beneficiary designation
- 457b Deferred Compensation Plan

Dates: Jan 15, Apr 16, **Jul 16 (in-person)**, Oct 15

Time: 9:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.

NEW EMPLOYEE ENROLLMENT SEMINAR

New Employee Enrollment Seminars (NEES) are for new employees who need to elect a retirement plan prior to the end of the 150-day mandatory plan selection period. Topics include:

- 401(a) Hybrid plan
- 401(a) Non-Hybrid plan
- 457b Deferred Compensation Plan
- Enrollment process
- Deadline requirements

Dates: Jan 14, Feb 11, Mar 11, **Apr 8 (in-person)**, May 13, Jun 10, **Jul 8 (in-person)**, Aug 12, Sept 9, **Oct 14 (in-person)**, Nov 4, Dec 9

Time: 9:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.

SOCIAL SECURITY

Join an expert presenter from the Nationwide Retirement Institute for an in-depth presentation around Social Security. Learn the part Social Security plays in your overall retirement picture and get your questions answered.

Dates: Jan 16, Apr 17, **Jul 17 (in-person)**, Oct 16

Time: 9:00 a.m.- 11:00 a.m.

Seminars are virtual unless otherwise noted. In-Person seminars are held at 7 E. Redwood St., 11th Floor. Call 443-984-3200 or visit retirewithbmore.myretirementappt.com to register

*The Office of the Labor Commissioner is authorizing permission leave for employees to attend a seminar. Any employee who wishes to attend a seminar must submit a request to the immediate supervisor at least two weeks in advance. The request may be denied for operational reasons.

EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT: MEET LATONYA D. REYNOLDS



ERS welcomes LaTonya D. Reynolds to the team as Senior Counsel. LaTonya is an accomplished legal professional with a wealth of experience in employment law, labor relations, and benefits/ERISA law. Throughout her distinguished career, she has demonstrated expertise in providing strategic legal counsel, managing complex litigation, and ensuring compliance with federal, state, and local employment laws.

One of LaTonya's most impactful roles was serving as Senior Counsel at the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, where she provided extensive legal support to the Employees' Retirement System, focusing on governance, compliance, and fiduciary duties. In addition to her work with the M-NCPPC ERS, LaTonya has held key positions across both public and private sectors, including the U.S. Securities and

Exchange Commission, FINRA, and prominent law firms. Her most recent experience includes roles as Assistant General Counsel at OneMain General Services Corp. and Counsel at Semmes, Bowen & Semmes.

LaTonya is recognized for her proactive approach, strategic thinking, and commitment to delivering practical, business-oriented legal solutions. Her passion for collaboration and professional growth has made her a trusted advisor and leader in the field.

LaTonya joined the Baltimore City Employees' Retirement System as Senior Counsel to contribute her specialized legal expertise in employment law, benefits/ERISA law, and compliance to the team. She is excited for the opportunity to engage in dynamic and meaningful work, further strengthening her legal skills in an area she is deeply familiar with. The role allows her to apply her strategic approach and deep knowledge in a collegial setting while making a positive impact on the system and its members.

Outside of her professional life, LaTonya enjoys a variety of activities that keep her engaged, balanced, and active. She has a passion for golf and yoga and relaxes by binge-watching reality TV in her downtime. Most importantly, LaTonya cherishes spending quality time with her eight-year-old triplets, whether participating in exciting activities or creating memories together.

Did you know that you can receive the BCERS newsletter and Popular Annual Financial Report (PAFR) electronically? Go green and cut down on the amount of paper in your household by choosing to receive your newsletter and PAFR via email.

To opt out of paper mailings for the newsletter and financial report:

1. Visit www.bcercs.org and click on the Publications tab.
2. Scroll to the very bottom of the Publications page to find the "Opt Out of Print Mailings" form.
3. Fill out and submit the form.

The "Opt Out" form only applies to the newsletter and PAFR publications. You will continue to receive statements and any other BCERS print publications by mail.





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*Serves on both boards.