

## RETIREMENT

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### SUMMARY

Miami-Dade County provides retirement benefits for eligible employees through the Florida Retirement System (FRS). FRS offers eligible members a choice between the defined contribution plan (Investment Plan) and the defined benefit plan (the original FRS Pension Plan). Newly eligible employees are initially enrolled in the FRS defined benefit plan and have five months after the month they begin employment to make an active plan election. Any employee who fails to make an active plan election within the specified time period, applicable to that employee, is considered by law to have elected the FRS Pension Plan. Temporary and seasonal classifications are not eligible.

The employee is responsible for paying 3% of their base salary toward cost of the retirement benefit to the FRS and the County pays the remainder of the cost of the retirement contribution. An employee who wishes to purchase additional service credit, such as military, leave of absence, prior service, etc. does so at their own expense.

An employee's annual benefit at normal retirement age is determined by multiplying years of creditable service by a percentage value and the average of the five highest years of earnings. Employees can accrue months of creditable service by working in an eligible position covered under the FRS. Under the defined benefit plan you must have at least 6 years of creditable service (8 if membership is established on or after July 1, 2011) to be eligible for any retirement benefits. One year vesting is required for the investment plan.

Normal retirement age is 62 for Regular Class members and 55 for Special Risk or after 30 years of service at any age or 25 years of Special Risk service. If membership is established on or after July 1, 2011, normal retirement age is 65 for Regular Class members and 60 for Special Risk or after 33 years of service at any age or 30 years of Special Risk service. An employee may retire before reaching normal retirement age, but the benefits will be reduced by 5% for each year under normal retirement age.

After reaching normal retirement age, or completing the years of service to receive unreduced benefits, the employee may choose to enter the Deferred Retirement Option Program (DROP). The DROP allows the employee to retire and begin accumulating retirement benefits without terminating employment for up to 60 months from the date normal retirement is first attained unless the employee defers participation in DROP in accordance to FRS rules.

Disability retirement benefits may be provided for employees with 8 years of service who become totally and permanently disabled. Employees who become disabled in the line of duty may become eligible for disability benefits regardless of length of service.

Employees who establish renewed membership on or after July 1, 2010, may not earn retirement credits.

## PROCEDURE

1. Contact the Florida Retirement System, Bureau of Retirement Calculations to request an estimate of benefits 6 months to 1 year prior to retirement. An update may be requested at the time the employee applies for retirement benefits.
2. Retirement is not automatic and is non-retroactive. An employee must apply for retirement benefits.
3. Four months prior to the employee's planned date of retirement (or if entering DROP), make an appointment with the Benefits Administration Unit, Human Resources Department/Risk Management Division, for a counseling session. During this session, application for the FRS and any type of retirement benefit through FRS will be completed. Non DROP employees will also be counseled on the group insurance options available at retirement.
4. Bring estimate of your benefits, received from FRS, to the retirement counseling. Also bring a valid driver's license and proof of age, which can be one of the following:
  - Birth Certificate
  - Delayed birth certificate
  - Census report more than 30 years old
  - Life Insurance policy more than 30 years old
  - Documentation from Social Security Administration stating date of birth it has established for payment of benefits
  - Certificate of naturalization
5. If you do not have any of the above, bring two (2) of the following:
  - Birth certificate of a child which gives the employee's age
  - Baptismal certificate
  - Hospital record of birth
  - School record at the time employee entered grammar school

Proof of birth is also required for designated beneficiaries under options that provide benefits after the employee's death.

6. During the counseling session, employee will make final selection of retirement options. The Sr. Employee Benefits Specialist will explain the options but cannot advise which to choose.
7. If employee chooses a retirement option that provides benefits for designated beneficiaries after employee's death, the same type of documents must be provided for the beneficiaries as are listed above. Married employees who choose Option 1 or Option 2 retirement benefits are required to have their spouse acknowledge, in writing, the option selected by the employee.
8. Send written notification of retirement to your supervisor at least 2 weeks in advance of your expected date of retirement. Once application for retirement has been made, the Benefits Administration Unit will notify the departmental personnel representative in writing.

9. The application for retirement will be sent to Florida Retirement System (FRS). They will send a letter acknowledging receipt of the application and asking for "final salary certification (FC-1)." The County cannot provide this information until the employee retires and is removed from the payroll. Payroll Information Management, Human Resources Department is responsible for sending the FC-1 to the Division of Retirement in Tallahassee.

Note: Employees leaving DROP must contact the Benefits Administration Unit to complete paperwork to exit DROP and to receive counseling on the group insurance options available upon leaving County employment.

#### RETIREMENT CHECKS

1. The employee's retirement will be "effective" the first day of the month following the termination date. For example, if an employee retires on April 30, retirement would be effective on May 1; however, if the Division of Retirement in Tallahassee does not receive the application within 30 days of when the employee retires, the retirement will not be effective until the first day of the month after FRS receives the application.
2. If all required paperwork has been received by FRS, the employee can expect to get a check at the end of the month of their effective day of retirement. In the previous example, if the employee retired April 30, he/she has an "effective" retirement date of May 1, and will receive the first check at the end of May for the month of May.
3. Most retirees who have health insurance coverage are eligible for a monthly supplemental payment (Health Insurance Subsidy) to help pay for their insurance. The amount of the subsidy is based on service credit at retirement with a minimum monthly subsidy of \$30 and a maximum of \$150. The Florida Retirement System will provide the retiree with the Health Insurance Subsidy Form which must be completed by the Benefits Administration Unit and returned to FRS. If the retiree elects to continue coverage through the County's retiree group. Otherwise, if the retiree elects health coverage elsewhere, they must have their provider complete and return to FRS, Retired Payroll Section.
4. Employee may request to have the retirement check directly deposited into a designated bank or credit union. FRS includes a direct deposit form with the first check.

Note: This is not intended to be a complete guide to the Florida Retirement System. For more information, contact the Benefits Administration Unit, Human Resources Department/Risk Management Division, or request a copy of the Florida Retirement System Summary Plan Description.

#### **CONTACT(S):**

##### **Department/Division**

Human Resources Department/Risk Management Division

#### **REFERENCE DOCUMENT(S):**

Florida Retirement System Summary Plan Description