



## **EMPLOYEES RETIREMENT SYSTEM SO YOU'RE THINKING OF RETIRING?**

The following information is designed to answer some of the questions you may have now that you are contemplating retirement. It is not meant to replace personal retirement counseling with your retirement benefits specialist. If you need to discuss your retirement plans, please telephone your retirement benefits specialist to schedule an appointment.

### **RETIREMENT APPLICATION**

An application for service retirement cannot be made more than 60 days prior to the effective date of retirement. It is recommended that members notify the retirement office of their intentions prior to applying so that they may receive counseling and information to help them plan their retirement. Please remember inquiries are treated in the strictest confidence. Your department will not be informed of your inquiries or your impending retirement until a retirement application has been completed and filed officially with the retirement office.

### **NECESSARY DOCUMENTS**

When making application for retirement the following documents must be furnished to the Retirement Office:

- Certified copy of your birth certificate and spouse/domestic partner if applicable
- Certified copy of marriage certificate/domestic partnership registration, if applicable
- Social Security card-spouse/domestic partner if applicable
- MEDICARE card –self & spouse/domestic partner, if applicable
- VOIDED check (not a deposit slip), for electronic deposit

### **OPTIONS**

There are five (5) retirement options. An election is irrevocable and cannot be changed after retirement. Care must be taken when selecting the Retirement Option. Therefore we recommend that no decision be made without discussing, in person, the ramification of each option with your retirement benefits specialist.

### **BUYBACKS**

Those members using payroll deductions for buying back county prior service and prior public service must be paid up prior to retirement. Any member wishing to purchase prior service by lump sum payment before retirement must make their request in a timely manner.

### **CALCULATION OF RETIREMENT BENEFIT**

Your highest final average salary, years of service, and your age are used to calculate your monthly retirement benefit. *IMPORTANT NOTE: the age factor increases every three months up to the age of 62 for general members, 55 for safety members. Therefore, please confer with your benefits specialist BEFORE selecting a retirement date and notifying your department.* We encourage members to retire at the end of a pay period.

### **VACATION AND HOLIDAY BALANCES**

Any unused vacation and holiday balances are paid off in your final paycheck. This is deposited as normal in your bank. Payroll questions should be addressed to departmental payroll clerk or the Payroll Division in the Auditor's office.

### **SICK LEAVE BALANCES**

Your accrued sick leave balance will be added to your service credit and used to calculate your monthly retirement benefit. *NOTE: Sick leave hours cannot be used to increase your service credit with the intent of making you eligible for retirement. Members who went deferred before July 1, 1989 do not receive this benefit.*

**REMINDER:** If you contribute to The Hartford Company, please contact them for information regarding disposition of your deferred compensation plan funds.

Telephone: (866) 429-0382 or toll free (888) 465-0817.

### INSURANCE PLANS AND OFFSETS

As a Santa Barbara County retiree you are eligible to receive health insurance coverage. The various insurance plans and rates will be discussed in full during your retirement counseling.

A monthly benefit of \$15.00 per year of service is paid by the Retirement System toward the cost of the monthly health insurance premium.

Retirees who do not elect to be covered for health insurance will receive a monthly subsidy equal to \$4.00 per year of service. The amount you receive may be limited to the health care cost you incur up to the maximum subsidy you are entitled to based upon your years of service credit.

### BENEFICIARIES

Please give some thought to the beneficiaries you will need to name on your retirement application. A spouse/domestic partner is the primary beneficiary to receive all and any death benefits. We will need their Social Security number for the file. A secondary beneficiary must also be selected in the event the primary beneficiary is not living at the time of the retiree's demise.

### TAXES

Your retirement benefits may be taxable under the Federal and State Income Tax law. Taxes can be withheld by the Retirement Office upon written request. Questions regarding the tax status of your retirement allowance should be referred to a tax advisor or the appropriate taxing agency as the retirement benefits specialist cannot advise you on these matters.

### DEPOSIT TO FINANCIAL INSTITUTION

Separation from county service terminates a direct deposit arrangement with the county payroll department. The retirement payroll is independent and separate from the county payroll; therefore the Retirement Office will initiate a new direct deposit arrangement.

*DEDUCTIONS For those with Santa Barbara County Employees' Federal Credit Union accounts, a deduction can be withheld from your monthly allowance upon request and sent by direct deposit to your specified loan/savings account.*

### RECIPROCITY

If you have reciprocity with another system, you must make a concurrent application for retirement with them. If you are uncertain with regard to the procedure, please call the retirement office for assistance.

### COST OF LIVING ADJUSTMENTS

On April 1<sup>st</sup> of each year, all retirement allowances may be adjusted upward or downward in accordance with changes in

the cost of living as determined by the Consumer Price Index, to a maximum increase or decrease of 3%. No allowance can be decreased below the amount at the time of retirement. *Please NOTE: There are no cost of living increases for Plan 2 members.*

### SOCIAL SECURITY

If you are eligible for social security benefits or have questions regarding eligibility you may reach them by calling (800) 772-1213.

### **Benefits Specialists**

In the South County:

If your last name begins:

- A - K Barbara Gordon  
(805) 568-2942
- L - Z Scott Dunlap  
(805) 568-2943

In the North County:

If your last name begins

- A - K Doreen Miller  
(805) 739-8668
- L - Z Reneé Lynn  
(805) 739-8667

### **Retirement Benefits Supervisor**

Julie Salley

(805) 739-8665

### **Assistant Retirement Administrator**

Lila Deeds

(805) 568-2941

### **Retirement Administrator**

Oscar Peters

Administrative Office

(805) 568-2940