

Legislative Negotiations Continue

Colorado PERA staff continues to meet with various groups related to pending legislation. Currently, there are two bills that have been assigned to the Senate State, Veterans and Military Affairs Committee that deal with PERA. These include the Senator Owen bill, Senate Bill 06-162, that is supported by the Governor and State Treasurer, and the PERA Board-endorsed bill, Senate Bill 06-174. PERA has met with staff from the Governor's Office, the State Treasurer, and interested employer/employee groups over the past month. PERA remains hopeful that a compromise piece of legislation can be moved through the General Assembly and gain the Governor's signature before the end of the legislative session in May.

The proposed "Reform PERA" initiative has been resubmitted as Initiative #93. At the time of publication of *Topics*, the proposal had not been approved by the Secretary of State's Office for signature collection.

Details on legislation and the proposed initiative can be found on PERA's Web site at this link:

<http://www.copera.org/pera/about/legislation/2006legislation.stm>

PERA plans to improve this portion of the Web site in the next few weeks to provide comprehensive information on legislation.

New Employer Relations Team Formed at PERA

Angela Byrne has been named the manager of the newly formed PERA Employer Relations Team at PERA. Angie was formerly the team leader overseeing PERA's annual retiree "payroll" of over \$2 billion. Joining Angie on the Employer Relations Team are Jeffrey Cable (coordinating employer PERA 401(k) and PERAChoice issues); Annette Cote from Accounting; Chris Hoehle from Benefit Services Division; Chad Hursh from Benefits Services Division; Rose Montano from Accounting; and Jesse Murillo from Customer Service.

PERA formed this new team in recognition of the increasingly complex retirement issues facing our over 400 affiliated employers. Our goal for this team is to quickly make it the only resource you will need when any employer-related question arises. The Employer Relations team is within the Benefit Services Division of PERA and is overseen by Director Rick Larson and Chief Operating Officer David Maurek.

The Employer Relations team can be reached at EmployerRelations@copera.org or by calling 1-800-759-7372 ext. 3724 or 303-832-9550 ext. 3724 in the Denver Metro area.

The Field Education team will continue to be your contact should you wish to schedule an on-site meeting for your employees. See page 3 for contact information.



Angie Byrne
Employer Relations
Manager



Jeffrey Cable
Employer
Representative



Annette Cote
Employer
Representative



Chris Hoehle
Employer
Representative



Chad Hursh
Employer
Representative



Rose Montano
Employer
Representative



Jesse Murillo
Employer
Representative

Employer Contribution Rates/AED Reminder

Starting January 1, 2006, employer contributions were increased by 0.5 percent for the new Amortization Equalization Disbursement (AED) contribution. The AED applies to all payroll periods that have an ending date on or after January 1, 2006. It does not apply to pay periods that have an ending date in 2005, even if the payment to your employees was made in 2006. The AED contribution will be automatically calculated when you complete the Summary Sheet when you submit your STARS report. The AED should be paid on all employees who work for a PERA-affiliated employer, regardless of whether or not they are currently covered by PERA. The combined employer and AED rates for 2006 for each PERA Division are shown in the chart to the right.

	Employer Contribution	AED	Total Contribution from Employer
State Division* (except Troopers)	10.15%	0.50%	10.65%
State Troopers	12.85%	0.50%	13.35%
School Division*	10.15%	0.50%	10.65%
Local Government Division*	10.00%	0.50%	10.50%
Judicial Division	13.66%	0.50%	14.16%

*On January 1, 2006, the State and School Division was split into two separate Divisions—the State Division and the School Division. On January 1, 2006, the Municipal Division was renamed the Local Government Division.

Submitting the Employer Contribution for Rehired Retirees

A few PERA retirees who have been rehired to work for PERA-affiliated employers have contacted us about the employer contribution being deducted from their pay. Remember that this is the employer contribution, and must be paid by you, the employer. (PERA does not require a member contribution for retirees.)

Whatever you determine is the best method to fund the employer contribution on rehired retirees is your decision. We know that some employers have reduced the salaries for rehired retirees to compensate for the employer contribution. The manner in which the employer chooses to fund the employer contribution is up to each individual employer. However, the employer contribution should not be reflected on the employee's pay stub as an employee deduction.

The AED should be paid on rehired PERA retirees.

State Employers Begin Offering Defined Contribution Choice

As of January 1, 2006, eligible new employees of State Agencies outside of Higher Education could select from five retirement choices: PERA's Defined Benefit (DB) Plan, PERA's Defined Contribution (DC) Plan, or one of the State's three DC vendors. Eligible new employees have 60 days in which to make a retirement choice election; after that, they automatically become PERA DB members.

Financial Product Solicitations

Some of our employers have contacted us to inquire about financial services representatives requesting to meet their employees at the work location about their PERA benefits. Often these financial services representatives state that they can teach your employees how to maximize their PERA benefit. While PERA encourages members to seek external financial advice from a trusted financial adviser, PERA does not work with or endorse external vendors for financial planning services.

The best course of action for our employers when contacted by any financial services or planning professional is to ask if they are affiliated with PERA (refer to the list of PERA's Field Education Representatives on page 3 to verify the person you are talking to is from PERA). You should also check any materials you might receive from such vendors to see if they are using the PERA logo, or a name similar to PERA, that might be intended to lead your employees to think they are working with someone from PERA. (Thank you for letting us know when you have been contacted, we do follow up when we hear about these incidents.)

Schedule a PERA Meeting

If you would like to schedule a PERA meeting for your employees to learn about their PERA benefits, please contact your Field Education Representative.

PERACare and GASB

Those employers who are currently providing health care to their retirees may wish to consider covering their retired employees under PERACare. With the upcoming Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) requirement for employers to calculate the cost of providing future retiree health care benefits, PERACare, PERA's health benefits program for retirees, may be an option for you to explore.

More information about the GASB post-employment benefit regulations No. 43 and No. 45 can be found at http://www.gasb.org/project_pages/opeb_summary.pdf

PERACare Stats

A total of 25 employers now provide PERACare to their employees. Selection of the PERACare program may occur at any time. For details about benefits and premiums, contact Julie Saad at 303-832-9550 ext. 6405, or e-mail her at jsaad@copera.org.



In Appreciation

Thank you for all the work you do in working with PERA to provide retirement benefits for your employees. We have recently mailed our "thank you" gift (a PERA flashlight keychain) to PERA's employers. If you did not receive yours, please e-mail Candy Olivarri at colivarri@copera.org to request a keychain be sent to you.

Colorado PERA Contact Information

For questions about accessing the secured employer access Web site, please contact the Employer Relations team at 1-800-759-7372 ext. 3724 or 303-832-9550 ext. 3724.

To schedule a meeting or for questions about PERA benefits, please contact your Field Education Representative at PERA:

PERA Field Education Representatives

<i>Employer Number</i>	<i>Field Education Representatives</i>
1-74	Gordon Steuck 303-863-3855
75-154	Thomas Shofner 303-837-6289
155-222	Carol Rhine 303-863-3809
223-391	Nadine Grosjean 303-837-6215
392-499	Aimee Buchholz 303-863-3706
500-779	Shane Linart 303-863-3861
780-991	Rick Chase 303-863-3790
	Dennis Gatlin Field Education Manager 303-863-3788



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