



FALL 2023

BULLETIN

Your Florida Retirement System Pension Plan Member Newsletter



Security Notice

The Division of Retirement will never request your banking information via phone, email, or text. If you ever receive such a request, do not share your information. Remember, direct deposit can be securely established after signing into your personal retirement account at frs.fl.gov.

Contacting the Division of Retirement



Our contact center representatives are available from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. (EDT), Monday through Friday, except on state holidays.

[Click here](#) to view contact information for the Division of Retirement.

Message from the Director

The Division of Retirement is steadfast in our commitment to provide the highest quality services possible to the dedicated individuals who serve the great state of Florida. Following the 2023 Legislative Session, there have been some changes that may have impacted your retirement journey. We have outlined a few of those changes in this newsletter.

Remember that the division is your trusted resource for planning and preparing for retirement. Explore your individual milestones and personalized retirement details, quickly and securely, using FRS Online frs.fl.gov. In your FRS Online account, you can:

- Set up and explore your personalized information, such as your Member Annual Statement and Beneficiaries.
- Submit important retirement forms to the division via the website's new "Upload Document" feature.

I am honored to lead the division with a team committed to customer service, innovation, and integrity as we continue to set the standard for excellence. We serve those who serve Florida. We serve you.

Kathy Gould, Director

Retirement Policy Update

The Florida Legislature passed legislation affecting members and employers of the Florida Retirement System (FRS) and other state-administered retirement plans. Bills passed during the 2023 legislative session are described below:

House Bill 7024:

Contribution Rates

New uniform employer contribution rates for the 2023-2024 fiscal year are effective July 1, 2023. The required employee contribution remains 3%.

Deferred Retirement Option Program (DROP)

Effective June 5, 2023, FRS members, in a regularly established position, regardless of class membership and occupation, may enroll in DROP at any time after reaching their normal retirement date. An eligible member can elect to participate in DROP up to 96 calendar months with employer authorization.

DROP Accrual Interest Rate

Effective July 1, 2023, DROP accounts will accrue at an effective annual rate of 4%, compounded monthly on the prior month's accumulated ending balance, up to the month of termination or death, except as provided in s. 121.053(7), F.S.

Retirement Policy Update- Continued

Special Risk Class Normal Retirement

Effective July 1, 2023, the legislation changes the normal retirement date for Special Risk Class members who enrolled on or after July 1, 2011, to age 55 with 8 years of service or at any age with 25 years of Special Risk Class service.

K-12 Personnel

Effective June 5, 2023, K-12 instructional personnel who are employed by a developmental research school, district school board, or the Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind can extend DROP participation an additional 24 calendar months. K-12 instructional personnel must end their extended DROP participation on the last day of the school year. This provision expires on June 30, 2029.

Health Insurance Subsidy (HIS)

Effective July 1, 2023, and after, the HIS benefit amount will be applied to all eligible retirees benefits after an application has been submitted and proof of health insurance coverage has been certified. The subsidy payment is equal to the number of years of service credit at the time of retirement and multiplied by \$7.50, with a maximum amount of \$225. The minimum subsidy an eligible retiree can receive is increased to \$45 per month.

[House Bill 1121](#)

Post-employment Volunteer Programs

Beginning July 1, 2023, Volunteer Services in accordance with section 121.091(15), Florida Statutes do not constitute employment by or provision of services to an FRS employer.

Legislative Changes to The Deferred Retirement Option Program (DROP)

Vested FRS Pension Plan members that reach normal retirement (by age or by service) may be eligible to participate in the DROP. Several important changes to the DROP are now effective following recently passed provisions by the Florida legislature.

DROP Eligibility – The new legislation provides unlimited DROP deferral for all membership classes once normal retirement is reached. The elimination of previous eligibility windows allows vested Pension Plan members to enter DROP at any time after he or she has reached normal retirement.

DROP Participation – Current DROP members can elect to participate in DROP up to a maximum of 96-calendar months after normal retirement. Members who wish to update their DROP participation to any date up to the maximum allowable period, may be eligible to do so with the authorization of their employer and the division. To update your DROP participation, complete a new Form [DP-ELE](#) with the revised DROP termination date and submit it to the division before your current DROP end date.

DROP Interest Rate – Beginning July 1, 2023, your DROP accumulation earns interest at an effective annual rate of 4.00%, compounded monthly on the prior month's accumulated balance. The interest earned on DROP accruals through June 30, 2023, is not changed.

After your DROP application has been approved, you may view your monthly DROP accrual at any time by accessing the "DROP Information" page [once you have logged in to your FRS Online account](#).

For more information on DROP and other resources, review the [DROP Guide](#) or, visit the Deferred Retirement Option Program (DROP) page by [clicking here](#).



For additional resources, visit: frs.myflorida.com.

Your Member Annual Statement is Online

Each calendar year, the Division of Retirement provides a Member Annual Statement (MAS) to active FRS Pension Plan members. The MAS is available only through your FRS Online account. Complete the following steps to access your most recent MAS:

1. Visit frs.fl.gov and log in to your FRS Online account.
2. Once you are in, on the left-side navigation, access the Annual Statement link under the Member Services menu.
3. Click the “Download Member Annual Statement” button to download your latest MAS as a PDF.

Your MAS summarizes your retirement record and, if you are vested, includes projected estimates of your future monthly benefit. Your MAS is updated yearly in the month you were born, based on service credit through the prior month. You will receive an email notifying you that your MAS is available in your FRS Online account, but you must log in to view it.



A MAS is only created for active FRS Pension Plan members or hybrid members with Pension Plan service. If you are a hybrid member, meaning you joined the FRS Investment Plan for your future service and kept your prior Pension Plan service credit, your MAS reflects only your Pension Plan service.

A MAS is not created for you if you are a Pension Plan retiree or participating in the Deferred Retirement Option Program (DROP), have applied for retirement with or without DROP participation, or are a member of the FRS Investment Plan without any Pension Plan service credit.

Keep Your Beneficiary Designation Current



You should review your beneficiary designation at least once per year.

For our active members, FRS Online makes it easier than ever to update your beneficiary designation:

1. Visit frs.fl.gov and log in to your FRS Online account.
2. On the left-side navigation, under the Member Services menu, click the link to the Beneficiary page to fill in the required information.

Note: In addition to designating a primary beneficiary, you can also designate a contingent beneficiary. To add additional beneficiaries, click “Add Primary Beneficiary” or “Add Contingent Beneficiary.” If you have more than one primary or contingent beneficiary designated, make sure the percentages of the benefit you assign add up to 100%.

As an active member, you may change your beneficiary at any time. It is essential to keep your beneficiary updated, especially if you recently had children, had a marital status change, or had another life-changing event. If you do not have a beneficiary on file or your beneficiary predeceases you, your beneficiary will be determined by all applicable Florida Statutes (F.S.), which may create additional hardships.

If you are currently in the DROP, you will be required to submit additional documentation to change your beneficiary. For more assistance, you can visit the Beneficiary page in your FRS Online account.

Only a beneficiary who qualifies as a joint annuitant is eligible to receive a continuing monthly benefit upon your death. For more information on who qualifies as a joint annuitant, [click here](#) see our Joint Annuitant Information publication.

For additional resources, visit: frs.myflorida.com.

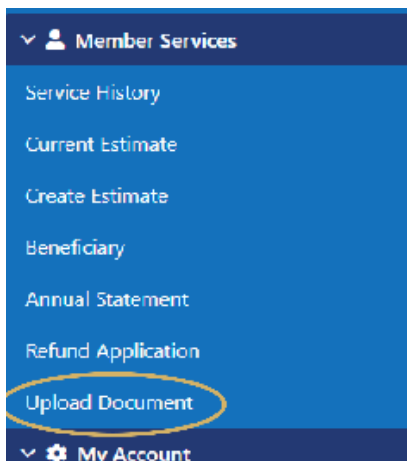
Why Should You Sign Up?



FRS Online is the primary online portal for monitoring and managing your FRS Pension Plan account. The following are actions you may do with your FRS Online account:

- Submit your birth verification. We encourage you to do this early in your career.
- Review your service credit.
- Run benefit estimates for DROP and Service Retirement.
- Review your Member Annual Statement (uploaded annually during your birth month).

New "Upload Document" Page on FRS Online



To ensure forms are uploaded quickly and securely to your account, log into FRS Online and navigate to the new Upload Document page.

When uploading a document, select the type of document you are uploading from the drop-down menu. Follow the remaining instructions to upload your document and submit it to the division. Visit the Upload Document page to view a list of document types available for upload.

Once your document is received, the Division of Retirement will begin processing and will reach out to you depending on the document type and your communication preferences.

Check Out The New Frequently Asked Questions Page

Find frequently asked questions and answers at frs.fl.gov/#/faqs. Topics include the following:

- Creditable Service
- Life Events
- Employee Contributions
- Deferred Retirement Option Program (DROP)
- Disability Benefits
- Survivor Benefits
- Purchasable Service

For More Great Resources, Visit Our Website

The DMS, Division of Retirement website, at frs.myflorida.com has helpful resources and information for all FRS members.

- [Active Members page](#)
- [Current and Past Active Member Bulletins](#)
- [Retirement Guides](#)
- [Helpful Resources for Active Members](#)
- [Retirement Forms](#)
- [Social Security Retirement Estimator](#)

For additional resources, visit: frs.myflorida.com.