

422A.23 SURVIVOR BENEFITS.

Subdivision 1. **Payment of city installment accumulated amount.** (a) If an active or deferred member dies with ten or more years of service credit, except as noted in paragraph (d), the individual specified in paragraph (b) is eligible to receive the benefit specified in paragraph (c).

(b) An individual eligible for the benefit specified in paragraph (c) is a beneficiary designated by the member on a form specified by the executive director. If the member failed to designate a beneficiary, or if the beneficiary or beneficiaries designated by the employee predecease the employee, the benefit in paragraph (c) is payable to the deceased employee's estate.

(c) The benefit is a lump-sum payment of the present value of the city's or other contributing employer's annual installments of \$60 to the credit of the member.

(d) No benefit is payable under this subdivision if a monthly survivor benefit is paid on behalf of the deceased employee under another subdivision of this section.

Subd. 2. **Short-service survivor benefit.** (a) If an active member dies prior to termination of service with at least 18 months but less than 20 years of service credit, the surviving spouse or surviving child or children is eligible to receive the survivor benefit specified in paragraph (b) or (c), as applicable. Payment of a benefit for any surviving child under the age of 18 years shall be made to the surviving parent, or if there be none, to the legal guardian of the surviving child.

(b) If the surviving spouse or surviving child benefit commenced before July 1, 1983, the surviving spouse benefit is increased from \$500 per month to \$750 per month and the surviving child benefit is \$225 per month, beginning with the first monthly payment payable after May 28, 1998. The sum of surviving spouse and surviving child benefits payable under this paragraph shall not exceed \$900 per month. The increased cost resulting from the benefit increases under this paragraph must be allocated to each employing unit listed in section 422A.101, subdivisions 1a, 2, and 2a, on the basis of the additional accrued liability resulting from increased benefits paid to the survivors of employees from that unit.

(c) If the surviving spouse or surviving child benefit commences after June 30, 1983, the surviving spouse benefit is 30 percent of the member's average salary in effect over the last six months of allowable service preceding the month in which death occurs. The surviving child benefit is ten percent of the member's average salary in effect over the last six months of allowable service preceding the month in which death occurs. The sum of surviving spouse and surviving child benefits payable under this paragraph shall not exceed 50 percent of the member's average salary in effect over the last six months of allowable service.

(d) Any surviving child benefit or surviving spouse benefit computed under paragraph (c) and in effect for the month immediately prior to May 28, 1998, is increased by 15 percent as of the first payment on or after May 28, 1998.

(e) Surviving child benefits under this subdivision terminate when the child no longer meets the definition of surviving child.

Subd. 3. [Repealed, 1983 c 286 s 26]

Subd. 4. [Repealed, 1976 c 279 s 4]

Subd. 5. **Administration.** Benefits provided in this section following the death of an active employee or deferred member, as applicable, commence on the first day of the month following the month in which the active employee or deferred member dies and shall end with the last day of the month preceding the month in which eligibility ceases. Information deemed necessary by the executive director to determine eligibility for the benefits provided by this section must be submitted. Failure to furnish any required information shall be sufficient grounds for denial or discontinuance of benefits. A determination made by the executive director may be appealed to the retirement board, whose determination is final. If the surviving spouse of the deceased active employee or deferred member becomes entitled to a retirement allowance by reason of membership in this fund, the surviving spouse is authorized to receive the retirement allowance in addition to all applicable surviving spouse benefits to which the surviving spouse is entitled as specified in this section and section 422A.22, subdivision 4, if applicable. The cost of all benefits provided in this section is an obligation of the members and of the city, any of its boards, departments, commissions or public corporations or other applicable employing units.

Subd. 6. **Survivor benefit employee contribution.** The retirement board shall create a reserve account for survivor's benefits from which shall be paid on an actuarial basis all survivor benefits due and payable. At the end of each fiscal year, as part of the annual actuarial valuation of the fund prepared by the actuary retained under section 356.214, a determination of the normal cost of the benefits payable from the survivor's benefit account shall be made and the board shall reduce or increase the employee contribution rate if and when it is determined based on the annual actuarial valuation that the member contribution rate is in excess of or is less than the amount necessary to pay for 50 percent of the calculated normal cost of the survivor benefits provided in this section.

Subd. 7. **Long-service active and deferred member survivor coverage.** (a) If the active or deferred member dies with 20 or more years of service credit, a beneficiary as defined in paragraph (b) is eligible to receive the benefit specified in paragraph (c).

(b) The beneficiary eligible for a benefit under paragraph (c) is the surviving spouse of the deceased employee. If there is no surviving spouse, the beneficiary may be a dependent surviving child of the member or dependent parent designated by the employee on a form prescribed by the executive director.

(c) The benefit payable to the beneficiary designated in paragraph (b) is a monthly allowance for life. The monthly allowance is the actuarial equivalent of a single life service allowance specified in section 422A.15, subdivision 1, which would have been payable to the employee on the date of death, notwithstanding the age requirement stated in section 422A.15, subdivision 1. For purposes of this section, the amount of any excess contributions or voluntary additions by the member shall not be included in the calculations in determining the monthly allowance.

(d) For benefits payable under this subdivision following the death of a deferred member, the benefit must be calculated as of the date of termination from service and increased by five percent per year until January 1, 1981, and by three percent per year thereafter, compounded annually.

Subd. 8. Surviving child; dependent definition. For purposes of subdivision 2, a surviving child is an unmarried child of the deceased member under the age of 18, or under the age of 22 if a full-time student at an accredited school, college, or university. For purposes of subdivision 7, a dependent surviving child or dependent parent must meet the definition of dependent, as defined in section 422A.01, subdivision 12, at the time of the active or deferred member's death.

Subd. 9. Lump-sum death benefit. If no monthly survivor benefit is payable under subdivision 2 or 7, there shall be paid from the survivor benefit account to a beneficiary designated by the employee on a form prescribed by the executive director a lump-sum death benefit of \$750 if death occurs prior to the end of the employee's tenth year of service credit or of \$1,500 if the employee had ten or more years of service credit. Any benefit under this subdivision may be paid in addition to a benefit payable under subdivision 1.

Subd. 10. Benefit increases. Annuities payable under this section must be adjusted at the same time and rate as retirement annuities in the retirement benefit fund.

Subd. 11. Effect of spouse remarriage. A monthly survivor benefit must not be discontinued or terminated due to a surviving spouse's remarriage.

Subd. 12. Determination of annuity. The survivor annuities payable under this section must be computed and determined under a procedure specified by the actuary retained under section 356.214 utilizing the appropriate mortality table based on the experience of the fund as recommended by that actuary and approved by the Legislative Commission on Pensions and Retirement and using the applicable postretirement interest rate assumption specified in section 356.215, subdivision 8.

History: 1973 c 133 s 23; 1973 c 770 s 15; 1974 c 75 s 1-3; 1974 c 76 s 13; 1974 c 232 s 1; 1976 c 279 s 1,2; 1977 c 399 s 18,19; 1980 c 607 art 14 s 45 subd 2; s 46; 1981 c 224 s 191; 1983 c 286 s 20; 1986 c 444; 1987 c 259 s 77,78; 1991 c 345 art 4 s 12; 1992 c 480 s 5; 1998 c 390 art 2 s 16; 1999 c 222 art 17 s 7; 2002 c 392 art 11 s 52; 2006 c 271 art 3 s 47