

353.27 PUBLIC EMPLOYEES RETIREMENT FUND.

Subdivision 1. **Income; disbursements.** There is a special fund known as the "public employees retirement fund," the "retirement fund," or the "fund," which must include all the assets of the association. This fund must be credited with all contributions, all interest and all other income authorized by law. From this fund there is appropriated the payments authorized by this chapter in the amounts and at such time provided herein, including the expenses of administering the fund.

Subd. 2. **Employee contribution.** (a) For a basic member, the employee contribution is 9.10 percent of salary. For a coordinated member, the employee contribution is six percent of salary plus any contribution rate adjustment under subdivision 3b.

(b) These contributions must be made by deduction from salary as defined in section 353.01, subdivision 10, in the manner provided in subdivision 4. If any portion of a member's salary is paid from other than public funds, the member's employee contribution must be based on the total salary received by the member from all sources.

Subd. 3. **Employer contribution.** (a) For a basic member, the employer contribution is 9.10 percent of salary. For a coordinated member, the employer contribution is six percent of salary plus any contribution rate adjustment under subdivision 3b.

(b) This contribution must be made from funds available to the employing subdivision by the means and in the manner provided in section 353.28.

Subd. 3a. **Additional employer contribution.** (a) An additional employer contribution must be made equal to the following applicable percentage of the total salary amount for "basic members" and for "coordinated members":

	Basic Program	Coordinated Program
Effective before January 1, 2006	2.68	.43
Effective January 1, 2006	2.68	.50
Effective January 1, 2009	2.68	.75
Effective January 1, 2010	2.68	1.00

These contributions must be made from funds available to the employing subdivision by the means and in the manner provided in section 353.28.

(b) The coordinated program contribution rates set forth in paragraph (a) effective for January 1, 2009, or January 1, 2010, must not be implemented if, following receipt of the July 1, 2008, or July 1, 2009, annual actuarial valuation reports under section 356.215, respectively,

the actuarially required contributions are equal to or less than the total rates under this section in effect as of January 1, 2008.

(c) This subdivision is repealed once the actuarial value of the assets of the plan equal or exceed the actuarial accrued liability of the plan as determined by the actuary retained under sections 356.214 and 356.215. The repeal is effective on the first day of the first full pay period occurring after March 31 of the calendar year following the issuance of the actuarial valuation upon which the repeal is based.

Subd. 3b. Change in employee and employer contributions in certain instances. (a) For purposes of this section, a contribution sufficiency exists if the total of the employee contribution under subdivision 2, the employer contribution under subdivision 3, the additional employer contribution under subdivision 3a, and any additional contribution previously imposed under this subdivision exceeds the total of the normal cost, the administrative expenses, and the amortization contribution of the retirement plan as reported in the most recent actuarial valuation of the retirement plan prepared by the actuary retained under section 356.214 and prepared under section 356.215 and the standards for actuarial work of the Legislative Commission on Pensions and Retirement. For purposes of this section, a contribution deficiency exists if the total of the employee contributions under subdivision 2, the employer contributions under subdivision 3, the additional employer contribution under subdivision 3a, and any additional contribution previously imposed under this subdivision is less than the total of the normal cost, the administrative expenses, and the amortization contribution of the retirement plan as reported in the most recent actuarial valuation of the retirement plan prepared by the actuary retained under section 356.214 and prepared under section 356.215 and the standards for actuarial work of the Legislative Commission on Pensions and Retirement.

(b) Employee and employer contributions under subdivisions 2 and 3 must be adjusted:

(1) if, after July 1, 2010, the regular actuarial valuations of the general employees retirement plan of the Public Employees Retirement Association under section 356.215 indicate that there is a contribution sufficiency under paragraph (a) equal to or greater than 0.5 percent of covered payroll for two consecutive years, the coordinated program employee and employer contribution rates must be decreased as determined under paragraph (c) to a level such that the sufficiency equals no more than 0.25 percent of covered payroll based on the most recent actuarial valuation; or

(2) if, after July 1, 2010, the regular actuarial valuations of the general employees retirement plan of the Public Employees Retirement Association under section 356.215 indicate that there is a deficiency equal to or greater than 0.5 percent of covered payroll for two consecutive years, the coordinated program employee and employer contribution rates must be increased as determined

under paragraph (c) to a level such that no deficiency exists based on the most recent actuarial valuation.

(c) The contribution rate increase or decrease must be determined by the executive director of the Public Employees Retirement Association, must be reported to the chair and the executive director of the Legislative Commission on Pensions and Retirement on or before the next February 1, and, if the Legislative Commission on Pensions and Retirement does not recommend against the rate change or does not recommend a modification in the rate change, is effective on the next July 1 following the determination by the executive director that a contribution deficiency or sufficiency has existed for two consecutive fiscal years based on the most recent actuarial valuations under section 356.215. If the actuarially required contribution exceeds or is less than the total support provided by the combined employee and employer contribution rates by more than 0.5 percent of covered payroll, the coordinated program employee and employer contribution rates must be adjusted incrementally over one or more years to a level such that there remains a contribution sufficiency of no more than 0.25 percent of covered payroll.

(d) No incremental adjustment may exceed 0.25 percent for either the coordinated program employee and employer contribution rates per year in which any adjustment is implemented. A contribution rate adjustment under this subdivision must not be made until at least two years have passed since fully implementing a previous adjustment under this subdivision.

Subd. 4. Employer reporting requirements; contributions; member status. (a) A representative authorized by the head of each department shall deduct employee contributions from the salary of each employee who qualifies for membership under this chapter and remit payment in a manner prescribed by the executive director for the aggregate amount of the employee contributions, the employer contributions and the additional employer contributions to be received within 14 calendar days. The head of each department or the person's designee shall for each pay period submit to the association a salary deduction report in the format prescribed by the executive director. Data required to be submitted as part of salary deduction reporting must include, but are not limited to:

- (1) the legal names and Social Security numbers of employees who are members;
- (2) the amount of each employee's salary deduction;
- (3) the amount of salary from which each deduction was made;
- (4) the beginning and ending dates of the payroll period covered and the date of actual payment; and
- (5) adjustments or corrections covering past pay periods.

(b) Employers must furnish the data required for enrollment for each new employee who qualifies for membership in the format prescribed by the executive director. The required enrollment data on new employees must be submitted to the association prior to or concurrent with the submission of the initial employee salary deduction. The employer shall also report to the association all member employment status changes, such as leaves of absence, terminations, and death, and shall report the effective dates of those changes, on an ongoing basis for the payroll cycle in which they occur. The employer shall furnish data, forms, and reports as may be required by the executive director for proper administration of the retirement system. Before implementing new or different computerized reporting requirements, the executive director shall give appropriate advance notice to governmental subdivisions to allow time for system modifications.

(c) Notwithstanding paragraph (a), the association may provide for less frequent reporting and payments for small employers.

Subd. 5. [Repealed, 1973 c 753 s 85]

Subd. 5a. [Repealed, 1992 c 443 s 2]

Subd. 6. [Repealed, 1971 c 106 s 40]

Subd. 7. **Adjustment for erroneous receipts or disbursements.** (a) Except as provided in paragraph (b), erroneous employee deductions and erroneous employer contributions and additional employer contributions for a person, who otherwise does not qualify for membership under this chapter, are considered:

(1) valid if the initial erroneous deduction began before January 1, 1990. Upon determination of the error by the association, the person may continue membership in the association while employed in the same position for which erroneous deductions were taken, or file a written election to terminate membership and apply for a refund upon termination of public service or defer an annuity under section 353.34; or

(2) invalid, if the initial erroneous employee deduction began on or after January 1, 1990. Upon determination of the error, the association shall refund all erroneous employee deductions and all erroneous employer contributions as specified in paragraph (e). No person may claim a right to continued or past membership in the association based on erroneous deductions which began on or after January 1, 1990.

(b) Erroneous deductions taken from the salary of a person who did not qualify for membership in the association by virtue of concurrent employment before July 1, 1978, which required contributions to another retirement fund or relief association established for the benefit of officers and employees of a governmental subdivision, are invalid. Upon discovery of the

error, the association shall remove all invalid service and, upon termination of public service, the association shall refund all erroneous employee deductions to the person, with interest as determined under section 353.34, subdivision 2, and all erroneous employer contributions without interest to the employer. This paragraph has both retroactive and prospective application.

(c) Adjustments to correct employer contributions and employee deductions taken in error from amounts which are not salary under section 353.01, subdivision 10, must be made as specified in paragraph (e). The period of adjustment must be limited to the fiscal year in which the error is discovered by the association and the immediate two preceding fiscal years.

(d) If there is evidence of fraud or other misconduct on the part of the employee or the employer, the board of trustees may authorize adjustments to the account of a member or former member to correct erroneous employee deductions and employer contributions on invalid salary and the recovery of any overpayments for a period longer than provided for under paragraph (c).

(e) Upon discovery of the receipt of erroneous employee deductions and employer contributions under paragraph (a), clause (2), or paragraph (c), the association must require the employer to discontinue the erroneous employee deductions and erroneous employer contributions reported on behalf of a member. Upon discontinuation, the association must:

(1) for a member, provide a refund or credit to the employer in the amount of the invalid employee deductions with interest on the invalid employee deductions at the rate specified under section 353.34, subdivision 2, from the received date of each invalid salary transaction through the date the credit or refund is made; and the employer must pay the refunded employee deductions plus interest to the member;

(2) for a former member who:

(i) is not receiving a retirement annuity or benefit, return the erroneous employee deductions to the former member through a refund with interest at the rate specified under section 353.34, subdivision 2, from the received date of each invalid salary transaction through the date the credit or refund is made; or

(ii) is receiving a retirement annuity or disability benefit, or a person who is receiving an optional annuity or survivor benefit, for whom it has been determined an overpayment must be recovered, adjust the payment amount and recover the overpayments as provided under this section; and

(3) return the invalid employer contributions reported on behalf of a member or former member to the employer by providing a credit against future contributions payable by the employer.

(f) In the event that a salary warrant or check from which a deduction for the retirement fund was taken has been canceled or the amount of the warrant or check returned to the funds of the department making the payment, a refund of the sum deducted, or any portion of it that is required to adjust the deductions, must be made to the department or institution.

(g) If the accrual date of any retirement annuity, survivor benefit, or disability benefit is within the limitation period specified in paragraph (c), and an overpayment has resulted by using invalid service or salary, or due to any erroneous calculation procedure, the association must recalculate the annuity or benefit payable and recover any overpayment as provided under subdivision 7b.

(h) Notwithstanding the provisions of this subdivision, the association may apply the Revenue Procedures defined in the federal Internal Revenue Service Employee Plans Compliance Resolution System and not issue a refund of erroneous employee deductions and employer contributions or not recover a small overpayment of benefits if the cost to correct the error would exceed the amount of the member refund or overpayment.

(i) Any fees or penalties assessed by the federal Internal Revenue Service for any failure by an employer to follow the statutory requirements for reporting eligible members and salary must be paid by the employer.

Subd. 7a. Deductions or contributions transmitted by error. (a) If employee deductions and employer contributions were erroneously transmitted to the association, but should have been transmitted to another Minnesota public pension plan, the executive director shall transfer the erroneous employee deductions and employer contributions to the appropriate retirement fund or individual account, as applicable, without interest. The time limitations specified in subdivisions 7 and 12 do not apply.

(b) For purposes of this subdivision, a Minnesota public pension plan means a plan specified in section 356.30, subdivision 3, or the plans governed by chapters 353D and 354B.

(c) A potential transfer under paragraph (a) that is reasonably determined to cause the plan to fail to be a qualified plan under section 401(a) of the federal Internal Revenue Code, as amended, must not be made by the executive director of the association. Within 30 days after being notified by the Public Employees Retirement Association of an unmade potential transfer under this paragraph, the employer of the affected person must transmit an amount representing the applicable salary deductions and employer contributions, without interest, to the retirement fund of the appropriate Minnesota public pension plan, or to the applicable individual account if the proper coverage is by a defined contribution plan. The association must provide the employing unit a credit for the amount of the erroneous salary deductions and employer contributions against future contributions from the employer. If the employing unit receives a credit under this

paragraph, the employing unit is responsible for refunding to the applicable employee any amount that had been erroneously deducted from the person's salary.

Subd. 7b. Recovery of overpayments. (a) In the event the executive director determines that an overpaid annuity or benefit that is the result of invalid salary included in the average salary used to calculate the payment amount must be recovered, the association must determine the amount of the employee deductions taken in error on the invalid salary, with interest determined in the manner provided for a former member under subdivision 7, paragraph (e), clause (2), item (i), and must subtract that amount from the total annuity or benefit overpayment, and the remaining balance of the overpaid annuity or benefit, if any, must be recovered.

(b) If the invalid employee deductions plus interest exceed the amount of the overpaid benefits, the balance must be refunded to the person to whom the benefit or annuity is being paid.

(c) Any invalid employer contributions reported on the invalid salary must be credited to the employer as provided in subdivision 7, paragraph (e).

(d) If a member or former member, who is receiving a retirement annuity or disability benefit for which an overpayment is being recovered, dies before recovery of the overpayment is completed and a joint and survivor optional annuity is payable, the remaining balance of the overpaid annuity or benefit must continue to be recovered from the payment to the optional annuity beneficiary.

(e) If the association finds that a refund has been overpaid to a former member, beneficiary or other person, the amount of the overpayment must be recovered.

(f) The board of trustees shall adopt policies directing the period of time and manner for the collection of any overpaid retirement or optional annuity, and survivor or disability benefit, or a refund that the executive director determines must be recovered as provided under this section.

Subd. 7c. Limitation on additional plan coverage. No deductions for any plan under this chapter or chapter 353E may be taken from the salary of a person who is employed by a governmental subdivision under section 353.01, subdivision 6, and who is receiving disability benefit payments from any plan under this chapter or chapter 353E unless the person waives the right to further disability benefit payments.

Subd. 8. District court reporters; salary deductions. Deductions from the salary of a district court reporter in a judicial district consisting of two or more counties shall be made by the auditor of the county in which the bond and official oath of such district court reporter are filed, from the portion of salary paid by such county.

Subd. 9. **Fee officers; contributions; obligations of employers.** Any appointed or elected officer of a governmental subdivision who was or is a "public employee" within the meaning of section 353.01 and was or is a member of the fund and whose salary was or is paid in whole or in part from revenue derived by fees and assessments, shall pay employee contribution in the amount, at the time, and in the manner provided in subdivisions 2 and 4. This subdivision shall not apply to district court reporters. The employer contribution as provided in subdivision 3, and the additional employer contribution as provided in subdivision 3a, with respect to such service shall be paid by the governmental subdivision. This subdivision shall have both retroactive and prospective application as to all such members; and every employing governmental subdivision is deemed liable, retroactively and prospectively, for all employer and additional employer contributions for every such member in its employ. Delinquencies under this section shall be governed in all respects by section 353.28.

Subd. 10. **Employer exclusion reports.** The head of a department shall annually furnish the executive director with an exclusion report listing only those employees in potentially PERA-eligible positions who were not reported as members of the association and who worked during the school year for school employees and calendar year for nonschool employees. The department head must certify the accuracy and completeness of the exclusion report to the association. The executive director shall prescribe the manner and forms, including standardized exclusion codes, to be used by a governmental subdivision in preparing and filing exclusion reports. The executive director shall also check the exclusion report to ascertain whether any omissions have been made by a department head in the reporting of new public employees for membership. The executive director may delegate an association employee under section 353.03, subdivision 3a, paragraph (b), clause (5), to conduct a field audit to review the payroll records of a governmental subdivision.

Subd. 11. **Employers; required to furnish requested information.** (a) All governmental subdivisions shall furnish promptly such other information relative to the employment status of all employees or former employees, including, but not limited to, payroll abstracts pertaining to all past and present employees, as may be requested by the executive director, including schedules of salaries applicable to various categories of employment.

(b) In the event payroll abstract records have been lost or destroyed, for whatever reason or in whatever manner, so that such schedules of salaries cannot be furnished therefrom, the employing governmental subdivision, in lieu thereof, shall furnish to the association an estimate of the earnings of any employee or former employee for any period as may be requested by the executive director. If the association is provided a schedule of estimated earnings, the executive director is authorized to use the same as a basis for making whatever computations might be

necessary for determining obligations of the employee and employer to the retirement fund. If estimates are not furnished by the employer at the request of the executive director, the executive director may estimate the obligations of the employee and employer to the retirement fund based upon those records that are in its possession.

Subd. 12. **Omitted salary deductions; obligations.** (a) In the case of omission of required deductions from the salary of an employee, the department head or designee shall immediately, upon discovery, report the employee for membership and deduct the employee deductions under subdivision 4 during the current pay period or during the pay period immediately following the discovery of the omission. Payment for the omitted obligations may only be made in accordance with reporting procedures and methods established by the executive director.

(b) When the entire omission period of an employee does not exceed 60 days, the governmental subdivision may report and submit payment of the omitted employee deductions and the omitted employer contributions through the reporting processes under subdivision 4.

(c) When the omission period of an employee exceeds 60 days, the governmental subdivision shall furnish to the association sufficient data and documentation upon which the obligation for omitted employee and employer contributions can be calculated. The omitted employee deductions must be deducted from the employee's subsequent salary payment or payments and remitted to the association. The employee shall pay omitted employee deductions due for the 60 days prior to the end of the last pay period in the omission period during which salary was earned. The employer shall pay any remaining omitted employee deductions and any omitted employer contributions, plus cumulative interest at an annual rate of 8.5 percent compounded annually, from the date or dates each omitted employee contribution was first payable.

(d) An employer shall not hold an employee liable for omitted employee deductions beyond the pay period dates under paragraph (c), nor attempt to recover from the employee those employee deductions paid by the employer on behalf of the employee. Omitted deductions due under paragraph (c) which are not paid by the employee constitute a liability of the employer that failed to deduct the omitted deductions from the employee's salary. The employer shall make payment with interest at an annual rate of 8.5 percent compounded annually. Omitted employee deductions are no longer due if an employee terminates public service before making payment of omitted employee deductions to the association, but the employer remains liable to pay omitted employer contributions plus interest at an annual rate of 8.5 percent compounded annually from the date the contributions were first payable.

(e) The association may not commence action for the recovery of omitted employee deductions and employer contributions after the expiration of three calendar years after the

calendar year in which the contributions and deductions were omitted. Except as provided under paragraph (b), no payment may be made or accepted unless the association has already commenced action for recovery of omitted deductions. An action for recovery commences on the date of the mailing of any written correspondence from the association requesting information from the governmental subdivision upon which to determine whether or not omitted deductions occurred.

Subd. 12a. **Terminated employees: omitted deductions.** A terminated employee who has a period of employment in which previously omitted employer contributions were made under subdivision 12 but for whom no, or only partial, omitted employee contributions have been made, or a member who had prior coverage in the association for which previously omitted employer contributions were made under subdivision 12 but who terminated service before required omitted employee deductions could be withheld from salary, may pay the omitted employee deductions for the period on which omitted employer contributions were previously paid plus interest at an annual rate of 8.5 percent compounded annually. A terminated employee may pay the omitted employee deductions plus interest within six months of an initial notification from the association of eligibility to pay those omitted deductions. If a terminated employee is reemployed in a position covered under a public pension fund under section 356.30, subdivision 3, and elects to pay omitted employee deductions, payment must be made no later than six months after a subsequent termination of public service.

Subd. 12b. **Terminated employees: immediate eligibility.** If deductions were omitted from salary adjustments or final salary of a terminated employee who is immediately eligible to draw a monthly benefit, the employer shall pay the omitted employer and employer additional contributions plus interest on both the employer and employee amounts due at an annual rate of 8.5 percent compounded annually. The employee shall pay the employee deductions within six months of an initial notification from the association of eligibility to pay omitted deductions or the employee forfeits the right to make the payment.

Subd. 13. **Certain warrants canceled.** A warrant payable from the retirement fund remaining unpaid for a period of six months must be canceled into the retirement fund and not into the general fund.

Subd. 14. **Periods before initial coverage date.** (a) If an entity is determined to be a governmental subdivision due to receipt of a written notice of eligibility from the association, that employer and its employees are subject to the requirements of subdivision 12, effective retroactively to the date that the executive director of the association determines that the entity first met the definition of a governmental subdivision, if that date predates the notice of eligibility.

(b) If the retroactive time period under paragraph (a) exceeds three years, an employee is authorized to purchase service credit in the applicable Public Employees Retirement Association plan for the portion of the period in excess of three years, by making payment under section 356.551. Notwithstanding section 356.551, subdivision 2, regarding time limits on purchases, payment may be made anytime before termination of public service.

(c) This subdivision does not apply if the applicable employment under paragraph (a) included coverage by any public or private defined benefit or defined contribution retirement plan, other than a volunteer firefighters relief association. If this paragraph applies, an individual is prohibited from purchasing service credit for any period or periods specified in paragraph (a).

History: 1957 c 935 s 7; 1959 c 650 s 12,37,58; 1961 c 744 s 1; Ex1961 c 50 s 1; 1963 c 641 s 18; 1965 c 714 s 1-3; 1965 c 880 s 3; Ex1967 c 53 s 1-3; 1969 c 267 s 2; 1969 c 940 s 5; 1971 c 106 s 16,17; 1973 c 35 s 55; 1973 c 753 s 27-33; 1974 c 229 s 12,13; 1975 c 102 s 6; 1976 c 329 s 20; 1977 c 429 s 24; 1980 c 607 art 14 s 45 subd 2; 1981 c 180 s 6; 1982 c 404 s 5; 1983 c 73 s 1,2; 1983 c 286 s 7; 1984 c 564 s 21; 1Sp1985 c 7 s 13; 1986 c 444; 1987 c 284 art 5 s 4-6; 1988 c 709 art 5 s 10-15; 1989 c 319 art 3 s 7; art 13 s 30; 1990 c 570 art 11 s 5,6; 1991 c 341 s 8-14; 1992 c 432 art 2 s 6-8; 1992 c 513 art 4 s 40; 1992 c 598 art 2 s 2-4; 1993 c 307 art 4 s 17; 1994 c 508 art 1 s 2; 1994 c 528 art 2 s 8; 1997 c 233 art 1 s 38,39; 1998 c 390 art 9 s 1,2; 1999 c 222 art 2 s 5,6; 2000 c 461 art 3 s 14,15; 1Sp2001 c 10 art 11 s 13-16; 2002 c 392 art 3 s 6,7; 1Sp2005 c 8 art 5 s 1-4; art 10 s 47; 2006 c 212 art 3 s 33; 2006 c 271 art 3 s 16-18,47; 2007 c 134 art 2 s 22; 2008 c 349 art 5 s 19,20; 2009 c 169 art 1 s 32; art 4 s 9-12