

As a newly elected/appointed official there is important information to consider regarding participation in the Orange County Employees Retirement System (OCERS) Defined Benefit retirement plan.

Elected Officials

- Membership in the OCERS Defined Benefit retirement plan is optional.
- You must make an affirmative election indicating your desire to participate in the OCERS Defined Benefit retirement plan by completing the attached new member affidavit form (attachment).
- There is no time limit in which to elect to participate in the OCERS Defined Benefit retirement plan. You may make an election at any time while in office; however membership is prospective from the date your election and member affidavit are received by OCERS.
- Once an election to participate in the OCERS Defined Benefit retirement plan is made the election is considered IRREVOCABLE.
- If you have made an election to participate in the OCERS Defined Benefit retirement plan and you are elected/appointed into a new office you must make another election to participate in the OCERS Defined Benefit retirement plan for the period of service in the new office. If you are reelected for another term, your membership in OCERS will continue, unless you specifically notify OCERS that you do not want to be a member for the new term. You will also have an opportunity to rescind your membership election for the prior term and withdraw your member contributions plus interest.

Choosing your Retirement Benefit Formula

Once you have decided to participate in the OCERS retirement Defined Benefit plan you must select your retirement benefit formula, the **1.62% @ 65 plan** or the **2.7% @ 55 plan**. For more information on the details of each plan you should refer to the Benefit Formula comparison sheet in the forms/publications section of the OCERS web site or attend one of the new employee orientation meetings held monthly at OCERS' offices. Retirement contributions are mandatory for either plan and will be taken from your pay as soon as your benefit formula election is made.

Once you have made your election, your choice of benefit formula is irrevocable.

Instructions for Naming Your Beneficiary

1. You may name one person or any number of persons as your primary or alternate beneficiary.
 - a. **Primary Beneficiary:** A primary beneficiary is the person or persons who would receive a benefit from OCERS upon your death.
 - b. **Alternate Beneficiary:** An alternate beneficiary is the person or persons who would receive a benefit from OCERS if you have no living primary beneficiaries on the date of your death.
 - c. If you name more than one person in either category, you must indicate what percentage of the benefit each individual is to receive. If you do not indicate a percentage, the benefit will be divided into equal parts.
2. Your designated beneficiary will be valid until the date you file another Beneficiary Change Form. Please note that, under California state law, if you have at least five years of service with OCERS at the time your death, or your death is caused by a service-connected injury or illness, your spouse or dependent children have legal rights to any death benefits payable regardless of the beneficiaries designated on this affidavit (or the beneficiaries designated on any future Beneficiary Change Form you may file).

