

At Your Service

July 2018

Orange County Employees Retirement System

Quarterly Newsletter

Take Five Steps Toward Retirement Readiness

As you seriously think about moving into retirement, there are five key areas that can help you become retirement ready with respect to your OCERS benefits.

1. Know your plan. OCERS is a defined benefit plan that provides its members a lifetime monthly benefit upon retirement. Your benefit amount is based on your benefit formula, age at retirement, service credits and Final Average Salary. When planning for retirement, it is highly recommended that you attend OCERS' Pre-Retirement Sessions, which will provide you with a good overall understanding of your OCERS benefits and the retirement process (see page 6 of this issue).

2. Estimate your benefit. The myOCERS Member Self-Service portal features a customized benefit estimator that you can use to obtain an estimate of your monthly retirement benefits. Upon completing registration of your myOCERS account, you will gain access to the benefit estimator to help you target a retirement date based on your unique financial goals (see page 8 for more information on myOCERS).

3. Resolve divorce claims. As an active or deferred member, you cannot receive your first OCERS benefit payment while your divorce is pending, unless the Court has determined how the community property interest in your OCERS pension benefit will be divided. Benefits are payable when OCERS is joined as a party to the proceeding and receives a court-filed Judgment and/or Domestic Relations Order (DRO). The Judgment and/or DRO should clearly identify OCERS and how your benefit shall be divided.



4. Buy eligible service credit. OCERS allows you to purchase the following types of service credit: Extra Help, unpaid medical leaves, active military, workers compensation and public service (public service is for service under agencies that are non-federal and within the state of California only). Purchasing service will increase the total service credits used to calculate your retirement benefit, thereby increasing your benefit amount. However, you cannot receive credit for any service for which another agency will pay you a benefit. To request a cost estimate, you can submit the request through your myOCERS account or complete and return a "Request to Purchase Service Credit" form to OCERS.

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At Your Service



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Board of Retirement Meetings:

All regular business meetings are held in the OCERS Board Room at 9:00 a.m. (unless otherwise specified)

July 16, 2018

August 20, 2018

October 15, 2018

November 19, 2018

December 17, 2018

Agendas can be found at www.ocers.org.

This newsletter is intended to provide you with general information. It does not constitute legal advice, and OCERS cannot provide legal advice to members. If there are any discrepancies between the information in this newsletter and the law, the law will prevail. Should you have legal questions, you are advised to consult an attorney.

Safety Member Election Details Announced

Deputy Sheriff Roger Hilton of the Sheriff-Coroner Department was elected to the 7th Safety Member seat on the OCERS Board of Retirement and Jeremy Vallone, Fire Apparatus Engineer with the Orange County Fire Authority, was elected to the 10th Alternate Safety Member seat on the Board of Retirement.

The election was held on May 15, 2018. The Board of Supervisors certified the election on May 22.

The two members took office on July 1, 2018 and will hold their seats for a three-year term that ends on June 30, 2021.



OCERS is administered by the Board of Retirement, a group of ten trustees bound by the County Employees' Retirement Law of 1937. Of the ten members, four are appointed by the County Board of Supervisors; four (including the Safety Member and Alternate Safety Member) are elected by OCERS' active membership. One is elected by the retired membership. The County Treasurer serves as an ex-officio member. Board members serve three-year terms, with the exception of the County Treasurer, who serves during his or her tenure in office. For more information on the Board of Retirement, please visit OCERS' website.



Face the Future; Know your Numbers

OCERS will have an information table at three upcoming health fairs and we look forward to meeting members and answering general questions about OCERS and planning for retirement. In addition, OCERS will be utilizing a state-of-the-art application so members can see their “retirement face.”

A successful plan means knowing your numbers. OCERS staff will demonstrate features on the website such as the Benefits Calculator and the myOCERS member portal so you can run personalized benefit estimates and projections based on your personal retirement plan.

On Tuesday, September 11, OCERS will be at the annual OCEA Health Fair. The OCEA Health Fair will be held from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at OCEA Headquarters, 830 N. Ross Street, Santa Ana. For more information on that event, call OCEA at 714-835-3355.

OCERS staff has recently participated at several Health Fairs hosted by the Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA), including two different events in May 2018. Looking ahead to Thursday, October 4, OCERS will be at another OCTA site (the agency's headquarters at 550 S. Main Street, Orange), from 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.



OCERS' staff will also be at the Association of Orange County Deputy Sheriff's Office, 1600 N. Main Street, Santa Ana, for a Health Fair open to active and retired members of AOCDS; our staff will be there from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Thursday, October 4. Call 714-285-9903 for details.

At the two most recent events, OCERS' staff was able to meet with several hundred members. “At the OCTA Health Fair we attended in May, we assisted several members nearing retirement, and were able to answer specific questions they had about their retirement benefits,” said Robert Kinsler, Communications Manager. “We provided a number of quick estimates and also explained to other members how to register to use their myOCERS account.”

While many members are very informed about OCERS and their other retirement-related income, a lot of members think they are too young to start thinking about retirement. Having a successful retirement plan includes knowing your numbers from not only OCERS but also deferred compensation, savings, 401(k) and Social Security (if applicable). Know your Numbers!



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Andy Dolan Discovers Retirement Has Its Rewards

When it came time for Andy Dolan to consider retirement, he thought his preparation had taken every detail into account.

"I was 59, and in March of 2015 I saw all these people around me retiring," recalled Andy, who was employed as an office technician at the Social Services Agency (SSA) in Garden Grove.

"I was looking at the world and all the craziness. I thought 'I'm going to check on this – if I can do it at age 60 – I'm going out.' I looked at the numbers and I began to make plans to retire in one year."

A dedicated County of Orange employee with more than 25 years of service, Andy let his supervisors know of his impending retirement plans and he began to work to complete all outstanding assignments; he also trained others in his department who would be assuming his duties.

Things were going well, but in late 2015, just around the time he turned 60, Andy felt like something "just wasn't right." After undergoing various medical tests and learning he had an enlarged prostate, Andy had a detailed biopsy procedure and learned he had small traces of cancer.

Because the cancer was caught at the extreme early stages, Andy finished out his career with the County as planned and retired on St. Patrick's Day in 2016. A month later, he was ready to begin a medical treatment plan that would extend from April through early July of 2016.

"I opted for radiation," said Andy, explaining the treatment plan called for 38 individual treatments. He continues to have regular check-ups, but all results show his PSA scores (a test to screen for cancer in the prostate) are low and he now counts himself as a cancer survivor.

Andy's enthusiasm for living may well have played a part in his beating cancer. During his career he also found happiness with raising and training a two-time champion Pharaoh Hound named Rory. Rory is a member of a breed that has changed little since its development more than 5,000 years ago, and has long been recognized as the national dog of Malta (an island nation in the Mediterranean Sea).

Back in 2007, almost a decade before his retirement, Andy and John (his spouse) decided they wanted to get a dog.

"We looked at the American Kennel Club (AKC) website. They have a section where you answer questions such as where you live and how active you are. After you plug in your information, the AKC gives you a listing of possible breeds to match your lifestyle. The Pharaoh Hound is well suited for South-

ern California's Mediterranean climate and was among the breeds suggested for us." Andy and John were then able to meet with two Pharaoh Hound owners who had the breed at their home in Orange.

Andy was introduced to the close-knit community of those who breed and show Pharaoh



Rory at full extension

Retirement Has Its Rewards (continued from page 4)

Hounds, and he and John traveled to a number of events before Andy flew to the Pacific Northwest to pick up the couple's new Pharaoh Hound puppy in the little town of Ethel, Washington. Andy still recalls how it was Rory's "white tail tip" that led him to pick his future champion.

Since flying back with Rory a decade ago, Andy and Rory have been on quite the adventure. What started out as weekly obedience training in Yorba Linda for his "pet quality" dog soon expanded with Rory's first professional show in April 2009, then to larger shows at the Los Angeles Fairgrounds over the Memorial Day weekend (where Rory picked up a win in a special sweepstakes among puppies). Five months later, at the same venue, Rory earned his first "Best of Breed" among 'class' dogs.

Being a sighthound, Rory earned a championship in lure coursing in the Spring of 2010. "It was an amazing experience. All I did was allow Rory to do what is instinctual and he proved himself to be a running maniac who couldn't stop barking if he tried."

Rory competed through early 2011. In order to achieve AKC confirmation status, he had to earn 15 points (with 1-5 points given at any one show). Besides earning the number of points needed, he also had to win at least two "majors" where he had to compete against other dogs in his breed and win at least three, four or five points.

"It was grueling. He is retired; I'm exhausted," recalled Andy of the training, preparation and demanding schedule of dog shows. While he no longer takes Rory (whose official name with the AKC is DC Kr'msun Nefer-temu Worth His Wait in Gold SC CGC) to various dog shows he continues to maintain strong friendships with other Pharaoh Hound owners across the country.



Andy Dolan with his dog Rory

Andy, however, also has good advice for those still in the workforce.

"My last year during work, I was a Dutch uncle (a person giving firm but benevolent advice). Flat out, in terms of deferred comp, put as much money away as you can. Do it now. When you can, up it," Andy recalled of his advice to those he worked with at SSA. "I started with \$25 a pay period; I was eventually at \$150 at the end (of my career)."

Andy is also a believer in attending OCERS' Pre-Retirement Sessions, which he attended four or five times in the years leading up to retirement.

"You have to think about retirement early and constantly."

While getting ready for retirement, Andy had made up a list of projects that needed to be done. Because of the extra time and energy he has since retiring and subsequently beating cancer, almost all those things have been completed over the past two years.

"There is that sense of accomplishment that I am taking care of everything that's important to me," said Andy. "I am thoroughly enjoying retirement."

Pre-Retirement Sessions Key to Readiness

Are you thinking about retirement? Have you thought about all the key elements that are a part of your retirement planning, including calculating your retirement allowance from OCERS, signing up for Social Security and Medicare benefits, and considering how you want to take distributions of your Defined Contribution plan monies?

Your OCERS defined benefit pension is obviously an important part of the equation of preparing to meet your retirement goals, but you may have other programs to help you achieve financial security, including an optional 457 plan, Social Security and other savings. A successful retirement starts by understanding the benefits you can count on when you retire. If retirement is in your near future you should plan on attending OCERS'

Pre-Retirement Sessions which are designed to help members navigate the choices that impact employees approaching retirement.

The retirement-related sessions are designed to provide a wide-range of information and resources to help any active or deferred member take the necessary steps to make their move into retirement. All sessions will be held at OCERS, 2223 E. Wellington Avenue, Santa Ana.

The upcoming **Pre-Retirement Sessions** will be held on **Wednesdays, July 11 and 25; August 1 and 15; September 5 and 19, 2018**.

Due to limited seating, all attendees must register to attend at www.ocers.org.

Pre-Retirement Sessions Schedule

8 – 9:30 a.m.	Social Security and Medicare session
9:45 – 10 a.m.	Retired Employees Association of Orange County (REAO) session
10 – 11:30 a.m.	Orange County Employees Retirement System (OCERS) session
12:30 – 1:05 p.m.	County Deferred Compensation Plan (Empower Retirement) session
1:05 – 2:30 p.m.	County of Orange Retiree Medical session

Take Five Steps Toward Retirement Readiness

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5. Call us. If you are a member planning for and/or nearing retirement and have specific questions, feel free to call us. Use the "Member Services Directory" link on the OCERS home page to find the name and direct phone number of your Retirement Program Specialist.

For more information, visit www.ocers.org.

2017 CAFR Focuses on Public Health Services

The Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) tells OCERS' annual financial story. The CAFR provides detailed information on OCERS' assets, liabilities, additions and deductions for the 2017 calendar year. Additionally, both our operating costs and details about our investment returns are included in the CAFR.

Understanding the financial operations of OCERS helps our employers (also known as "plan sponsors"), members and various other stakeholders gain a greater understanding of the retirement system.

OCERS recognizes that prior to retiring from a career in public service, our members are dedicated to providing an array of services that benefit residents throughout Orange County. With many different services to choose from, this year's CAFR theme is "OCERS Members



"Serving the Public" with a focus on agencies whose members provide various public health services within our community. The Health Care Agency (HCA), Social Services Agency (SSA), Orange County In-Home Supportive Services Public Authority (IHSS) and Orange County Sanitation District are among the important service-minded agencies highlighted in the CAFR.

"When a member of the public picks up a copy of our CAFR, we want them to be immediately reminded of the value they receive from our members' dedicated service to the citizens of Orange County," said OCERS' CEO Steve Delaney. "In the document, we also get to highlight OCERS' adoption of a new Vision Statement and set of Values adopted during the year."

You can see the new CAFR for the year ended December 31, 2017 on the OCERS website Finance page.

Annual County of Orange Benefits Open Enrollment for Retirees Coming October 26 - November 16, 2018

The Annual County of Orange Benefits Open Enrollment for *eligible* retirees will start on October 26, 2018. You will be sent detailed information before Open Enrollment from the County and from the Benefits Center to your current mailing address on file. Please make sure that if you experience a change in address that you report that change directly to the Benefits Center, OCERS and any other organization you are affiliated with. We strongly encourage you to thoroughly review all materials sent from the County and the Benefits Center to you as soon as possible to ensure you are informed and have the most current information necessary to make the best decision regarding health plan choices for you and your family for 2019.

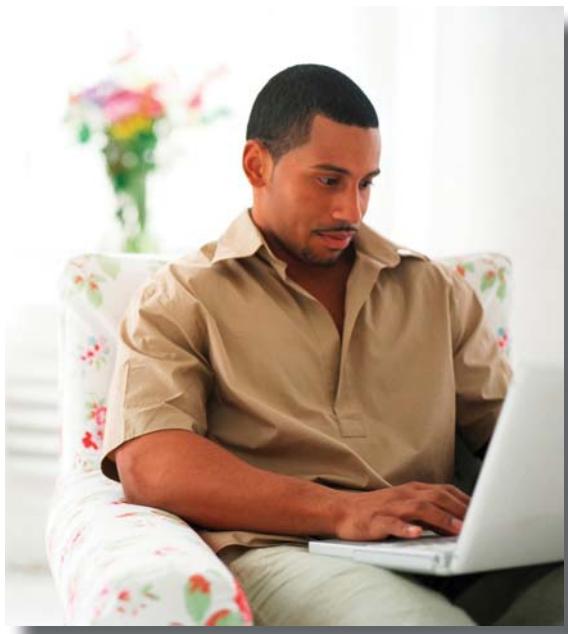
During Open Enrollment, the County of Orange and the Benefits Center will be available to support and assist you with your questions and concerns. There will be a series of Open Enrollment meetings in November. These meetings provide an overview of upcoming changes and provide the opportunity to ask questions of all the health plan representatives. Be sure to watch your mailbox and read all Open Enrollment materials carefully. For information about your current benefits, or to verify the Benefits Center has your current mailing address, please call the Benefits Resource Line toll-free at 1-800-858-7266.



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Your OCERS on myOCERS



myOCERS is our secure, self-service portal that allows you to quickly and easily access your personal information and conduct business with OCERS 24 hours a day 7 days a week.

If you are retired, you can view your payment history, see your 1099-R and even change your address and phone number. Active members can run benefit estimates, get a current account balance statement and update their beneficiary information.

Not registered yet? Go to www.ocers.org and click on the “myOCERS” link on the upper left corner.

Coming up in our next issue of
At Your Service...
OCERS by the Numbers