

Your CalSTRS retirement timeline

This timeline of events from the year before your retirement up to your first benefit payment gives you an idea of what to do and when. Your specific timeline, however, may differ.

- Activate your *myCalSTRS* account at **myCalSTRS.com**, if you haven't already. You can complete and submit your *Service Retirement Application*, sign up for direct deposit, update your address and more using *myCalSTRS*.
- Prepare for retirement early to avoid delays that may occur during the peak months of April–July.
- Register for a workshop or benefits planning session. Go to **CalSTRS.com/benefits-planning**.

Step 1

What to do

Activate your *myCalSTRS* account, if you haven't already.

Plan and research your retirement decisions. Read the *Your Retirement Guide* booklet, available at **CalSTRS.com**.

Attend a CalSTRS retirement planning webinar or workshop or benefits planning session conducted by CalSTRS benefits specialists.

Check to see if pending or new legislation may affect your benefits or influence the timing of your retirement.

When

10–12 months before your retirement date.

Step 2

What to do

Complete and submit your *Service Retirement Application* and other forms online using *myCalSTRS*. Step-by-step guidance helps you fill out the application accurately, resulting in faster processing.

Or complete and submit the paper version. Find the forms you'll need at **CalSTRS.com/forms**.

When

No earlier than six months before your requested retirement date.

What to do

Fill in Section 1 of the *Express Benefit Report* form and submit it to your employer to complete and submit to CalSTRS.

When

Your employer must submit the *Express Benefit Report* to CalSTRS within 30 days of your retirement date or the date CalSTRS receives your application, whichever is later.

Step 3

What to do

Check your email if you submitted your application on *myCalSTRS*. You'll receive an immediate email confirmation and a message if we need more information to process your application.

Review your award letter, which includes the amount of your monthly benefit, how your monthly benefit was calculated and the total amount of your contributions and interest.

Look for your first benefit payment.

When

Within 45 days of your retirement or the date your application is processed, whichever is later. Or sooner, if you apply using *myCalSTRS*.

The deadline to change or cancel your retirement application is 30 days after your first benefit payment is issued.

There could be changes in your monthly payment for several months beyond your retirement date as we receive and process additional information from your employer.

Applying for service retirement

Ready to retire? Complete and submit your *Service Retirement Application* and other forms online using *myCalSTRS*. Get prepared by reading the *Your Retirement Guide* booklet.

Complete and submit your forms online

You must submit your *Service Retirement Application* to CalSTRS before you'll receive a CalSTRS retirement benefit. Complete and submit your *Service Retirement Application* online using *myCalSTRS*. It's easy, fast and secure.

When you complete your application using *myCalSTRS*:

- You'll receive step-by-step guidance to complete your application correctly.
- Your member-specific information is auto-filled, saving you time.
- Your application is processed automatically, for a faster turnaround.
- You'll receive immediate email confirmation when CalSTRS receives your application and after it has been processed.
- You'll receive your award letter sooner.
- You'll receive prompt emails if we need additional information to process your application.

Service retirement benefit effective date

If you were unable to submit your *Service Retirement Application* before your retirement date, you can backdate your service retirement benefit effective date to as early as the day following the last day for which you were compensated. Your benefit effective date can be backdated no earlier than January 1, 2012, and must be after you complete any service credit purchase.

Do not submit your *Service Retirement Application* to your employer. Your employer is not responsible for submitting your retirement application to CalSTRS—you are. You'll need to notify your employer that you intend to retire from CalSTRS. You'll also need to resign from your position. Be sure to complete any forms your employer requires. CalSTRS will not notify your employer of your retirement.

Be sure to complete Section 1 of the *Express Benefit Report* form, then give it to your employer to complete and submit to CalSTRS.



Deadline for service retirement application changes

You have 30 days from the date your first benefit payment was issued to make changes or cancel your service retirement application. This includes options elected at retirement and preretirement option elections. If you cancel your service retirement, you must return all benefit payments within 45 days of receiving your first benefit payment. Use the *Service Retirement Application Change Request* form, available at [CalSTRS.com/forms](https://www.calstrs.com/forms), to make changes.



Retirement planning checklist

To help you plan for your CalSTRS retirement.

- Read *Your Retirement Guide* and the retirement planning sections of this handbook.**
- Go online to myCalSTRS.com** to activate your *myCalSTRS* account, if you haven't already.
- Estimate your monthly benefit using the online calculator at CalSTRS.com/calculators** or the benefit estimate worksheet on page 70.
- Sign up for a CalSTRS and Your Retirement benefits planning session.** Go to CalSTRS.com/benefits-planning to learn more.
- Consider purchasing permissive service credit or redepositing service credit** to increase your benefit if you did not do so earlier in your career. See the booklet, *Purchase Additional Service Credit*, at CalSTRS.com/publications. You must complete your service credit purchase before your retirement date.
- Consider making a preretirement election of an option** to provide a lifetime monthly benefit to one or more persons if you should die before retirement. Find the *Preretirement Election of an Option* form on *myCalSTRS* and at CalSTRS.com/forms.
- Consider rolling over your Defined Benefit Supplement funds to CalSTRS Pension2.** See page 41.
- Check to see if pending or new legislation may affect your benefits** or influence the timing of your retirement. Sources include your legislative representative, your union representative and CalSTRS.com/legislation.

- Gather clear, unaltered photocopies of the necessary documents.**

If you're electing an option beneficiary:

- Birth certificate or other acceptable verification of birthdate, such as a birth record, state-issued ID, passport photo ID page or certain military IDs, for each option beneficiary.
- A copy of a marriage certificate or declaration of domestic partnership from the Secretary of State if you're naming a spouse or registered domestic partner.
- Marriage certificate or other proof of a name change, if your option beneficiary's name is different from the name on the birth certificate.

If you elected an option beneficiary before retirement, you may need to submit the items above.

If a portion of your CalSTRS benefit was awarded to another party:

- A complete court-filed copy of your community property settlement documents. For more information, see the *Community Property Guide* at CalSTRS.com/publications.

- Notify your employer that you intend to retire** and ask about forms your employer may require for you to resign from your position. Also let your employer know if you plan to set up a health insurance deduction from your benefit payments.

Give your employer the *Express Benefit Report* form after you complete section 1 to confirm your last day of employment and any unused sick leave.

- Submit your *Service Retirement Application*** using *myCalSTRS* or go to CalSTRS.com/forms to print the application, complete it and mail it to CalSTRS. You must submit the application to us to receive a retirement benefit.