

Disabled Members Who Return to Work

Introduction

The return to work program is designed to enable disabled members to return to the work force without losing benefits they may be entitled to.

Notifying PERS of your return to work

Any member receiving disability retirement benefits who returns to work must provide written notification to PERS within 30 days of employment or self-employment. The mailing address is:

PERS, PO Box 23700, Tigard, OR 97281-3700, Attention Disability Unit

This notification should include the date you started working; the name, address, and phone number of your employer; and whether you work part-time or full-time. You must also report self-employment.

Once you have notified PERS, you will receive a written acknowledgment outlining PERS requirements.

Medical release for employment

If you have been medically released to work in your former occupation or other work for which qualified or a job similar in compensation and location you are no longer eligible for PERS disability retirement benefits.

Your disability retirement checks will stop, and your account balance will be reinstated to the amount that was in your account at the time you became disabled.

You may be eligible for regular retirement or to withdraw your PERS account. For further information, contact the Customer Service Center at 503-598-7377 or toll-free 888-320-7377.

This fact sheet is not a legal reference and is not a complete statement of the laws or PERS administrative rules. In any conflict between this fact sheet and Oregon laws or administrative rules, the laws and administrative rules shall prevail.

You may be eligible for other PERS benefits. To obtain information regarding other PERS benefits, please contact the Customer Service Center at 503-598-7377 or toll-free 888-320-7377.

Trial employment with PERS-covered employers

Members who have been medically released for trial employment or who have not been released medically but would like to try to return to work must meet PERS' requirements based on type of employment.

PERS-qualifying employment

If you are reemployed in a qualifying position with a PERS-covered employer, you will have a 90-day trial period during which your claim will be held open. Disability retirement benefits will not be paid during the trial period. (A qualifying position is a position with one or more PERS-covered employers requiring a total of 600 or more hours in a 12-month period.)

If you are unable to continue employment for the full 90 days due to the disabling injury or illness, your disability retirement benefits may be reinstated without requiring you to reapply. Current medical documentation is required and should promptly be sent to PERS.

If you are able to continue employment beyond 90 days, your disability retirement benefits will be discontinued and your account balance will be reinstated to the amount that was in your account when you became disabled. You may also be invoiced for any overpayments issued to you by our office.

Non-PERS-qualifying employment

You may return to work with a PERS-covered employer if your position(s) with one or more PERS-covered employers does not qualify for PERS membership (requires less than 600 hours in a calendar year).

You are required to submit copies of your pay records (e.g., check stubs, statements). Your disability retirement benefits will be adjusted by any gross income paid to you which, when added to your gross disability retirement check, exceeds your gross monthly salary at the time you retired for disability. Pay records for the period must be reported monthly to PERS.

If you are unable to continue employment due to the disabling injury or illness, your disability retirement benefits will continue.

Private industry employment

Notify PERS in writing within 30 days of returning to work with a non-PERS employer. Include the name and address of your employer and your position. Report changes in your work status in writing to PERS.

You are required to submit copies of your pay records (e.g., check stubs, statements). Your disability retirement benefits will be adjusted by any gross income paid to you which, when added to your gross disability retirement check, exceeds your gross monthly salary at the time you retired for disability. You must report paid income in writing monthly to PERS.

Self-employment

Self-employment is treated the same as being employed in the private industry. If you are self-employed and make an income similar to the job you held when your disability retirement began, you are no longer eligible for PERS disability retirement benefits.

You must provide PERS with itemized statements of income and business expenses each month. PERS may also request copies of income tax returns.

Overpaid benefits

Once you are no longer eligible for disability retirement benefits, PERS will invoice you for any overpaid benefits issued to you from PERS.

Normal retirement age

Members who have reached normal retirement age are no longer required to report income to PERS, and the disability retirement benefit payment shall no longer be adjusted by the amount of monthly income earned or paid.

If you return to work in a PERS-qualifying position (600 hours or more per year), your benefits will be stopped, and you will be required to return any overpayments to PERS.

When reemployed in a PERS-qualifying position, you may not exceed the 90-day trial period and continue to receive PERS disability retirement benefits.