

Retiree Health Insurance

PERS offers health and dental insurance to PERS retirees and eligible dependents.

Health and Dental Insurance

When You Retire

Within 90 days following your effective retirement date, you may apply for coverage under one of the PERS group health and dental insurance plans. You may also enroll in the PERS health and dental insurance programs later, provided you were in a group plan for at least the two prior years. These plans provide coverage for your spouse and eligible dependents if you wish. The insurance premiums may be deducted from your monthly retirement benefit.

For information on PERS-sponsored health and dental insurance, call 503-224-7377 (in the Portland area) or 800-768-7377 (outside of Portland) or write to the PERS Health Insurance Program at PO Box 40187, Portland, OR 97240-0187. You should also determine what retiree insurance plans are available through your employer or as a dependent on your spouse's insurance. For information on employer-sponsored health insurance, contact your personnel or payroll office.

Eligibility

This information is a summary of the Oregon PERS Administrative Rule OAR 459-035-0020 for enrolling in PERS-sponsored health plans. If you have any questions about your eligibility for enrollment, or RHIA or RHIPA contributions, or would like a copy of the complete eligibility rules, please call the PERS Health Insurance Program at 1-800-768-7377 or visit http://arcweb.sos.state.or.us/rules/OAR_default.html.

Eligible Persons

An "eligible person" includes an eligible retiree, an eligible spouse, an eligible dependent, or an eligible surviving spouse or dependent. The PERS Health Insurance Program reviews eligibility upon receiving enrollment forms. The categories of "eligible persons" are as follows:

1. An eligible retiree means a PERS member who is receiving a service or disability retirement allowance or benefit under PERS or who received an optional lump sum payment.
2. An eligible spouse means the spouse of an eligible retiree.
3. An eligible Dependent Domestic Partner means a person who has a relationship with and resides with a PERS retiree, the PERS retiree is providing over one-half of the financial support for the person and have claimed that person on their most recent federal tax return. For more detailed information regarding requirements for coverage, contact the PERS Health Insurance Program at 1-800-768-7377.
4. An eligible dependent means a dependent child who satisfies one of the requirements listed in sub-sections (a), (b), (c) that follow:
 - a) The child is less than nineteen (19) years of age.
 - b) The child is less than twenty-four (24) years of age, and is attending school full-time, such as an academic, trade or vocational school. You will be asked to submit documentation for proof of a full-time status.

- c) The child is nineteen (19) years of age or more and has either been continuously dependent upon the retiree since childhood due to disability or physical handicap, or had been covered under a healthcare insurance plan as the retiree's dependent for at least twenty-four (24) consecutive months immediately prior to enrollment in a PERS-sponsored health insurance plan. In either case, the following additional requirements must also be satisfied.
 - The child is not able to achieve self-support through his or her work due to developmental disability, mental retardation or physical handicap as verified by a physician and accepted by the carrier, and
 - The incapacity is continuous and began prior to the date the child would otherwise have ceased to be an eligible dependent.
5. An eligible surviving spouse or dependent means:
 - a) The surviving spouse or dependent of a deceased retired PERS member, or
 - b) The surviving spouse or dependent of a deceased PERS member who was not retired but who was eligible to a retiree at the time of death.
6. In no event shall an eligible person as defined in this rule be entitled to coverage as both a retiree and a spouse or dependent.

Please note: Upon reaching age 65 or becoming Medicare eligible due to a disability, a retiree must be enrolled in Parts A and B of Medicare to be eligible for PERS-sponsored health coverage. If you drop your Part B, you will no longer be eligible for coverage through the PERS Health Insurance Program.

When You Become Medicare-Eligible

When you become eligible for Medicare, you can enroll in a PERS-sponsored Medicare companion insurance plan. Insurance information will be mailed automatically approximately 120 days prior to your 65th birthday. **For most retirees, this will be the last enrollment opportunity.**

The Oregon Legislature has directed PERS to establish a Retirement Health Insurance Account (RHIA) to help pay the Medicare companion health insurance premiums of eligible retirees. A monthly contribution, up to \$60 per retiree, is applied to PERS-sponsored Medicare companion insurance costs. Premium payments exceeding that amount can be deducted from your monthly benefit checks.

You are eligible to receive a PERS RHIA contribution if you:

- are enrolled in a PERS-sponsored health plan; and
- are enrolled in both Medicare Part A (hospital insurance) and Part B (medical insurance); and
- have a minimum of eight years' PERS-qualifying service when you retired (or the equivalent of eight years if you receive a disability benefit); and
- are receiving an ongoing retirement benefit from PERS.

Subsidy for State of Oregon Retirees

Members who are retired from the state of Oregon and are not eligible for Medicare may be eligible for another subsidy. ORS 238.415 establishes a Retiree Health Insurance Premium Account (RHIPA) fund to help pay the monthly health insurance premiums for certain state retirees.

Spouse or Dependent Coverage Upon a Retiree's Death

A spouse or dependent of a deceased retired member may be eligible for PERS health care coverage. A surviving spouse or dependent of a deceased PERS retiree may also be eligible for the RHIA or RHIPA contributions if the deceased member met the eligibility requirements while living. While the retiree is living, however, the retiree's eligibility does not qualify spouses and dependents for the RHIA or RHIPA contribution. To be eligible for the RHIA contribution, the surviving spouse must be enrolled in Medicare Parts A and B and be receiving a PERS benefit payment.

Eligibility requirements and subsidy amounts can be obtained by calling the PERS Health Insurance Program telephone numbers listed below.

Remember, for information on PERS-sponsored health and dental insurance, call 503-224-7377 or toll-free 800-768-7377. You may also access the PERS Retiree Insurance Programs Web site at www.pershealth.com