

PERS EMPLOYER ADVISORY GROUP MEETING

Date: 01/23/2026

Time: 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Location: Microsoft Teams

TYPE OF MEETING	Employer Advisory Group (EAG) meeting	
FACILITATOR	Sam Paris	
NOTE TAKER	Chloe Harris	
CALL-IN NUMBER	+1 971-300-4342	Phone conference ID: 881 244 608#
ATTENDEES	<p>EAG members: Anne Willis, University of Oregon; Diana Herb, Tualatin Valley Fire & Rescue; Gina Turner, Portland State University; Matt Warner, League of Oregon Cities; Robert Tintle, Deschutes County; Sharie Lewis, Parkrose School District; Shauna Tobiasson, Department of Administrative Services; Stacy Michaelson, Portland Public Schools</p> <p>PERS staff: Brandon Armatas, Elli Probasco, Ethan Erickson, Heather Case, Jake Winship, Jonathan Yost, Kai Turner, Kevin Olineck, Kristi Ivers, Laurel Galego, Matthew Graves, Rachel Schizas, Richard Horsford, Sam Paris, Shawn Harper, Theresa Bechtol, Tina Swenson, Troy Phillips</p> <p>Guests: Amber Schonbrod, Anita Gurule, Brendan Watkins, Carol Samuels, Cheryl Carder, Daniel Adatto, Donna Chastain, Ian Peterson, Jackie Olsen, Jennifer Jones, Jon Grover, Lori Sattenspiel, Morgan Allen, Moriah, Nancy, Sandra LeHoullier</p>	

Public Employees Retirement System (PERS) Employer Advisory Group (EAG) Meeting

NOTES

TOPIC	Welcome	Sam Paris
TIME: 10:00–10:01		
Sam Paris, PERS Chief Operating Officer, welcomed the Employer Advisory Group (EAG) and reviewed the meeting agenda .		

TOPIC	Director's Office update	Kevin Olineck
TIME: 10:01–10:06		
Kevin Olineck, PERS Director, introduced new Board Member, Robert Tintle and new PERS Deputy Director, Kai Turner . Kevin gave an overview of highlights from the December 2025 PERS Board meeting. The board meeting packet is available on the PERS website .		
December board recap The December 5, 2025, PERS Board meeting (PDF) topics included the board self-evaluation, financial modeling, actuarial contract, and the board scorecard report.		

January 2026 PERS Board meeting preview

- Senate Bill 1566 reporting requirements.
 - School District Unfunded Liability Fund (SDULF).
 - Employer Incentive Fund (EIF).
- Preliminary Earnings Crediting and Reserving.
 - Oregon Public Employee Retirement Fund (OPERF) 9.7% return for 2025.
 - Information will be posted to the [PERS website](#).

TOPIC	Legislative update	Heather Case
TIME: 10:06 - 10:16		
Heather Case, PERS Senior Policy Advisor, presented legislative updates.		
January legislative days These sessions are held around five times a year to hear reports, but they do not pass bills. January 2026 legislative days were January 13-15. Topics covered included: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Progress report for House Bill (HB) 4045 (2024) implementation.• Progress report for PERS Modernization program.• Budget request for PERS Modernization program.<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ Most of agency's budget request was approved.• Development and operations budget request within the modernization program request was deferred. February short session 2026 Legislative Session begins February 2, 2026. Topics will include: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Preliminary earnings crediting reporting.• Senate Bill (SB) 1566 reporting – status of Employer Incentive Fund (EIF), School Districts Unfunded Liability Fund (SDULF), and Unfunded Actuarial Liability Resolution Program (UALRP).• Budget adjustments will likely impact SB 1566 programs above.• Very few bills related to PERS are planned.<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ One bill that will affect PERS proposes to add multiple different groups of jobs to the definition of "Police Officer". This would reclassify those positions from General Service to Police & Fire.• Budget reallocation will occur during short session.• PERS budget is considered "other" funds, but PERS may still have budget reduction.		

2027 legislative concepts

Development of 2027 legislative concepts have begun. A government stakeholder meeting is scheduled for February.

Changes to PERS Health Insurance Program (PHIP) subsidies and subsidy eligibility will be proposed again (previously proposed in 2025 with SB 847). This request includes:

- Increase the Retirement Health Insurance Account (RHIA) subsidy from \$60-\$100/month, no adjustment for inflation.
- Open eligibility to both subsidy programs to Oregon Public Service Retirement Plan (OPSRP) members.

This mitigates effect on employer rates from the original plan introduced in SB 847.

EAG knowledge request

Heather requested feedback from EAG attendees: "Changing salary reporting for local governments from "earned when earned" to "earned when paid" to align all employer reporting. If you have questions or feedback and want to email, please email heather.case@pers.oregon.gov.

Changing to "earned when paid" will help maintain consistency in processing. With "earned when earned" we often see missing start and end dates in EDX. This change would not affect how you pay your employees.

Please reach out to your payroll with this information.

Comment: Robert Tintle - I ran the concept by payroll person for Deschutes County, and she thought it was great. When there are errors and you need to make a change, it can delay.

TOPIC	Modernization update	Kristi Ivers
TIME: 10:16 - 10:29		
Kristi Ivers, PERS Modernization Program Director, presented an update on modernization efforts.		
Telephony Modernization Project <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Project is current in execution stage (Phase 2).<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ Adding options for natural language processing. Allows members to either press or say the number when calling into PERS.◦ Adding options to schedule callbacks for other than same day.• Phase 2 is set to go live on 2/26.• Currently gathering high-level requirements for Phase 3.• Aiming for completion by June 2026.		
JClarety UI/UX Project (JUMP) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Project is currently in the execution stage.		

- Deadline to meet Americans with Disability Act (ADA) compliance on track for April 2026.
- Business functional testing (BFT) was completed on time - 11/26/25.
- User Acceptance Testing (UAT) began 1/13/26.
- Deployment scheduled for 4/9/26.
- Phase 2 will begin after Phase 1 is completed.

Pension Administration System (PAS) Modernization Project

- Currently in pre-initiation stage.
- Starting 11/3/25, requirement-gathering sessions have been held with interested parties
- Elli Probasco (Project Owner) spoke on the themes emerging from this process:
 - Lack of automation.
 - Operational complexity.
 - Chat/online service vs. calling.
 - Technical debt.
- Upcoming activities:
 - Request for proposal (RFP) for specialized consultant to help write the Pension Administration System (PAS) RFP.
 - Should have approval early next week.
 - Preparing for PAS RFP.
 - It will likely take a year from the point of onboarding the specialized consultant.
- PERS is expecting to gather requirements from employers between March and May of 2026. This depends on when the specialized consultant is onboarded. Reviewed high-level iterative PAS timeline through Q4 2027.

Q: Shauna Tobiasson – What will gathering employer pain points will look like? Timing requirements?

A: Kristi Ivers – Virtual meetings will be scheduled. We can accommodate other methods; whichever methods work for you. You can send in your requirements via email as well.

TOPIC	Actuarial update	Troy Phillips
TIME: 10:29–10:42		

Troy Phillips, PERS Actuarial Business Specialist, presented an update on actuarial activities.

December 2026 Milliman financial modeling

Steady return model estimates values using a specific steady rate of return (ROR) over 20 years. This model showed:

- Estimates that employer base pension rates are projected to stay steady 2025-27.
- Rates are decreasing as new OPSRP members replace existing Tier 1/Tier 2 members.
- UAL decreases due to estimated year end 2025 investment returns and contributions.
 - At a steady +6.9% return, UAL declines and reaches \$0 at year-end 2036.

Variable return model develops ranges of values rather than a single value using a simulation using 10,000 different trials. This model showed:

- Assume median 20-year return of 7.44% with 13.51% annual standard deviation.
- Rates for 2027-29 based on modeled returns for the period ending 12/31/25.

Expiring Side Accounts Project

- Task force was created October 2025.
- Monitoring expiring side accounts.
- Identify side accounts that are amortizing prematurely.
- Goal is to keep employers informed.
- Significant impact on contribution rates for employers.
- Have been reaching out to employers in time to prepare for subsequent rate increase instead of allowing large negative balance to accrue.

Employer Incentive Fund (EIF)

- As of 12/31/25 the fund has distributed \$32,182,398 in matching funds.
 - Anticipating four more deposits totaling \$3,222,937 in Q1 of 2026.
- Current cycle ends 3/31/26.
- Employer payments must be received by 3/31/26 or employer forfeits match.

Update to Employer Rate Projection Tool (ERPT)

- Data within tool has been updated.
- User guide can be found [here](#).
- We really encourage employers to use this tool!

Advisory evaluations

- 2024 valuations are available on the [website](#).
 - ER statistical info through 12/31/25.
 - View estimated contribution rates for 2027-29.
 - Useful for budget planning.
 - Estimates only.
- Troy reviewed how valuation reports are organized.

Earnings

- 2025 earnings
 - OPERF prelim was more than 6.9%.
 - Expect contribution rates to be lower for 2027-29 biennium than 2024 advisory valuation estimates.

Q: Carol Samuels – Regarding EIF and 3/31 deadline: What happens if payments aren't received by the deadline? Are you moving employers to the waiting list?

A: Jake Winship - If we don't receive payments by deadline, the amount available for match will be made available to a particular employer whose original match was reduced because funds were not available. This employer must be made whole before any match is available to employers on the waiting list. It is unlikely that we will get to any employers on the waiting list.

Topic	Employer Service Center update	Laurel Galego/Brandon Armatas
Time: 10:42–10:53		
Laurel Galego, Employer Service Center (ESC) Business Operations Supervisor, Rachel Schizas, Employer Trainer, and Brandon Armatas, Data Services Section Manager and Deputy Chief Operating Officer, gave an ESC update.		
Employer Announcement 106 – Retroactive Changes (Laurel)		
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Announcement sent in April, 2025.When requesting changes be made to employment information for a closed year, ESC may require documentation.<ul style="list-style-type: none">Send an email or attach to the Demographic Change Request (DCR) form.Most common retroactive requests include hire intent and missing hours.Submitting required documents will help ensure timely service.		
Employer-reporting Webinars (Rachel)		
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Large effort in 2025 for employer reporting webinars.Future webinar dates are now listed on the training webpage.Video recordings of past webinars are now available.Eight total webinars in 2025 with 1,266 attendees.Planning for monthly webinars in 2026.		
Employer Training resources can be found here .		
Major Fraction of the Month Update (Brandon)		
Major Fraction of the Month (MFM) is the basis for how retirement credit for PERS members is earned. MFM has administrative rules from both OAR 459-010-0014 and OAR 459-075-0150, but these included two separate standards. One based on dates of employment, and one based on actual hours of employment.		
To resolve this, SB 851 (2025) established a single standard for PERS with a new definition of MFM: ... "a month: (a) in which an active member is employed for more than one-half of the total calendar days in that calendar month; and (b) in which the member is being paid a salary by a participating public employer for hours worked in that calendar month."		
The change to Major Fraction of the Month does not operationally impact employers, however, it does affect Leave without Pay (LWOP):		
<ul style="list-style-type: none">The previous standard length of LWOP that disqualifies a month from earning service credit was 11+ <u>business</u> days.The new standard length of LWOP that disqualifies a month from earning service credit is half or more of the <u>calendar</u> days in a month.<ul style="list-style-type: none">Months with 30 or 31 days – members would need to have been employed for at least 16 days.Months with 28 or 29 days - members would need to have been employed for at least 15 days.		

Salary Limit & Member Redirect Numbers

- Salary limit increased from \$238,567 in 2025 to \$245,724 in 2026.
- Member redirect monthly threshold increased from \$3,777 in 2025 to \$3,890 in 2026.

Comment: Robert Tintle – I ran the changes for MFM by our payroll team and we noticed that this change should make this simpler for us.

TOPIC	Communications update	Shawn Harper
TIME: 10:53–11:06		
	Shawn Harper, Employer Communications Specialist, gave an employer communications update.	
Annual Reports Published		
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>2025 PERS By the Numbers</i><ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ Latest statistics in an easily digestible report.• <i>PERS Annual Comprehensive Financial Report</i><ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ Source data for <i>PERS by Numbers</i>.◦ Detailed financial information that PERS is required to report.• <i>PERS Popular Annual Financial Report</i><ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ Simplified version of the financial report.		
PERS-Treasury Webinars		
PERS partnered with Treasury department to host education webinars for PERS employers and members. These webinars explained how the PERS Fund is invested and managed. Future webinars will be planned.		
<u>Employers/Partners session: January, 20 2026</u>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 250 registered• 160 attendees		
<u>Members/Retirees session: January 22, 2026</u>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1000 registered• 500 on waitlist• 600 attendees		
Shawn opened the floor for comments from EAG meeting attendees:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Sharie Lewis – I attended the member session on Thursday. Enjoyed learning about investments. I wish there was more time in the Q&A session. There were a lot of good questions in the chat that didn't get answered.</i><ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ <i>Jonathan Yost – I recognize there were a lot of questions. Compiling a Q&A sheet that will be sent out as a follow-up next week.</i>• <i>Sanda LeHoullier - I attended and felt transparency is always good. It allowed us to hear updated information.</i>		

- *Ethan Erickson - I enjoyed seeing what I believe were graphs or models showing how what we're planning for today will be realized 30 years into the future.*
- *Robert Tintle – Attended both sessions. Found them both useful. They were both similar in the content, but the Q&A was different. It may be beneficial to do a separate webinar on benefits for employees.*
 - *Jonathan Yost - We have PERS Expo in October that covers more benefit information. This series is finance specific.*

Updated Materials for December/January

- Resources with service credit updates:
 - Guide 1, *Overview of PERS*.
 - Guide 11, *Reporting a Leave*.
 - This guide is on hold as we discuss how to report calendar days without excess burden on employer reporters.
 - Guide 16, *Reporting a Retirement*.
 - *Detail 1 Member Demographics Fields quick-reference guide*.
- Resources with average overtime updates:
 - Guide 18, *Reporting or Changing Average Overtime*.
 - *Detail 1 Member Demographics Fields quick-reference guide*.
- Resource with EDX error messages:
 - Guide 6, *Correcting Suspended Records*.
 - More error messages and how to handle them.
- New guide about changing Information for a prior year.
 - Instructions for requesting information changes for closed year.
 - When supporting documentation is needed, which types of documentation.
 - Answers to sample questions and scenarios.

TOPIC	Open discussion	Sam Paris
Time: 11:06–11:08		
Sam Paris shared an announcement regarding EAG:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ EAG has three vacancies in our member list. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Two vacancies in League of Oregon Cities. ○ One vacancy in Oregon Community College. 		

If you have recommendations or would like to fill a member spot, please email Employer_Advisory_Group@pers.oregon.gov.

Next meeting facilitator: Sam Paris
Next meeting date and time: Friday, 4/24/26, 10 a.m. to 12 p.m.

EAG information: [Employer Advisory Group webpage](#)