



## CHECKLIST FOR RETIREMENT PLANNING

Now that you're considering retirement, it's time to take a more in-depth look at exactly what the steps are and when you should be doing them. Remember, applying for retirement requires careful thought and planning. It's best to start compiling your retirement checklist several years before your actual retirement date.

### Three to Five Years Prior to Your Retirement:

- Attend a LACERA Pre-Retirement Workshop.
- Create your own Retirement Benefit Estimate on My LACERA, found on [lacera.com](http://lacera.com).
- Maximize contributions to your deferred compensation and/or savings plans.
- Maximize your pensionable earnings; purchase service credit.
- Speak with a LACERA Retirement Benefits Specialist.
- Target a possible retirement date.

### Six Months Prior to Your Retirement:

- Call LACERA at 800-786-6464 to request a **Retirement Benefit Estimate and Election form**.
- Update your beneficiary record.

### Two Months Prior to Your Retirement:

- Meet with a LACERA Retirement Benefits Specialist to assist you in preparing your retirement paperwork. The Specialist will provide you with enrollment forms for LACERA-administered retiree medical and dental insurance.

Bring the following documents with you:

- Your completed Retirement Benefit Estimate and Election Form.
- Your original Certified Marriage Certificate or Certificate of Registered Domestic Partnership.\*
- LACERA Beneficiary Designation Form and your beneficiary's original certified birth certificate (for Unmodified+Plus or Options 2, 3, or 4).
- Completed Direct Deposit application with a voided check from your checking account.  
*If you are a new retiree, we suggest enrolling in a Direct Deposit account prior to your retirement date to ensure your first retirement allowance is received according to schedule.\*\**
- Completed Tax Withholding form W-4/DE-4P. (Per IRS and California Franchise Tax Board regulations, if you do not fill out a withholding form, tax will be withheld as if you were married and claiming three withholding allowances.)
- Notify your department of your retirement date.
- Prepare your finances to complete any outstanding service credit contracts (contracts must be paid within 120 days following retirement).

### If You Submit Your Retirement Documents by Mail:

You may write a letter to LACERA indicating you're electing to retire, and fax it to us at: **626-564-6155**. **You must also mail the original paper copy of your Retirement Benefit Estimate and Election form to LACERA.** The faxed form will be processed once we receive the mailed original document.

### Related documents you may need to submit:

- If you were divorced during your County employment**, you must provide LACERA with a conformed copy (with the court clerk's filing date stamp and the judge's signature) of all the pages of your Judgment of Dissolution and any other orders directing division of benefits.
- If you are in the process of a divorce at the time of retirement**, LACERA cannot pay your retirement allowance until the Judgment of Dissolution of Marriage is final and a court order directing the community property division (QDRO) of your LACERA benefits is received.
- If you are a Plan E Member** with service prior to 1983, or a contributory member selecting the Pension Advance Option—to insure accuracy, we recommend you submit your Social Security Statement.
- LACERA-administered **medical and/or dental insurance** enrollment forms.
- Original certified birth certificate for any **dependents that will be covered** under LACERA-administered health and/or dental insurance.

\*If you were married or in a domestic partnership at least one year prior to retirement.

\*\*LACERA is mindful of getting our retirees their payment in a timely manner. However, if incorrect information is recorded, delays in processing or unforeseen banking issues may occur. If this is the case, your retirement allowance may be paid by check. Mailed checks typically take 3-5 business days to receive. You will continue to be paid by check until your Direct Deposit begins.

### Additional Materials

The Direct Deposit application, W-4P/DE-4P (Tax Withholding form), and Beneficiary information can be obtained in a variety of ways: by signing in to **My LACERA**, by visiting the **Brochures & Forms** page of [lacera.com](http://lacera.com), or by calling our Call Center at 800-786-6464.

# Retiring? Talk to us, we can help!

## RESOURCES

### Call Center

Our knowledgeable Retirement Benefits Specialists in the Call Center are available to answer your retirement-related questions Monday through Friday from 7:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. To speak with one of them, call 800-786-6464.

### Member Service Center

One-on-one consultations with a Retirement Benefits Specialist are available at our Member Service Center on a walk-in basis Monday through Friday from 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Appointments may be scheduled by calling 800-786-6464, or online at lacera.com.

### Email

You can communicate with LACERA via email at [welcome@lacera.com](mailto:welcome@lacera.com).

### lacera.com

Visit [lacera.com](http://lacera.com) for the latest information on matters related to retirement and LACERA policies, procedures, and annual reports. Including:

- An expanded “Planning to Retire” section with useful tips and videos
- A Brochures & Forms section, where you can find a variety of helpful material
- And much more!

### My LACERA

The secure member-only feature that serves as your private office on [lacera.com](http://lacera.com) and allows you to perform a variety of transactions, including:

- A Retirement Benefit Estimate
- Updating your profile
- And much more

### Workshops

Get the retirement information you need to retire with confidence. Attend the Pre-Retirement Workshop three to five years before your desired retirement date to learn valuable retirement strategies. The workshop schedule is online.

### Spotlight on Retirement

Retirees receive our quarterly newsletter, *Spotlight*. It focuses on member service enhancements, administrative procedures, retiree healthcare benefits, legislation impacting retirees, and general information regarding the overall retirement system.

## lacera.com: Your 24/7 Retirement Resource

- Link to the latest web pages and documents
- Enter Search word or Search by Topic
- Specific web sections for New, Active, and Retired Members
- Sign Up or Sign In to My LACERA

The screenshot shows the LACERA website homepage. At the top, there is a navigation menu with links for 'About Us', 'LACERA Accomplishments', 'Retirement Board', 'Investment Board', 'Careers', 'RFPs', 'Contact Us', and 'My LACERA'. Below the menu is a search bar with a 'Search by Topic' button. The main content area features a 'Welcome To LACERA' section with contact information: 'Call: 800-786-6464 (toll-free), 626-564-6132 (local), 1-626-564-6132 (international)', 'Email: [welcome@lacera.com](mailto:welcome@lacera.com)', and 'Mail: 300 N. Lake Ave., Pasadena, CA 91101'. It also includes a 'Manage your LACERA account' link. To the right, a 'WHAT'S NEW' section lists recent updates, including '10-8-14 Agenda: BOR IBL and OOC', 'BOR 10-7-14 Agenda', '10-8-14 Agenda: SOI Public/Private Equity and Portfolio Risk', 'DPS 10-7-14 Agenda', 'LACERA Annomy Appointed to HAPPA Board', 'Staying Healthy Together: Fall Workshop', and '8-14-14 Minutes: BOR IBL and OOC'. At the bottom, there are three promotional banners: 'Appointment and Workshop Reservation System', 'Retiree Healthcare Eligibility • Enrollment Plan Info • Medicare', and 'my LACERA SIGN UP OR SIGN IN Your Private Office on lacera.com'.