

News for
Retired Members


Spotlight

Spring 2024
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LOS ANGELES COUNTY EMPLOYEES RETIREMENT ASSOCIATION

Board of Retirement Approves Maximum COLA Increase



On February 7, 2024, the Board of Retirement approved a 3.5 percent cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) change for retirees and eligible payees. All retirees and eligible payees will receive the maximum allowable COLA under their plans:

- General Plan and Safety A: 3.0 percent increase
- General Plans B, C, D and Safety B: 2.0 percent increase
- General Plan E members who retired on and after June 4, 2002: up to a 2.0 percent increase*
- PEPRA General Plan G and Safety C: 2.0 percent increase

The increase, effective April 1, 2024, will be reflected in your April 30 benefit payment.

*See footnote 2 under the Accumulation Chart on page 5 for more details.

How the COLA Increase Was Determined

The increase is based on the change in the cost of living from December 2022 to December 2023, as reflected in the Bureau

of Labor Statistics Consumer Price Index (CPI) for all urban consumers in the Los Angeles-Long Beach-Anaheim metro area. The 2023 calendar year-to-date change is 3.5 percent. When rounded to the nearest one-half percent, as prescribed by law, the resulting COLA change is a 3.5 percent increase. The rounded COLA percentage is used to determine and apply the COLA change under each plan.

COLA Accumulation

If the COLA percentage change exceeds the maximum allowable amount, under the provisions of LACERA retirement plans, the excess CPI percentage is accumulated to supplement future COLA benefits. The longer you have been retired or receiving a survivor's allowance, the higher your COLA accumulation balance may have reached. In years when the COLA change is below the plan maximum, LACERA deducts amounts from the COLA Accumulation to fund the maximum increase allowable under each plan.

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FROM THE EXECUTIVE DESK

SANTOS H. KREIMANN, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

- LUIS A. LUGO, DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
- LAURA GUGLIELMO AND JJ POPOWICH, ASSISTANT EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

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Chief Deputy County Treasurer and Tax Collector
Acting Ex-Officio Trustee*

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Elected by Safety Members

DEBBIE MARTIN

Elected by Retired Members

NICOLE MI

Elected by General Members

DAVID E. RYU

Appointed by Board of Supervisors

*When ex-officio trustee is absent

New Year, Fresh Look

Hello members, and welcome to our first newsletter of 2024! We hope you like our new design, which our in-house Communications team revamped to be easier to read, more modern, and consistent with our new style guidelines.

New Board Lineups

We have had several Board changes and are glad to welcome our new and returning trustees for their terms effective January 1, 2024, through December 31, 2026: Newly elected Trustees Nancy Durazo (BOR), Debbie Martin (BOI), and Nicole Mi (BOI); reelected Trustees JP Harris (BOR) and Les Robbins (BOR); reappointed Trustee Patrick Jones (BOI); and newly appointed Trustee Michael Gatto (BOI). In addition, BOI Trustee David Ryu was newly added to the BOR, and prior BOI Trustee Wayne Moore was appointed to the BOR in December 2023.

Read more about our new trustees on page 4.

Strategic Action Plans Take Shape

We continue to make steady progress toward our strategic priorities while internally focusing on our revised mission, vision, and values as part of building our “One LACERA” culture to better serve you. In mid-October 2023, our executive team, divisional managers, and supervisors held the first in a series of meetings dedicated to developing action plans for achieving each strategic priority, and they prioritized nine objectives that we will focus on in 2024. Teams have been assigned to each objective, and they are enthusiastically engaging to create and execute the work plans around each objective. These prioritized objectives include:

- Establishing a Member Experience Council and enhancing the Retiree Healthcare experience as part of our Superior Member Service priority

- Implementing enterprise business intelligence and knowledge management initiatives as part of our Innovation Through Technology priority
- Improving and simplifying our hiring process and implementing our LEAD initiative (aimed at leading effectively, ensuring equity and accessibility, achieving inclusivity and belonging, and driving diversity) as part of our Investing in People priority
- Developing our enterprise compliance and ethics program as part of our Compliance and Enterprise Risk Management priority
- Developing organizational tools and controls to support fiscal responsibility and our Investments Office as part of our Fiscal Durability priority

The teams will identify budget needs and draft their workplans in the first quarter of the year. Once approved by their executive sponsor, the teams will implement and execute the workplans in the remainder of the year. Starting around April, be sure to check the strategic priorities under our Strategic Planning page at lacera.com/leadership/strategic-plan, where we’ll be including actionable items from the plans, including any milestones and metrics for tracking our progress.

New Online Features and Updates

As part of our Superior Member Experience efforts already underway, we have been improving the retirement process for active members, which has benefits for retired members as well. First, we recently launched an online application process in conjunction with a new retirement counseling model and self-help tools and collateral—improvements that should help mitigate the spikes in call volumes during the busy retirement season and ensure the availability of retirement benefits specialists for all callers. In addition, as part of the overhaul, our subject matter experts have

identified ways to streamline our Retiree Healthcare processes and provide more user-friendly materials.

We also updated the My LACERA dashboard in January to provide you the information and self-service options you need the most, conveniently accessible right when you log in. See below for more details or log in to your account to check it out.

Until my next article, thank you for your ongoing contributions to our community. Take care and have a happy and healthy 2024!



Enroll in Direct Deposit



If you are receiving a physical check for your retirement allowance, we urge you to make the switch to direct deposit as the safest and most efficient way to receive your benefits. Payments via check present a variety of risks that can be eliminated by electing to be paid via direct deposit. Receiving your retirement benefits by check carries the risk of your check being intercepted by mailbox thieves (an increasingly common crime), the risk of your check being lost in the mail, and the risk of significant payment delays due to late mail delivery.

It's easy to sign up for direct deposit. If you're ready to enroll, please choose one of the following enrollment options:

- Visit lacera.com, log in to your My LACERA member portal, and select Direct Deposit on the dashboard.
- Download or request a mailed Direct Deposit Application from lacera.com. From the homepage, click on the Forms & Publications tile, then Manage Your Retirement Payments.
- Call Member Services at 800-786-6464 and a LACERA retirement benefit specialist will be glad to assist you.

Your direct deposit will begin the same month if we receive your form by the 13th of the month (or the last business day before the 13th if it falls on a weekend or holiday).

My LACERA

See What's New!

We recently updated the My LACERA dashboard to present your account information in clearly grouped categories and provide links to the most frequently accessed features for your plan. Now when you log in to My LACERA, you will see panels with the following:

- Your allowance payment information, and a quick link to generate a pension verification letter for any financial transactions requiring proof of income
- Your Retiree Healthcare summary
- Your primary beneficiaries
- For members who have returned to work under the 120-day rule, a tracking tool of your accumulated hours
- Account maintenance options

Not signed up? Visit lacera.com and click on the green My LACERA button at the top right of any page to get registered and access your account.





LACERA Accomplishments

Meet Our New Trustees

LACERA welcomes the following newly elected and appointed Board trustees, who started their terms in January. For more detailed biographies, visit www.lacera.com/leadership.



Nancy Durazo

Nancy Durazo was elected by general members to the Board of Retirement. She has broad administrative and managerial experience in the private and public sectors. Her community involvement includes serving as a neighborhood council president and board member for the Pacoima Credit Union and nonprofit Homes Fur All. She attended Azusa Pacific University and Southern New Hampshire University.



Debbie Martin

Debbie Martin was elected by retired members to the Board of Investments. A certified public accountant and fraud examiner, Martin has 35 years of experience in six L.A. County departments, where she served as Chief Deputy Director and Operations Manager, in addition to other positions of responsibility. Martin also sits on the RELAC Board of Directors. She earned her Bachelor's Degree at CSU Long Beach and Master of Public Administration from CSU Northridge.



Mike Gatto

Mike Gatto was appointed to the Board of Investments by Supervisor Janice Hahn. He is an attorney and former California State Assemblyman who authored several landmark pieces of legislation, including the state's first Rainy Day Fund. He is currently a managing partner of a small law firm, advising on governmental and regulatory issues. Gatto is also a national news commentator and board member for the A-Mark Foundation. He graduated Magna Cum Laude from Loyola Law School after completing his Bachelor of Arts at UCLA.



Nicole Mi

Nicole Mi was elected by general members to the Board of Investments. She is a California-licensed civil and traffic engineer, L.A. County Public Works' program and operations manager, and entrepreneur. She holds both Bachelor and Master of Science degrees from U.C. Irvine, and an Executive MBA from UCLA. She is also a board member on the Metropolitan L.A. Branch of the American Society of Civil Engineers and an advocate for STEM education.

Welcome Back



Wayne Moore

Returning trustee Wayne Moore was appointed to the Board of Retirement in December 2023 by Supervisor Holly Mitchell. He previously served on the Board of Investments from February 2017 to December 2020.

Moore's public service career includes 25 years in leadership positions for the Metropolitan Transportation Authority, City of L.A. Public Works and Transportation departments, and Southern California Association of Governments. He is a prior Commissioner on the City of L.A. Fire and Police Pension Board and currently sits on boards for WellNest and the Bridge Builders Foundation. A U.S. Air Force veteran, Moore holds a B.S. in Finance and M.S. in Public Administration from CSU Los Angeles.

How the 2024 COLA Accumulation Was Calculated

In years when the CPI percentage change exceeds the applied COLA, LACERA adds amounts to the COLA Accumulation. Since this year's change exceeds the 3.0 percent maximum

allowed in Plans A and the 2.0 percent maximum for all other plans, the corresponding excess for each plan is added to the COLA Accumulation (0.5 percent for Plans A; 1.5 percent for all other plans).

The chart below shows the COLA Accumulation percentages for all retirees and survivors as of April 2024.

Retirement Dates	Plan	Maximum Cost-of Living Increase	CPI Change	Accumulation as of April 2023	Adjustment April 2024	Accumulation as of April 2024
Prior to 4/1/81	A	3.0%	3.5%	10.8%	0.5%	11.3%
4/1/81-3/31/22	A	3.0%	3.5%	5.5%	0.5%	6.0%
4/1/22-3/31/23	A	3.0%	3.5%	1.9%	0.5%	2.4%
4/1/23-3/31/24	A	3.0%	3.5%	0.0%	0.5%	0.5%
4/1/77-3/31/91	B, C, D	2.0%	3.5%	20.0%	1.5%	21.5% ¹
4/1/91-3/31/92	B, C, D	2.0%	3.5%	18.8%	1.5%	20.3%
4/1/92-3/31/00	B, C, D	2.0%	3.5%	18.2%	1.5%	19.7%
4/1/00-3/31/01	B, C, D	2.0%	3.5%	17.9%	1.5%	19.4%
4/1/01-3/31/02	B, C, D	2.0%	3.5%	16.2%	1.5%	17.7%
4/1/02-3/31/03	B, C, D	2.0%	3.5%	16.1%	1.5%	17.6%
4/1/03-3/31/05	B, C, D	2.0%	3.5%	14.4%	1.5%	15.9%
4/1/05-3/31/06	B, C, D	2.0%	3.5%	12.0%	1.5%	13.5%
4/1/06-3/31/18	B, C, D	2.0%	3.5%	10.8%	1.5%	12.3%
4/1/18-3/31/19	B, C, D	2.0%	3.5%	9.2%	1.5%	10.7%
4/1/19-3/31/20	B, C, D	2.0%	3.5%	8.0%	1.5%	9.5%
4/1/20-3/31/22	B, C, D	2.0%	3.5%	7.5%	1.5%	9.0%
4/1/22-3/31/23	B, C, D	2.0%	3.5%	2.9%	1.5%	4.4%
4/1/23-3/31/24	B, C, D	2.0%	3.5%	0.0%	1.5%	1.5%
4/1/02-3/31/03	E ²	2.0%	3.5%	16.1%	1.5%	17.6%
4/1/03-3/31/05	E ²	2.0%	3.5%	14.4%	1.5%	15.9%
4/1/05-3/31/06	E ²	2.0%	3.5%	12.0%	1.5%	13.5%
4/1/06-3/31/18	E ²	2.0%	3.5%	10.8%	1.5%	12.3%
4/1/18-3/31/19	E ²	2.0%	3.5%	9.2%	1.5%	10.7%
4/1/19-3/31/20	E ²	2.0%	3.5%	8.0%	1.5%	9.5%
4/1/20-3/31/22	E ²	2.0%	3.5%	7.5%	1.5%	9.0%
4/1/22-3/31/23	E ²	2.0%	3.5%	2.9%	1.5%	4.4%
4/1/23-3/31/24	E ²	2.0%	3.5%	0.0%	1.5%	1.5%
1/1/13-3/31/18	PEPRA Plans G and Safety C	2.0%	3.5%	10.8%	1.5%	12.3%
4/1/18-3/31/19	PEPRA Plans G and Safety C	2.0%	3.5%	9.2%	1.5%	10.7%
4/1/19-3/31/20	PEPRA Plans G and Safety C	2.0%	3.5%	8.0%	1.5%	9.5%
4/1/20-3/31/22	PEPRA Plans G and Safety C	2.0%	3.5%	7.5%	1.5%	9.0%
4/1/22-3/31/23	PEPRA Plans G and Safety C	2.0%	3.5%	2.9%	1.5%	4.4%
4/1/23-3/31/24	PEPRA Plans G and Safety C	2.0%	3.5%	0.0%	1.5%	1.5%

¹Amount reflects -2.9 percent STAR benefit adjustment in 2024.

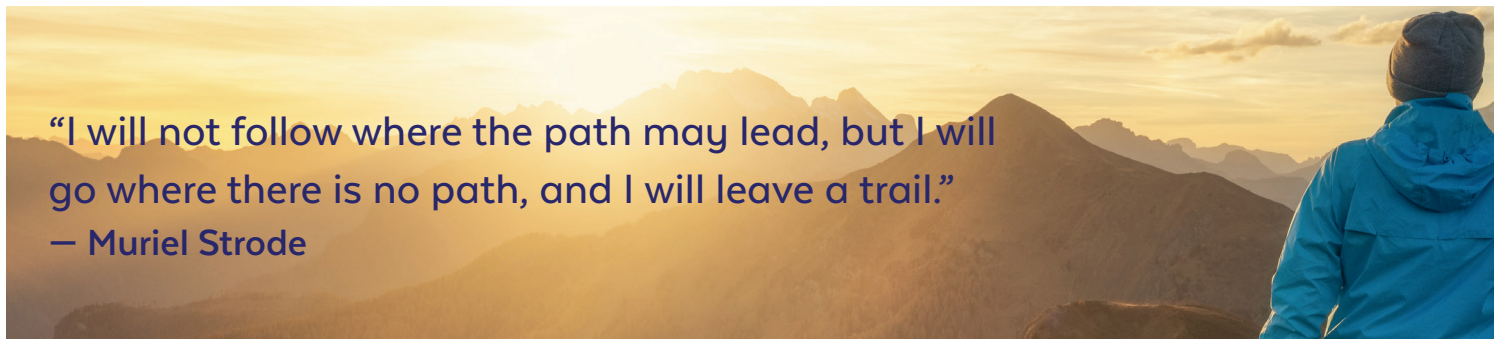
²Plan E COLA increases apply only to service credit earned after June 4, 2002, and any purchased Plan E Elective COLA. Plan E members who retired after June 4, 2002, will receive up to a 2.0 percent COLA increase. The portion of the 2.0 percent COLA is based upon a ratio of the months of service earned after June 4, 2002, plus any purchased Plan E Elective COLA, divided by the total months of service.

Three Things: April Fools' Day



Days dedicated to pranks have woven their whimsy across the globe for centuries. Many countries uphold their unique April Fools' traditions, but the advent of technology has also propelled the jesting spirit of April 1 beyond national boundaries, transforming it into a shared worldwide experience. Here are some foolish facts about the day when laughter is the best medicine, and trust is optional.

- Origin theories for April Fools' Day go all the way back to rowdy ancient Roman and Hindu spring festivals, but the adoption of the Gregorian calendar during Europe's Middle Ages could also be the source. (After January 1 was officially established as New Year's Day, those who continued to celebrate the new year on March 25 or around Easter were called April fools.)
- In 1957, the BBC pulled off one of the most famous pranks of all time during its newscast, airing a 3-minute staged segment that featured a Swiss family harvesting a bumper crop from their "spaghetti tree." Hundreds of viewers called the network questioning the authenticity of the segment, while others asked about how they could cultivate their own trees.
- Corporate pranks have featured memorable fake ads and stunts, like Taco Bell's 1996 full-page newspaper ad announcing its purchase and renaming of the Liberty Bell to reduce the country's debt. Google, too, is renowned for its April 1 traditions, unveiling mock products such as a bubble wrap keyboard, cloud data center on Mars, translators for alien languages and business jargon, and pet collars with a voice-to-text feature.



"I will not follow where the path may lead, but I will go where there is no path, and I will leave a trail."
— Muriel Strode

Payday Calendar

Your monthly retirement allowance check is payable on the last business day of the month.

March 2024						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	H	26	M	28	D	30
31						

April 2024						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	M	27
28	29	D				

May 2024						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	H	28	M	30	D	

M = Check Mailing Date **D** = Direct Deposit Date **H** = Holiday

Highlight on **Greek American Heritage Month**

As March heralds Greek American Heritage Month, Los Angeles County takes a moment to recognize our local community as well as the ancient Hellenic cultural contributions to philosophy, art, architecture, literature, democratic governance, and even athletics (in the form of the Olympic Games), all of which are evident to this today. The Greek American community, with its storied history and vibrant traditions, has played a pivotal role in shaping various facets of life in L.A., from the culinary delights of Mediterranean cuisine to the flourishing arts and business sectors.

The melting pot of cultures in Los Angeles has been notably enriched by the Greek American presence. Landmarks like the St. Sophia Cathedral west of downtown not only serve as spiritual hubs but as cultural beacons, echoing the community's commitment to preserving and sharing its heritage. This month, we honor the profound impact of Greek Americans and embrace the spirit of philoxenia—the Greek ideal of hospitality—celebrating the unique contributions that continue to enrich our county.



We Also Celebrate:

March

- Women's History Month
- Gender Equality Month
- Irish American Heritage Month

April

- Arab American Heritage Month
- Armenian History Month
- Scottish American Heritage Month

May

- Military Appreciation Month
- National Asian and Pacific Islander Heritage Month
- Jewish American Heritage Month

Public Service Announcement

Bilingual Election Workers Needed to Build Community Partnerships

Hello, members! My name is Breanna Clifton, and I am the Supervisor over at Staff Development and Outreach with the Los Angeles County Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk's Office—Election Worker Services.

I'm reaching out to all LACERA members (both past and present) to discuss the need for election workers who speak any of the 18 languages we provide in our outreach—Armenian, Farsi, Burmese, Gujrati, Indonesian, Khmer, Mongolian, Spanish, Telugu, Vietnamese, Bengali, Chinese, Hindi, Japanese, Korean, Russian, Tagalog, and Thai.

You can earn income while helping us better serve our community members of differing demographic and socioeconomic statuses. Bilingual election workers who speak a qualified language will earn a \$100 stipend, and you can receive compensation of up to \$1,180 for your service.

Our strategic priority is to ensure we serve every community,

near and far, with their best interests in mind. Our goal is to properly market, canvass, and dedicate time to attending local workshops, outreach events, and other similar outings to further our representation, instill trust, and ensure that all individuals are serviced within Los Angeles County at every applicable vote center. Our values include: 1) delivering services with trust, integrity, and high-level customer service, 2) cultivating strong relationships with community organizations and partners, and 3) valuing every person, regardless of location.

If you are interested in helping us with our outreach efforts by collaborating and/or becoming an election worker, I would love to hear from you! Let us continue to inspire, cultivate relationships, and build connections within the County of Los Angeles. Please contact me via email at StaffDevelopmentOutreach@rrcc.lacounty.gov or call me at 562-345-8345. I look forward to our partnership in advance!

STAYING HEALTHY TOGETHER

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Schedule a Preventive Care Visit With Your Primary Care Physician



If you haven't done so already, schedule an annual preventive care visit with your primary care physician (PCP) immediately, before appointments get booked up. If you don't have a PCP overseeing your care, you should choose one, or one will be assigned to you by your healthcare provider.

The Value of the PCP- Patient Relationship

Having a PCP who oversees your medical needs is essential. The PCP will be directly involved in your care and will act as your main healthcare provider in non-emergency situations, such as performing and overseeing the important preventive care screenings you should undergo annually. Even if you go to the doctor just once a year for your annual physical, a PCP is still extremely valuable.

A PCP who knows you:

- Is more likely to be attuned to something that's not quite right with your health.
- Can recognize signs of depression or other mental health issues better

than a doctor who sees you only once and doesn't know that you are not your usual self.

- Is involved with all levels of your care. A PCP can be like a coach, ensuring all of the health professionals you may need to see work together as a team. That means less likelihood of test duplication, fewer appointments, and better health outcomes.
- Can keep track of medications you may need to take, recognize potential drug interactions,

and monitor critical follow-up appointments.

The value of having a PCP is clear, so if you *don't* have a PCP yet, give it serious consideration. It will be to your benefit.

How to Select a PCP, if You Don't Have One Already

The relationship you build with your PCP is a personal one, so not any doctor will do. When choosing a PCP, take into consideration all of the things that matter to you. For instance, you may





want to know the following:

- The location of the doctor's office, and if free parking is provided
- If the building has an elevator or ramps for a wheelchair or walker
- The days/hours the doctor sees patients
- If times are set aside for the doctor to take phone calls
- If the doctor accepts questions via email, and if there's a charge for the service
- How you can reach the doctor in case of an emergency
- Who takes care of patients after hours or when the doctor is away
- What hospital the doctor is affiliated with

To find out the above details regarding a network provider's services, or for assistance selecting a PCP, visit the website of the vendor network in which you are enrolled, or call the customer service number for the health plan that you are enrolled in (listed at right) or the telephone number listed on your ID card.

Important: The level of your benefits coverage is, among other things, based on the providers from whom you receive care, so you should receive your care from providers who participate in the network that you are enrolled in.

Schedule Your Preventive Care Visit

Preventive care saves lives! Although you may be tempted to postpone or avoid seeing your doctor, annual preventive care visits are extremely important. Medical exams provide a snapshot of your current status, and

they can catch emerging health issues when they are easier and less expensive to treat. For instance, during an exam, your doctor can catch signs of serious health problems like heart disease, high blood pressure, high blood sugar, and even cancer, so that quick exam could save your life.

Health screenings come in a variety of forms, from measuring blood pressure and cholesterol to getting a mammogram or colonoscopy. The primary goal of any health screening visit is to identify risks, diseases, or other significant medical conditions early while they are easier to manage and may even be less expensive to treat.

Don't Underestimate the Value of Dental and Vision Exams!

Dental exams offer insight into your overall health and catch cavities before they become bigger issues (filling versus root canal). Furthermore, medical evidence suggests a major connection between your oral health and your overall health. For instance, a high percentage of health conditions have an oral component like swollen or bleeding gums, ulcers, dry mouth, bad breath, metallic taste, and various other changes in the oral cavity. Surprisingly, more than 120 medical conditions—many of them life-threatening—can be detected in the early stages by a dentist, including diabetes, cancer, heart disease, kidney disease, thyroid problems, high blood pressure, asthma, sleep and breathing disorders, skin rashes, bruxism (teeth grinding), HIV, tuberculosis, drug abuse, anorexia, digestive disorders, and upper respiratory problems.

Vision exams are also a key component to identifying the condition of your health. During a routine eye exam, an eye doctor can detect the signs of health conditions like high blood pressure, diabetes, and high cholesterol—along with other eye and health issues. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), early eye treatment is critically important in preventing permanent vision loss or blindness due to cataracts, diabetic retinopathy, glaucoma, and age-related macular degeneration. Regular eye care can have a life-changing impact on

preserving vision.

Be Proactive: Monitor Your Health and Get Your Screenings

Your health is important not just to you but to your family and friends—those who care about your well-being. Choose a PCP if you don't already have one. Get an annual physical, routine vaccinations, and screenings. See your dentist regularly for cleanings and X-rays. Get your eyes checked. Take good care of yourself. Do it for you, and do it for the important people in your life.

Questions?

If you have any questions about your coverage, you can always reach out directly to the health plan that you are enrolled in at the phone numbers or websites provided below. You can also refer to the phone number on your ID card.

Anthem Blue Cross PPO Plans
800-284-1110
www.anthem.com/ca

Cigna Network Model Plan
800-244-6224
www.mycigna.com

Kaiser Permanente Group Model HMO
800-464-4000
www.kp.org

Kaiser Permanente Senior Advantage MAPD HMO
800-443-0815
www.kp.org

SCAN Health Plan:
800-559-3500
www.scanhealthplan.com

UnitedHealthcare
800-624-8822
www.myuhc.com

UnitedHealthcare Group Medicare Advantage (MAPD HMO)
800-457-8506

This article is for general informational purposes only. Consult with professional advisors regarding medical matters; LACERA does not offer medical advice.

Mark Your Calendar

Staying Healthy Together Workshop on Tuesday, April 16, 2024

Good news! LACERA will host its next *Staying Healthy Together* in-person, half-day workshop on April 16, 2024. Be on the lookout for more information in the mail. We'll also post details soon on lacera.com.



Sweet and Spicy Roasted Salmon With Wild Rice Pilaf

If you have diabetes or high blood pressure—or even if you don't—here's a great healthy recipe that you should try. Fresh jalapeños give this quick and easy roasted salmon dish its kick, and honey and balsamic vinegar give it a sweet finish. A nutty-tasting wild rice pilaf completes the meal, which comes together in just 30 minutes.



Prep Time:
15 minutes

Cook Time:
15 minutes

Total Time:
30 minutes

Nutritional Facts:
339 calories | 5g fat
43g carbs | 30g protein

Servings:
4

Ingredients

- 5 skinless salmon fillets, fresh or frozen (1 1/4 pounds)
- 2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
- 1 tablespoon honey
- teaspoon salt
- 1/8 teaspoon ground pepper
- 1 cup chopped red and/or yellow bell pepper
- 1/2 to 1 small jalapeño pepper, seeded and finely chopped
- 2 scallions (green parts only), thinly sliced
- 1/4 cup chopped fresh Italian parsley
- 2 2/3 cups wild rice pilaf

Instructions

1. Thaw salmon, if frozen. Preheat oven to 425 degrees F.
2. Line a 15-by-10-inch baking pan with parchment paper. Place the salmon in the prepared pan.
3. Whisk vinegar and honey in a small bowl; drizzle half of the mixture over the salmon. Sprinkle with salt and pepper.
4. Roast the salmon until the thickest part flakes easily, about 15 minutes.
5. Drizzle with the remaining vinegar mixture.
6. Coat a 10-inch nonstick skillet with cooking spray; heat over medium heat. Add bell pepper and jalapeño; cook, stirring frequently, until tender, 3 to 5 minutes. Remove from heat. Stir in scallion greens.
7. Top four of the salmon fillets with the pepper mixture and parsley. Serve with pilaf. (Refrigerate the remaining salmon for another use.)

Stop! Look both ways before you go.

Did you know that if you're happy with your County of Los Angeles Deferred Compensation and Thrift Plan (Horizons) and/or 401(k) Savings Plan, you can keep your funds in your account(s) after you retire? It's true. You can keep your money in your account where it is and continue to access all the great features and investment options you've used all along.¹

However, you can't keep all the funds in your account indefinitely. The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) requires that you start making withdrawals at some point. These mandatory annual withdrawals are known as required minimum distributions, or RMDs. Below are a few things to know about RMDs:

- **Be aware of your required beginning date for RMDs.** In general, you must begin taking RMDs by April 1 following the calendar year in which you reach age 73 (age 72 for years between 2021–2022, and age 70 1/2 for years before 2020) or the year you leave employment with the County of Los Angeles, whichever is later.
- **The amount varies by person.** There's no fixed amount for an RMD. It depends on your December 31st prior year-end account balance and the formula on the calculation worksheets the IRS provides.²
- There are penalties for not taking your RMD. If you fail to take your RMD, you could face a strict penalty known as an excise tax. The amount not withdrawn could be taxed at 25 percent.

Things to consider:

You can choose from the following distribution options to meet your annual RMD.

- **Automated Required Minimum Distribution Request:** You can choose to receive the required minimum annual payment required under current U.S. Treasury regulations by authorizing Empower to calculate the minimum amount each year and make payments to you.
- **Periodic Payments:** You can schedule periodic payments from your account for a fixed dollar amount or for a fixed number of years. However, neither payment selection may exceed your life expectancy.³ Please compare your periodic payments against your RMD amount annually. If your periodic payment does not cover your RMD, you are responsible to take an additional distribution(s) before the end of each calendar year, otherwise you may be subject to an excise tax penalty.
- **Partial Lump-Sum Distributions:** You can take a partial lump-sum distribution each year in an amount sufficient to meet the RMD. You are

responsible for determining the annual RMD amount and ensuring the RMD requirement is met each year. Please note that if you roll these funds over to another institution or IRA, the RMD portion of the distribution is not eligible to be rolled over.

- **Full Lump-Sum Distribution:** You can take a single lump-sum distribution of your entire account balance. By taking a full lump-sum distribution, you will have satisfied the RMD for the year of the distribution. Please note that if you roll these funds over to another institution or IRA, the RMD portion of the distribution is not eligible for rollover.

Consider all your options and their features and fees before moving money between accounts.

- **Annuities:** An annuity is designed to provide you with a guaranteed,⁴ long-term or even lifetime income stream regardless of market performance or interest rate changes. As a Plan participant, you can purchase an annuity with a portion or all your account balance. Keep in mind that with any annuity purchase, the decision is final. You cannot receive a refund of the funds that were used to make the purchase unless it's specified in your contract. It's a good idea to consult with a financial advisor before making any annuity purchase.

At first glance, RMDs can be a little confusing, but we're here to help. If you have questions about when you should begin your RMDs or would like to set yours up, call 800-947-0845, Monday–Friday, 7 a.m.–5 p.m., Pacific Time.

¹Plan provisions may provide for the automatic distribution of small balances.

²Required Minimum Distribution calculation worksheets can be found here: www.irs.gov/retirement-plans/plan-participant-employee/required-minimum-distribution-worksheets

³More information on life expectancy and RMDs can be found here: www.irs.gov/retirement-plans/plan-participant-employee/retirement-topics-required-minimum-distributions-rmds

⁴Guarantees are subject to the terms and conditions of the contract and the claims-paying ability of the insurer.

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Our secure onsite mailbox is available 24/7 at 300 N. Lake in Pasadena. It is located outside, to the right of the lobby doors nearest the Member Service Center.

Upcoming Holidays

LACERA will be closed on:

Monday, March 25

For Cesar Chavez Day

Monday, May 27

For Memorial Day



Email: welcome@lacera.com

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