

Filing for Service Retirement

The day has finally come. You have decided, or at least are thinking of retiring. To help you make that decision, NYCERS wants you to have a full understanding of what happens from the minute you turn in your application to the day you receive your first retirement payment.

Filing Requirements

Filing requirements differ in each Tier and Plan. Tier 1 and Tier 2 members who meet all eligibility requirements, and wish to retire, must file an application at least 30, but not more than 90, days before the effective date that they wish to retire. Tier 3, Tier 4 and Tier 6 members (except members in certain special retirement plans who must adhere to requirements identical to Tier 1 and 2) may file up to the day they wish to retire, but no more than 90 days before. To learn more about your plan's specific filing requirements, refer to your plan brochure at nycers.org.

In general, the day after your last day on the payroll, including any leave without pay, will be your retirement date, which is the date you should put on your NYCERS service retirement application. The IRS requires a bona fide termination from public service with no prearranged agreement to return to public service. Your retirement date must be **on or after** your termination or "cease" date. This may be different than your last day at work.

When you inform your employer as to the date you wish to "stop" working, they will inform you of any unused leave time you have accumulated. Unused leave time may be paid in lump sum (generally, managers) or through paychecks (generally, non-managers). If paid through paychecks, it is especially important to coordinate with your employer to determine when those paychecks will cease. If you are on an approved leave without pay, you must contact your employer to determine your retirement date and provide a letter from your agency with this information along with your retirement application. Remember, your retirement date is the day after your last day on payroll, including any leave without pay.

If you haven't already, NYCERS encourages you to register for your MyNYCERS account at mynycers.org. When you are ready, you can file your retirement application, upload supporting documents, add a direct deposit account, select your final option, and more online. [Application for Service Retirement Form #521](#) (or [Form #511](#) for Tier 1), available at nycers.org, may also be mailed or submitted in person. If you wish to meet with a NYCERS Retirement Counselor, log in to your MyNYCERS account to schedule a phone, video or in-person consultation.

Withdrawing Your Application for Service Retirement

You may withdraw your application for Service Retirement up to the **day before** your retirement date by logging in to your MyNYCERS account. Alternatively, you may submit [Withdrawal of Service Retirement Application Form #542](#), available on nycers.org, by mail or in person. If your request is received after your retirement date, it is **denied**.

Changing Your Retirement Date

If you have filed for retirement and have decided you want to change the date of your retirement, you may extend your retirement date up to **90 days** from the original filing date. To change your retirement date, you may log in to your MyNYCERS account or submit [Request to Change or Correct Retirement Date Form #543](#), available at nycers.org, by mail or in person. Any extension longer than 90 days will require you to **withdraw** your application.

Your First Advance Payment

If you are eligible for a service retirement, your case is processed for an advance payment, which is a reduced pension benefit paid to you until NYCERS can calculate your final pension based on the retirement option you select.

If you retire on the **1st** or **2nd** of the month, you will receive an advance payment at the **end** of the month in which you retire.

Example: If you retire on January 2, your first advance payment will be on January 31.

If you retire on the **3rd** of the month, or later, you will receive an advance payment at the end of the **following** month.

Example: If you retire on January 3, your first advance payment will be on February 28.

Starting with your first advance payment, Federal income taxes will be withheld based on the election you made on your retirement application. To see how your advance payment is calculated, see [Advance Payment Brochure #892](#).

Your Option Letter

An option letter breaks down the amount your pension will be under the various retirement options available to you. Once you receive this letter, you have **60 days** to notify NYCERS of the option you choose. If you do not choose an option within this time frame, your retirement benefit is processed under the Maximum Retirement Allowance or, if applicable, the temporary option you selected on your retirement application. The Maximum Retirement Allowance is payable to you only for your lifetime with no benefits continuing after your death. For an example of what you should expect, refer to your option letter brochure at nycers.org/service-retirement-kits.

The option you select is important to both you and your beneficiary, should you choose to nominate one. Be sure you understand each option and elect the one that best fulfills your needs. The sooner you file an option selection, the sooner NYCERS can process your case for your full retirement benefit. You may **not** change an option once your first full payment has been sent to you. For an overview of the various options and their impact on your retirement benefit, refer to your retirement options brochure at nycers.org/service-retirement-kits.

Your Finalized Full Payment

After you have selected an option (or, by default, one has been awarded to you), your file is processed and you are placed on the pension payroll for the full amount. Your first finalized

pension payment will include retroactive amounts from your retirement date. You will receive a letter that includes the details of the option chosen and how your payment was calculated.

When and Where Your Pension Payments will be Sent

You have two options on how to receive your pension payments:

- You may elect to have your pension checks **mailed** to your home, a Post Office box or any address you choose; **or**
- You may elect to have your pension payments **directly deposited** into your checking or savings bank account by Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT).

Pension checks are dated the last day of each month and are generally mailed **two to three business days** before that date. If you elect for direct deposit, your payment is generally credited to your account on the **last day** of each month or the **following business day**. See [Pension Payment Calendar Fact Sheet #713](#) or visit nycers.org/payment-calendar for this year's pension payment schedule.

Over 60% of NYCERS' pensioners use direct deposit because it is:

- **Safe:** Eliminates lost or stolen checks
- **Sure:** Ensures that you get your retirement allowance every month, even if you're out of town, ill or on vacation
- **Fast:** Your account is credited on the payment date - no waiting for a pension check to clear before you can draw on it
- **Easy:** Eliminates a trip to the bank and waiting in lines

To sign up for direct deposit, log in to your MyNYCERS account and click "Update Pension Payment Method" in the menu. Please note that your first payment must be a paper check mailed to you. You may also submit [Authorization for Electronic Fund Transfer \(EFT\) of Monthly Retirement Allowance Form #380](#), available at nycers.org.

Lost Check

If you do not receive your mailed check by the 10th day of the following month, notify NYCERS and [Affidavit Concerning Lost Check\(s\) Form #399](#), available at nycers.org, will be sent to you. NYCERS will not process Form #399 until the 10th of the month.

Taxes

Taxes are automatically withheld from all pension payments you receive from NYCERS based on the Federal tax table for a person who is married claiming three exemptions, unless you indicate on your retirement application otherwise. You can also change your Federal tax withholding by logging in to your MyNYCERS account and looking for "Withholding Tax (W4-P)" in the menu, or by submitting [Application to Change Federal Income Tax Withheld Form #349](#), available at nycers.org.

Health Insurance

NYCERS does not administer health insurance benefits. If you have any problems with coverage or deductions from your pension payments, you should call one of the following entities:

- NYC Office of Labor Relations: (212) 513-0470
- NYC Transit Authority and MTA Bridges & Tunnels: (646) 376-0123

Change of Address

If NYCERS does not have your current address, you could experience delays in receiving pension payments, refund checks and other important documents such as your annual income tax statement (1099R) and quarterly EFT statements. To prevent this, notify NYCERS of appropriate changes even if your pension payment is sent directly to a bank.

If NYCERS sends you correspondence and it is returned, your pension payments may be **withheld** until you contact NYCERS.