



New York City Employees' Retirement System

Trusted Partner of New York City Employees for 100 Years

The New York City Employees' Retirement System (NYCERS) was founded by the New York State Legislature in 1920 with 13,331 members. Today, NYCERS has grown into the largest municipal public employee retirement system in the United States with more than 350,000 active members and retirees including civilian employees such as clerical workers, accountants and social workers, and uniformed employees such as New York City Correction Officers and Sanitation Workers.

What is NYCERS?

NYCERS is a defined benefit retirement plan, meaning a member's benefit is defined by law, not by the condition of the stock market on a given day. NYCERS membership is available to civilian and uniformed employees of the various agencies, boards, and commissions of the City of New York, as well as employees of public benefit corporations such as the NYC Transit Authority and NYC Health + Hospitals. Retirement benefits provided by NYCERS, based on a member's years of service, age, and compensation base, are funded by employee and employer contributions and from earnings on the invested assets of the system. Other benefits of membership include the ability to borrow against your pension contributions, portability between NYS and NYC public pension systems, and disability and death benefits.

Transforming Our Clients' Experience

NYCERS is dedicated to a client-centered approach to quality service delivery and performs many functions for active members and retirees. On the occasion of NYCERS' October 1, 2020 100th anniversary and beyond, its focus is on strengthening core business capacities through several major technology modernization projects. Those projects include a Customer Relationship Management system (CRM), state-of-the-art Call Center technology, greatly expanded online services, and a replacement of the legacy pension administration system. The first phase of our journey to transform the members' experience was the launch of our CRM system in August 2019, enhanced in 2020 with more than a dozen new online features, including NYCERS' first mobile app.



NYCERS HISTORY

1920 NYCERS was founded by the NY State Legislature in 1920 with 13,331 members. By the late 1800s, the City employed a full time, professional workforce. By 1920, the Fire, Police, and Teachers' pension funds already existed. The City created NYCERS for other municipal employees.



1973 Tier 2 was created by the State Legislature.

1976 Tier 3 was created by the State Legislature.

1980s The City and national economies improved, and for the first time the City and State began investing pension funds in the stock market. People and institutions began widespread use of computers. NYCERS' first major digital records management system was developed.



1995 The State Legislature adopted a group of laws known as Chapter 96, which allowed certain members to retire earlier than age 62.

2000 In 2000, NYCERS established the NYCERS' Walk-In Center and Call Center.

2005 NYCERS began to administer the WTC Disability Law for NYCERS members who worked on the recovery and clean-up.

2012 Tier 6 was created by the State Legislature.



1920

1968

Several Tier 1 plans went into effect, including the Career Pension Plan (CPP), Increased-Service Fraction Plan (ISF), and Transit 20-Year Plan (T-20).

1970s

The 1970s were a period of widespread economic distress in both the City and the country as a whole. Annual inflation rose to double digits and the City teetered on the edge of bankruptcy. Budgets were slashed, people laid off, maintenance and repairs delayed.

1983

Tier 4 was created by the State Legislature.

1990s

The stock markets boomed. City and State leadership and the NYCERS Board of Trustees used outsized investment returns to improve benefits, administration, and service to members.

1996

The State Legislature approved Corpus Funding, which enabled NYCERS to pay its administrative expenses from NYCERS assets (the "Corpus"). Since the adoption of Corpus Funding, NYCERS' Board of Trustees adopts the annual operating budget and decides how to properly and responsibly run NYCERS.

2001

On September 11, 2001, the World Trade Center was attacked, profoundly affecting the lives of thousands of NYCERS members and their families.

2015

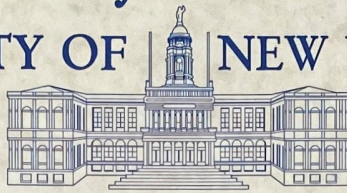
The Legacy Replacement Project was conceptualized to modernize the almost 40-year-old member records database; committees and working groups were established to study NYCERS' business practices, records, and IT systems to prepare for the new system.

2020

- Today, NYCERS remains the largest municipal public employee retirement system in the United States, administering 62 different retirement plans for more than 350,000 active members and retirees.
- The COVID-19 pandemic reached the United States and heavily impacted New York City, forcing NYCERS employees to work remotely and the NYCERS' Walk-In Center to close effective March 18 with a partial reopening on August 24 by appointment only. NYCERS operations and service to its members continued, thanks to ongoing technological modernization and employees performing essential functions on site as needed. The new, improved MyNYCERS was launched in March 2020, followed by the MyNYCERS mobile app in July 2020. MyNYCERS account holders can now complete more than 20 different secure transactions online during their membership lifecycle – from applying for membership, loans and buybacks, to filing for retirement and electing an option.
- On October 1, 2020, NYCERS celebrates its 100th Anniversary!

Office of the Mayor

CITY OF NEW YORK



Proclamation

WHEREAS: THE NEW YORK CITY EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM WAS FOUNDED BY THE NEW YORK STATE LEGISLATURE IN 1920 WITH 13,331 MEMBERS. OVER THE LAST CENTURY, NYCERS HAS BECOME THE LARGEST MUNICIPAL PUBLIC EMPLOYEE RETIREMENT SYSTEM IN THE UNITED STATES. EVERY DAY, NYCERS SERVES MORE THAN 350,000 ACTIVE MEMBERS AND RETIREES, RANGING FROM CORRECTIONAL OFFICERS AND SANITATION WORKERS TO ACCOUNTANTS, SOCIAL WORKERS, AND MANY MORE INDIVIDUALS TASKED WITH KEEPING OUR CITY RUNNING. TODAY, I AM PROUD TO JOIN WITH NYCERS AS IT CELEBRATES ITS 100TH ANNIVERSARY.

WHEREAS: NYCERS HAS LEFT AN INDELIBLE MARK ON THE LIVELIHOODS OF COUNTLESS NEW YORKERS, RAISING OUR RETIREMENT SYSTEM TO NEW LEVELS OF EXCELLENCE AND BUILDING A SOLID FOUNDATION FROM WHICH TO DELIVER THE BEST QUALITY SERVICE POSSIBLE TO CITY EMPLOYEES AND RETIREES FOR DECADES TO COME. NYCERS HAS CONTINUED TO DEMONSTRATE ITS COMMITMENT TO EMPOWERING OUR CITY'S VITAL PUBLIC WORKFORCE AND SUPPORTING THEM THROUGHOUT THEIR CAREERS IN THEIR EFFORTS TO ACHIEVE SUSTAINABLE RETIREMENTS.

WHEREAS: MY ADMINISTRATION IS PROUD OF OUR UNPARALLELED MUNICIPAL EMPLOYEES AS THEY CONTINUE TO DISPLAY THEIR UNWAVERING DEDICATION AT A TIME OF UNPRECEDENTED CHALLENGES ACROSS THE FIVE BOROUGHES, AND NYCERS HAS BEEN A SOURCE OF REASSURANCE FOR THOSE WHO HAVE SPENT THEIR CAREERS UPLIFTING OUR RESIDENTS. WE ARE ALL TREMENDOUSLY APPRECIATIVE OF THE WORK THAT NYCERS UNDERTAKES TO ENSURE THAT NEW YORK CITY'S PUBLIC SERVANTS AND THEIR BENEFICIARIES RECEIVE THE RETIREMENT BENEFITS THEY HAVE EARNED. AS NYCERS CONTINUES TO IMPROVE ITS TECHNOLOGICAL INFRASTRUCTURE, EXHIBIT THE HIGHEST LEVELS OF ADMINISTRATIVE EFFICIENCY, AND DELIVER WORLD-CLASS CUSTOMER SUPPORT TO ITS MEMBERS, I AM PROUD TO CONGRATULATE ITS HARDWORKING STAFF AND ALL THOSE ASSOCIATED WITH IT FOR REACHING THIS LANDMARK MILESTONE. TOGETHER, WE ARE BUILDING A MORE PROSPEROUS FUTURE FOR ALL NEW YORKERS.

NOW THEREFORE, I, BILL DE BLASIO, MAYOR OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK, DO HEREBY PROCLAIM THURSDAY, OCTOBER 1ST, 2020 IN THE CITY OF NEW YORK AS:

"NYCERS DAY"



Bill De Blasio
BILL DE BLASIO
MAYOR



Honoring Artie Weiss on his 60th Year of City Service

As NYCERS celebrates its 100th Anniversary, we are pleased to recognize another milestone in NYCERS' history – Artie Weiss, of NYCERS' IT-Mainframe Operations unit, has been working for the City for 60 years, 55 of them at NYCERS!



Artie went to work for the City on March 14, 1960 at the age of 18 – right out of high school. (One of his fellow high school graduates was Vermont Senator Bernie Sanders – but his mother got the job application for him!). He spent his first five years working for the Department of Finance as a Tab Operator (“Tab” is short for “Tabulator”). Artie’s job was to sort the IBM punch cards – the cards contained data represented by the absence or presence of holes in the card (forerunner of the zeros and ones used in modern-day programming). He sorted them manually by whatever data point was needed – by date, alphabetically, or transaction type. There were thousands of cards and it could take days to sort them.

“When I got hired at 18, I went to the Municipal Building and got sworn in to the Department of Finance and got a booklet about the history of New York City and being a civil servant. The fee was a quarter I think. When I started I made \$3,000 a year as a Tab Operator, just above clerk level. The raise was \$250 a year. But I felt really good – I felt like a million dollars.

“I worked at 50 Pine Street in the Division of Special Taxes on the 6th floor. We had elevator operators then, who were City workers, but no air conditioning.

“The Tab Operators were the eyes and ears of what was happening – if they didn’t know what to do, they knew who to go to.

“I could see what was happening – now the computer does all the work. The Tab Operator saw things that were wrong, like a wrong date, and spotted it. Made sure it was running properly. I knew the job instinctively and would know if a voucher wasn’t done or the job wasn’t completed.”

Five years later, Artie passed the Senior Tab Operator test and came to NYCERS at 2 Lafayette Street in Manhattan. He became a NYCERS member on January 2, 1965. At that time, NYCERS was under the Board of Estimate; the head of the system was the Secretary of the Board of Estimate (who picked him up and drove him to work during the 1970s transit strike.)

NYCERS had a staff of about 200 when Artie started. “There were no lawyers, no Legal Division. Just a law clerk. We had a typing pool, and typewriters – manual, and then electric. It was a different world. The only phone was on the supervisor’s desk – you had to get called to the phone. Now there are regular phones and cellphones everywhere.”

When Artie first started working for the City, Robert F. Wagner was the Mayor, and Dwight D. Eisenhower was the president. Other mayors Artie worked under: John Lindsay, Abe Beame, Ed Koch, David Dinkins, Rudy Giuliani, Michael Bloomberg, and of course Mayor Bill de Blasio.

“Across the street from the office you paid 65 cents for 2 eggs, coffee, and toast, 75 cents if you wanted a piece of meat.

“Everything was handwritten into books, like the book in the glass case on the 21st floor in Brooklyn. I saw people working with those books. We had a History Cards room with big white index cards and machines to put them in. I went from the Loans Room to the Refunds Room, and all the business unit rooms; customers would wait outside on benches to speak to a NYCERS employee about their loan or refund. I brought all customers’ applications and other documents to the keypunch operators.

“For the weekly loan and refund vouchers, the keypunch operators would punch the cards, and the cards would be sent by messenger to the Comptroller, where checks would be cut. For the quarterly reconciliation (3 months’ worth of cards), the cards were loaded onto a wagon and wheeled across the street to the Office of the Budget, where the members’ accounts were adjusted. One of my jobs was to manually check the cards each quarter to make sure they were correct and no information was missing.

“All the printing was done in the Tab Room in my department – vouchers, certifications, everything. We would bring the printing to the other departments. I guess we were the original ‘Central Printing.’

“I became a Senior Tabulation Operator and then computers started to take over the work. I did parallel work to make sure the computer was doing the work right – I was a ‘safety valve.’ I knew the complete job; if there were problems I went right to the person doing the work. Now there are many layers doing the work.

“Now everything is so fast. Everything is computers. It’s amazing and it keeps on rolling along – more and more information is on the computer.”

City service is something of a family affair: Artie and his wife have a son who previously worked for the New York City Corporation Counsel, and a daughter who is a New York City schoolteacher (plus five grandchildren).

Artie has been in his current title -- Computer Associate Technical Support – since September 17, 1979.

About NYCERS’ 100th anniversary, Artie shared this thought: “It’s great, but I miss all the people I knew who were true friends, like family. My graduating class graduated.”

Artie Weiss holds the record as the longest-standing NYCERS member. When he was asked how that made him feel, and what kept him going, he answered: “I feel proud. I met great people and can’t ask for anything more. I never made much with the City – but I am grateful for my career with the City. People used to put it down years and years ago. I picked up the work and saw the whole thing unfold. I was never sorry working for the City. People knock it but I don’t think they mean it half the time they say it. I am grateful for the opportunity to serve. Proud to be a City worker and happy to have met all the wonderful people in my career. People want this, they want that, but they don’t realize what they have now.”

Artie, your NYCERS family thanks you for your service and congratulates you on 60 years of dedicated service to the people who serve our city!