

Name of Policy	State Retirement
Description of Policy	This policy sets forth the provisions of the Employees' Retirement System (PERS) of Mississippi, enacted by the 1952 Legislature and amended by the Laws of 1980 and 2010.
Policy applies to	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> University-wide <input type="checkbox"/> Specific (<i>outline location, campus, organisational unit, etc.</i>)
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Faculty & Staff only <input type="checkbox"/> Students only <input type="checkbox"/> Staff and students
Policy status	<input type="checkbox"/> New policy <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Revision of existing policy

Approval authority	Senior Vice President, Finance, Administrative Services & Operations/CFO
Governing authority	Human Resources Management
Responsible officer	Assistant Vice President, Human Resources

Approval date	
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Related legislation, policies, procedures, guidelines and local protocols	
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Background

The Public Employees' Retirement System (PERS), enacted by the 1952 Legislature and amended by the Laws of 1980 and 2010, includes all employees of the University who are employed one-half time or more in excess of 4½ months. These employees must join one (1) of two (2) retirement programs administered by PERS: the defined benefit program (for most employees) or the defined contribution program (Optional Retirement Plan) which is only available to persons in designated positions, employed after July 1, 1990. Effective July 1, 1998, ORP allows enrollment for newly employed librarians with academic rank, coaches, and administrative department heads. Effective July 1, 2001, ORP allows enrollment for newly employed Research Scientists and Postdoctoral Research Associates.

Policy Statements and Principles

Contributions

PERS (Defined Benefit Program):

- Employee Contribution—9.00% of eligible earnings up to \$270,000
- Employer Contribution—17.40%

Optional Retirement Plan (Defined Contribution Program):

- Employee Contribution—9.00% of eligible earnings up to \$270,000
- Employer Contribution—14.751% (2.649% of the employer contribution is retained by PERS for the accrued liability contribution fund).

In accordance with IRS Code Section 415(c) (1) (A) and the ORP Plan Document, the contribution limit is \$55,000.

Benefit Highlights of PERS Defined Benefit Program

1. Eight-year vesting
2. Monthly retirement benefits.
 - a) Members hired on or before June 30, 2007 may retire at age 60 with at least four (4) years of service or with 25 years of creditable service, regardless of age.
 - b) Members hired July 1, 2007 to June 30, 2011 may retire at age 60 with at least eight (8) years of service or with 25 years of creditable service, regardless of age.
 - c) Members hired on or after July 1, 2011 may retire at age 60 with at least eight (8) years of service or with 30 years of creditable service, regardless of age.

(Note: Only four years of vesting is required for employees who entered covered service before July 1, 2007 if they remain continuously active or do not get a refund for their contributions once they become inactive.)

3. Right to select retirement option
4. Spouse survivorship benefits after vesting, if married at least one-year immediately preceding death.
5. For members who joined PERS after June 30, 1992, and active members on that date who elected to make the change, the disability allowance consists of a temporary allowance and a deferred allowance. The temporary allowance is either 40 percent of average compensation at the time of disability, plus 10 percent of average compensation for each of the first two dependent children during their dependency years, or the accrued benefit based upon actual service, whichever is greater. The temporary allowance is payable for a period

based upon the member's age at the time of disability, but not less than one year. The deferred allowance begins when the temporary allowance ceases and is payable for life. It will be either the amount that would have been payable had the member continued in service until the termination of the temporary allowance, but not more than 40 percent of average compensation, or the accrued benefit based upon actual service at the time of disability, whichever amount is greater.

Active members as of June 30, 1992, who did not choose the new option will receive benefits under the previous disability law. Under the previous law, after four (4) years of service, a member's annuity is based upon the amount payable as a retirement allowance had the member continued in service until the age of 60.

6. Right of employee (or beneficiary in case of death of employee) to withdraw all contributions to the program upon separation from state service.

Benefit Highlights of ORP Defined Contribution Program

1. Immediate vesting
2. Portability
3. Retirement at any age
4. Control over investment
5. No risk of intervention

Review

As required