

# APPLYING FOR YOUR RETIREMENT BENEFIT



ET-4106 (1/15/2016)



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## Checklist for Completing Your Retirement Benefit Application

### Have you:

- Selected **only one** payment option? If amounts are shown in the Employee Additional column, check **only one** box in that column to apply for your additional benefit.
- Completed the named survivor information **if** you selected a joint and survivor option?
- Completed the Direct Deposit Authorization information (including a voided check if for a checking account)?
- Completed the termination date and benefit effective date sections?
- Completed all tax withholding information?
- Signed and dated the application, and (if required) has your spouse or domestic partner (see below) also done this?
- Made a copy for your records?

## Beneficiary Designation

### Have you:

- Signed and dated the form?
- Made a copy for your records?

Under state law, same-sex and opposite-sex domestic partners are treated similarly to spouses for the benefit programs authorized in Chapter 40 of the state statutes. Chapter 40 benefit programs are administered by the Department of Employee Trust Funds, and include the Wisconsin Retirement System, group health insurance, deferred compensation, life insurance and other programs.

An *Affidavit of Domestic Partnership form (ET-2371)* **must be received and approved** by ETF to establish a Chapter 40 domestic partnership. Please see the domestic partnership information on ETF's web site at [etf.wi.gov](http://etf.wi.gov) or call ETF to request the packet. When *domestic partner* is used in this brochure, it means a Chapter 40 domestic partnership is in effect at ETF.

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ETF has made every effort to ensure that this brochure is current and accurate. However, changes in the law or processes since the last revision to this brochure may mean that some details are not current. The most current version of this document can be found at [etf.wi.gov](http://etf.wi.gov). Please contact ETF if you have any questions about a particular topic in this brochure.

ETF does not discriminate on the basis of disability in the provision of programs, services or employment. If you are speech, hearing or visually impaired and need assistance, call 1-877-533-5020 (toll free) or 608-266-3285 (local Madison). We will try to find another way to get the information to you in a usable form.

## Eligibility

To be eligible to receive a Wisconsin Retirement System retirement benefit, six conditions must be met:

1. You must be vested\* and at least age 55 (age 50 for participants with some protective employment category service\*\* and certain participants who began covered Wisconsin teaching before May 11, 1973).
2. You must terminate all employment covered by the WRS. **Note:** Part-time elected officials age 55 or older (age 50 for participants in a protective employment category) may irrevocably waive that coverage if terminating all other covered WRS employment. Request a [Waiver of Part-time Elected Service \(ET-4303\)](#) form if this applies to you and you wish to file this waiver.
3. If you terminated WRS employment before July 2, 2013, you must remain terminated from all employment with a WRS employer that meets participation standards for at least 30 days after your termination date or the date ETF receives your application, or on your benefit effective date, whichever is latest. If you return to the same WRS employer from which you retired, the 30-day requirement applies to all WRS employment regardless of whether it meets WRS-participation standards.

If you terminated WRS employment on or after July 2, 2013, you must remain terminated from all employment with a WRS employer that meets participation standards for at least 75 days after your termination date or the date ETF receives your application, or on your benefit effective date, whichever is latest. If you return to the same WRS employer from which you retired, the 75-day requirement applies to all WRS employment regardless of whether it meets WRS participation standards.

4. You must not be on a leave of absence or in layoff status.
5. You must submit a completed application to ETF. Failure to complete certain critical portions of the form may result in your application being rejected as invalid and your subsequent application being treated as a new application for purposes of receipt date. This could result in a loss of benefits. See the checklist on the inside cover of this booklet.
6. ETF must receive your completed application prior to your death. Applications received after death are invalid.

If you terminate WRS employment due to a disability, you should contact ETF about eligibility for disability benefits before you apply for a retirement benefit. Taking a retirement benefit may affect eligibility for disability benefits.

\* You may have to meet one of two vesting laws depending on when you first began WRS employment.

- If you first began WRS employment after 1989 and terminated employment before April 24, 1998, then you must have some WRS-creditable service in five calendar years.

- If you first began WRS employment on or after July 1, 2011, then you must have five years of WRS-creditable service.

If neither vesting law applies, you were vested when you first began WRS employment. If you are vested, you may receive a retirement benefit at age 55 (age 50 for protective category participants) once you terminate all WRS employment. If you are not vested, you may only receive a separation benefit.

## When to Apply

If you are currently working in a WRS-covered position, you may apply up to 90 days before your termination date. When to apply is based on your age if you are not currently working in a WRS-covered position.

- You may apply up to 30 days before your 55th birthday (50th birthday for participants with some protective employment category service\*\* and certain participants who began covered Wisconsin teaching before May 11, 1973).
- If you are already age 55 (50), you may apply immediately for the earliest possible backdated effective date or up to 60 days before your *future specified* benefit effective date.

### Example:

Termination date	November 2
Earliest date ETF can accept your application	August 4
Earliest annuity effective date	November 3
First payment date	December 1

If you are inactive and delay applying for a monthly annuity, you forfeit payments that you may never recover. If you die before applying, your survivors may receive only half of your account balance.

If you apply more than 90 days after you terminate your WRS employment, you will not be eligible for an immediate annuity and you will lose one or more months of benefits. An immediate annuity begins within 30 days of your termination date.

- If you have group health and/or life insurance administered by ETF, you may lose those benefits if you do not have an immediate annuity.
- If you want to apply for insurance in the Local Annuitant Health Program, you should apply for your retirement benefit within 60 days after terminating.
- These time limits are determined by the date ETF receives your application, not the date you mailed it.

Interest crediting could affect your decision about when to apply.

The annual effective rate of interest varies based on the Core Fund and Variable Fund gains or losses. Interest is applied effective each December 31 to that year's beginning balances.

- If you apply for a monthly benefit and your retirement annuity is based on a money purchase calculation, you receive 5% annual interest prorated on your January 1 balance until the end of the month prior to the month in which your annuity is effective. This also applies to a monthly benefit from additional contributions.
- If you are applying for a lump sum payment, prorated interest will be paid from January 1 through the end of the month before your benefit is approved for payment.

\*\*You cannot receive a retirement benefit until age 55 if your only protective category service is purchased service (e.g. forfeited protective category service that you have purchased).

## Benefit Effective Date

### **Retirement Annuity**

You may choose an effective date for your retirement annuity.

- Retirement annuities are usually effective the day after you terminate covered employment.
- If you choose a different effective date, it must be on the first of a month.
- The effective date cannot be more than 90 calendar days before the date we receive your completed application form.

### **Disability Annuity**

The effective date for a disability annuity is normally the day after the last day you were paid.

- It cannot be earlier than 90 days before the date we receive your application.
- To have the last day you worked be your effective date, we should receive your application no later than 90 days after your last day paid. ETF will backdate your disability annuity to the earliest possible date.
- If your annuity is not effective on the day after the last day you were paid, it must be effective on the first of a month.

## Benefit Payment Options

### Life Annuity

All annuities are paid for the lifetime of the annuitant. You can select:

- The For Annuitant's Life Only option (no benefits payable on death of annuitant unless your accelerated option begins after June 30, 2008, and you die before age 62), or
- An option to protect a beneficiary(ies) with 60 or 180 payments guaranteed from the date the annuity begins. The guaranteed payments cannot exceed your life expectancy based on federal mortality tables. This applies if you are age 85 or older, or
- A joint and survivor option to provide your named survivor with benefit payments for his or her lifetime, following your death.

**Note for Domestic Partnerships:** Joint and survivor options may be limited or not available for domestic partners based on federal tax laws. Refer to the Domestic Partner information on ETF's web site or contact ETF.

### Lump Sum Payment

If your For Annuitant's Life Only option amount is less than or equal to \$190 per month, you are eligible only for a lump sum payment. If your monthly amount for this option is more than \$190 but less than \$388, you may choose either a lump sum or a monthly payment option. You are restricted to a monthly life annuity if your monthly amount for this option is \$388 or more. These amounts for 2016 are adjusted annually. If you select a lump sum payment, any additional contributions (regular and tax deferred) will be included in your payment.

### Accelerated Payment Options

The accelerated options provide a higher WRS annuity until you reach age 62, when you can apply for Social Security benefits. At age 62, your WRS annuity will reduce to your current gross after-age-62 lifetime amount because the temporary portion ends. The intent is that your age 62 Social Security benefit will replace some or most of the temporary portion of your annuity that ends at age 62.

These options are available only if you have not reached age 62 on your annuity effective date and your after-age-62 amount meets the monthly minimum when the annuity begins. These options will be listed on your application only if you are eligible for them.

If you die while receiving an accelerated annuity, 100% of that temporary annuity will be paid as a death benefit through the month in which you would have reached age 62, even if no death benefit is payable from the lifetime portion of your annuity.

**Note:** For accelerated annuities that began **before** July 1, 2008, the temporary portion ends at death. Then, any death benefit is based on **only** the after-age-62 portion. The payment options are described in more detail in our brochure *Choosing an Annuity Option* (ET-4117) included in your annuity packet.

## Who May Sign the Application

A guardian or conservator of the estate may sign a benefit application on behalf of an individual. However, an application signed by a guardian or conservator of the estate is valid only if a photocopy or facsimile of an order of guardianship or conservatorship is also submitted. Copies of these documents must be either signed by a judge, have a judge's signature stamp or have the stamp of a clerk of courts.

A person who has been granted power of attorney may be eligible to sign an application on behalf of the member.

If a participant is unable to sign his/her name on the application, but can mark an "X" in the signature box, the application is valid if the mark is witnessed by two people who have no beneficial interest in the member's benefits. Witnesses must sign and date the application next to the mark.

## Consent of Spouse or Domestic Partner

**Required Contributions:** Your spouse's or domestic partner's signature is required on the application if:

- you do not select a joint and survivor annuity with your spouse or domestic partner as the named survivor, and
- you have been married or in a Chapter 40 domestic partnership for at least one full year immediately preceding your annuity effective date.

This spousal or domestic partner signature is not necessary if you are only eligible for a lump sum payment from your required contributions.

**Note: A spouse or domestic partner should not sign the spousal or domestic partner consent if he/she wants to preserve his/her rights to being the named survivor for a joint and survivor annuity option.**

**Additional Contributions:** A spouse's or domestic partner's signature is not required for benefits from additional contributions.



## Changing Options

**ETF must receive your request to change your annuity option within 60 days after the date of your first payment or the date your lump sum payment was issued.** Based on WRS regulations, you may be eligible for only a monthly option, only a lump sum option, or can choose either a monthly or lump sum option.

- If you are eligible for only a monthly option, you can change from one monthly option to another monthly option.
- As long as you are eligible to choose either a monthly or lump sum option, you can request to change to or from a lump sum option.
  - ◇ From monthly to lump sum option—unless you return the monthly payment(s) that have been issued, the amount paid will be deducted from your lump sum payment.
  - ◇ From lump sum to monthly option—you must return the net lump sum payment (or the gross payment if your lump sum benefit was paid in the previous tax year). ETF cannot begin your monthly benefit until ETF receives your payment that refunds your entire lump sum benefit.

Your spouse's or domestic partner's signature may be required for an option change. You can use the *Retirement Annuity Option Change Application form (ET-4319)*. The option you select on your original retirement application cannot be changed if your request is not received by the deadline.

## Canceling Your Application

To cancel your application for a monthly annuity, ETF must receive your written request to cancel no later than the last working day before the 21st day of the month in which your first monthly payment is dated. To cancel your application for a lump sum payment, ETF must receive your written request no later than the last working day before the date of your payment.

If ETF approves your request to cancel your application, it becomes void and you must repay any payment issued. You must request and complete a new application when you wish to apply for a benefit.

## Payments

Direct deposit is the only payment method available for all ETF benefits, except for those going to another country or direct rollovers. Complete the *Direct Deposit Authorization* section on page 2 of your application.

### Monthly Payments

Monthly payments will be electronically transferred to your financial institution by the first business day of the month.

Your first payment will normally be based on the amount shown on your *Retirement Benefit Estimate/ Application*. Your first monthly payment should be deposited within six weeks after your benefit effective date and will include payments retroactive to that date. Your payment is prorated if you work part of the first month.

If you receive more than one monthly benefit from ETF, each will be a separate direct deposit.

### Lump Sum Payments

ETF will direct deposit your lump sum payment approximately 60 to 120 days after receiving your completed application. Processing time varies, depending on the volume of applications and when we receive the report of termination and final earnings from your employer.

## Final Calculation of Your Annuity

After your employer reports your final earnings and service, ETF will calculate the final amount of your annuity. Your payment amount will be adjusted retroactively to reflect the final amount. The final calculation is usually done six to nine months after your first payment. You will receive a *Notice of Final Retirement Annuity Calculation* when your final annuity is calculated.

## Future Benefit Changes

Each year ETF reviews investment results as of December 31. In the following year, the monthly payments to annuitants may increase or decrease based on this review.

This is not a cost-of-living increase; it is an adjustment based on the investment results of the Core and Variable Trust Funds. Your May 1 payment will reflect this change.

It will apply until the next adjustment is made the following year. Annuity adjustments can be positive or negative. Some years, your annuity will receive positive adjustments. Those gains can be taken away by market losses in a future year; however, if you participate solely in the Core Trust Fund, your annuity will never drop below your final calculation. There is no limit to the amount the variable portion of your annuity can be reduced.

The core annuity adjustment paid on May 1 during the first year after you retire is prorated based on the number of months you were retired during the calendar year you retired. You receive the full core annuity adjustment in subsequent years. If you participate in the Variable Trust Fund, you receive the full variable adjustment to the variable portion of your annuity every year.

## Disability or Long-Term Disability Insurance Benefits

If you have become totally and permanently disabled and are unable to engage in gainful employment, you may qualify for a WRS disability or a Long-Term Disability Insurance (LTDI) benefit.

- Strict time limits apply to eligibility for these disability benefits.
- If you believe that you may qualify, contact ETF immediately for information about disability benefits **before** filing a retirement application.

An employee in a protective employment category may qualify for a special disability or LTDI benefit if disabled to the extent that he or she can no longer safely and efficiently perform the duties of that protective category position. The protective employee must become disabled between ages 50 and 55 and have at least 15 years of WRS creditable service to qualify for this special disability or LTDI benefit.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **When should I contact ETF about my retirement?**

Contact ETF for your retirement estimate form six to twelve months before you think you will retire. This form contains estimates of the amounts you will receive under the various payment options. To apply for your retirement, fill it out and return it to ETF. You can get this estimate by:

- Calling ETF at 1-877-533-5020 (toll-free) or 608-266-3285 (local Madison).
- Downloading the [Retirement Estimate Request \(ET-4207\)](#) form at [etf.wi.gov](http://etf.wi.gov), or requesting it from ETF.
- Submit your request online at <https://trust.etf.state.wi.us/ETFRetirementEstimateRqstWeb/retirementestimate.do>.

You can use the Retirement Benefits Calculator at [etf.wi.gov/calculators/disclaimer.htm](http://etf.wi.gov/calculators/disclaimer.htm) to project your future retirement benefits, or refer to the [Calculating Your Retirement Benefits \(ET-4107\)](#) brochure at [etf.wi.gov](http://etf.wi.gov).

The How to Retire page at [etf.wi.gov](http://etf.wi.gov) contains in-depth information on the retirement process.

### **Will I lose benefits if I don't apply for retirement immediately?**

If we receive your application within 90 days after your termination date, we will include retroactive payments. However, if we receive your retirement benefit application more than 90 days after you terminate WRS employment, you will lose some benefits since your annuity cannot be backdated to your termination date. Delaying your application may also affect WRS life and health insurance benefits (if you have this insurance coverage).

### **How does an accelerated payment option affect any payments when I retire and what happens when I reach age 62?**

The accelerated payment options may be available if your WRS annuity begins before you reach age 62. They provide a higher annuity than the regular options before you reach age 62, when you can begin your federal Social Security pension. When you reach age 62, your WRS annuity will decrease by the amount of your current accelerated portion. The intent is that your before-age-62 annuity from the WRS alone is about the same as your combined income from the WRS and Social Security after you reach age 62. There is **no** adjustment in the WRS benefit or Social Security for the difference after you are age 62. See the [Choosing an Annuity Option \(ET-4117\)](#) brochure for more information.

### **When I approach age 62, does ETF contact Social Security about starting my benefit under their program?**

No. It is your responsibility to contact the Social Security Administration (SSA) about starting your benefit, normally about three months before you reach age 62. You can call SSA at 1-800-772-1213 for information or go online at [ssa.gov](http://ssa.gov).

### **What if I want to change banks for my direct deposit?**

Complete ETF's [Direct Deposit Authorization form \(ET-7282\)](#), available upon request or on our web site at [etf.wi.gov](http://etf.wi.gov).

### **When will I receive my first payment?**

If you apply 45 to 90 days before your annuity effective date (normally the day after your termination date), you should receive your first payment within six weeks after your termination date. Your payment will include payments retroactive to your annuity effective date. The payment you receive on the first of each month is for the preceding month.

## Frequently Asked Questions (continued)

### **Will I be paid for the entire month if I retire during the month instead of on the first of the month?**

No. You are paid retirement benefits only for the days you are actually retired. Your first payment could be for a partial month or for a full month plus a partial month. For example, if your last day of work is May 20, your annuity effective date is May 21. This means that we would add payment for May 21 through May 31 to the payment for the month of June, which you would receive on the first of July.

### **For how long after I begin my annuity will my payments be based on the estimated amounts?**

It usually takes from six to nine months after your retirement benefit begins for us to do the final calculation of your annuity. When the final calculation is done, we will send you a final calculation notice that provides the total service, earnings and account balance information on which your final calculation was based. Any retroactive adjustments due for under- or over-payments will be made to your subsequent payment(s).

### **Do I receive an Annuity Payment Statement every month?**

No. ETF sends an *Annuity Payment Statement* only when there is a change in your annuity net payment (including tax withholding and insurance deduction changes).

### **Do my retirement payments increase after I retire?**

Your payment amount may change when the final calculation is done, for insurance premium deductions, tax withholding and annual adjustments based on the investment results of the Trust Funds, etc. Any annual adjustment could be an increase or a decrease.

(Please see the *Future Benefit Changes* section for more information on the annual adjustments.)

### **I am in the Variable Trust Fund. Can I transfer to the Core Fund after my benefit begins?**

Participants who elect to join the Variable Trust Fund remain in that program unless they elect to cancel their participation.

You may transfer to the Core Fund by submitting a completed *Canceling Variable Participation form (ET-2313)* to ETF. It becomes effective on the January 1 after ETF receives it, (or if conditional, on January 1 of the year that the condition is met). Please carefully review the Variable cancellation information.

Once a participant cancels participation in the Variable Trust Fund and the cancellation goes into effect, there is no opportunity to rejoin.

### **Can I change my mailing address over the telephone?**

Upon proper identification, we can accept your home address change over the telephone. You must request the change yourself. Another person acting on your behalf cannot make an address change for you by telephone. An address change form is available upon request, or you may provide this information in a letter to ETF. Be sure to sign and date your letter.

### **Can I change my withholding for taxes after my benefit begins?**

Yes. You can change your federal and Wisconsin state income tax withholding election at any time.

Use the ETF Retiree Monthly Tax Withholding Calculator to determine how much you would like to withhold from your paycheck for taxes. Access the calculator at <https://trust.etf.state.wi.us/ETFTaxCalculator/calculator.do>

Fax or mail a completed *Income Tax Withholding Election (ET-4310) form*, available online or by contacting ETF.

## Frequently Asked Questions (continued)

### **Will I receive a statement for income tax purposes after my benefit begins?**

If you receive a monthly annuity, ETF will mail a 1099-R statement every year by January 31 providing information to complete your tax return. You do not need to request this information. The 1099-R will provide the amount of your benefit payments defined as taxable income, the gross amount of all benefit payments made during the year, the total withheld for life and health insurance premiums, as well as federal and Wisconsin state income taxes, if any.

If you receive a lump sum payment, ETF will send you a 1099-R form shortly after your payment has been direct deposited. The 1099-R will show the amount of income tax withheld, the total amount of your benefit and the taxable portion of your benefit. You will need this form when you file your income tax forms.

If you have multiple WRS annuity accounts (for example, you receive an annuity from both your own WRS account and as a beneficiary of another account), you will receive a separate annual 1099-R tax statement for each of your annuity accounts. It is important that you file copies of all your 1099-R forms with your annual tax returns, if required by the taxing authority.

### **After I retire, can I take a job with a private employer?**

As a retiree, you can work in private employment and your benefits administered by ETF (retirement and health/life insurance) will not change.

### **After I retire, when can I take a job that's covered by the WRS?**

When you can take a position covered by the WRS depends on when you last terminated WRS employment. Your annuity or lump-sum benefit will be cancelled if you return to WRS-eligible employment before the end of your required break in service.

### **If You Last Terminated WRS Employment Before July 2, 2013**

If you terminated WRS service before July 2, 2013, the earliest day you may return to WRS eligible employment is the latest of the following dates. This is called your "break in service" requirement:

- The day after the effective date of your annuity.
- The 31st day after you terminated your WRS-participating employment.
- The 31st day after the date ETF received your benefit application

### **If You Last Terminated WRS Employment On or After July 2, 2013**

If you terminated WRS service on or after July 2, 2013, the earliest day you may return to WRS-eligible employment is the latest of the following dates. This is called your "break in service" requirement.

- The day after the effective date of your annuity.
- The 76th day after you terminated your WRS participating employment.
- The 76th day after the date ETF received your benefit application

### **After I retire, when can I take a job with a WRS employer that's not covered by the WRS?**

Whether or not you need to satisfy a break in service (see previous page) depends on whether you go back to the same employer that you retired from.

- If your WRS employer is the same employer from whom you retired, the break in service requirement applies even though your new job does not meet WRS-participation standards.
- If you are going to work for a different WRS employer, you do not have to satisfy a break in service requirement. You can take a non-WRS job at any time.

## Frequently Asked Questions (continued)

### **What happens if I take a job that's covered by the WRS after I meet my break in service requirement?**

How you are impacted if you take a position covered by the WRS depends on when you last terminated WRS employment:

#### **If You Last Terminated WRS Employment Before July 2, 2013**

If you return to work for any WRS employer in a qualifying position after your required 30-day break, you have two choices:

1. Remain an annuitant. If you decide to remain an annuitant and continue receiving your WRS annuity, you must file the Rehired Annuitant Form (ET-2319) with your employer electing not to participate in the WRS as an active employee. You may elect active WRS coverage in the future, depending on eligibility.
2. Elect coverage under the WRS. You can elect to become covered under the WRS at any time. If you choose to be covered by the WRS again, you must file the Rehired Annuitant Form (ET-2319) with your employer. Your employer will forward this form to ETF. Your annuity will be suspended and your WRS coverage will begin effective on the first of the month after ETF receives your completed election form.

#### **If You Last Terminated WRS Employment On or After July 2, 2013**

If you return to work for a WRS employer in a position in which you are expected to work at least two-thirds of full time after your required 75-day break, your annuity will be automatically suspended. It will be re-established when you retire again.

If you work less than two-thirds of full time in your new position, what happens to your annuity depends on when you were first employed in a WRS position.

- If you first began work under the WRS before July 1, 2011, and you return to work for a WRS employer in a position that is at least one-third of full time, but less than two-thirds of full time, you may choose whether you want to continue or stop your annuity.

- If you first began work under the WRS on or after July 1, 2011 and you return to work for a WRS employer in a position that is less than two-thirds of full time, you may not become a participating employee. Your annuity will continue.

Special rules apply to disability benefits. If you are receiving a disability benefit, please contact ETF for information about how any earnings can affect your disability benefit.

#### **If I have coverage in the Wisconsin Public Employers Group Life Insurance Program through ETF, do I have to contact the insurance company for information on continuing my coverage?**

No. Our office will review your file for life insurance coverage and include continuation information in your retirement packet. In most cases, we will automatically deduct premiums from your annuity until age 65 with no further action on your part.

#### **I am *not* a state employee, but I have coverage in the Wisconsin Public Employers Group Health Insurance Program through ETF. How do I continue this health insurance when I retire?**

We will include information about continuing your coverage in your retirement packet. Your employer must complete the Verification of Health Insurance Coverage and Local Employer Paid Annuitant Transfer Report (ET-4814), and give it to you. You must then return the form to ETF with your retirement application. If your former employer does not pay the premiums, they are automatically deducted from your annuity if it is large enough. If your annuity is not large enough to cover the premiums, you will be billed directly by the insurance company. You will receive the *It's Your Choice* booklets each year. You can continue your coverage as long as your employer participates in this program. You have no re-enrollment rights if your coverage lapses.

## Frequently Asked Questions (continued)

### **I am a state employee with coverage under the State Group Health Insurance Program and have sick leave credits. How does this affect my health insurance premiums when I retire?**

Your sick leave credits will automatically be used to pay the premiums for your health insurance. When your sick leave credits are exhausted, your premiums will automatically be deducted from your annuity. If your annuity is not large enough to cover your premiums, you will be billed directly by your insurance company. You may be eligible to escrow your sick leave credits for an indefinite period of time. If your spouse or domestic partner is a state employee with family coverage that includes you, your sick leave credits are automatically *preserved* for you. More details are in our [\*Sick Leave Conversion Credit Program \(ET-4132\)\*](#) brochure.

### **I am a state employee with no sick leave. What happens to my health insurance?**

If your retirement benefit effective date is within 30 days after you terminate employment, health insurance automatically continues unless you elect to cancel. ETF must receive your signed cancellation prior to your retirement date. If you do not want coverage to continue during retirement, you must submit a [\*Health Insurance Application/Change Form \(ET-2301\)\*](#) or a signed letter to ETF requesting to cancel your health insurance.

If you choose to continue your insurance, your premiums will automatically be deducted from your annuity. If your annuity is not large enough to cover your premiums, you will be billed directly by your insurance company.

### **What happens to my health insurance when I or my spouse or domestic partner reach age 65? Are we required to enroll in Medicare? Will I be notified?**

When each of you reach age 65, each must enroll in Medicare (both parts A and B) to continue state or local health insurance. We will automatically mail you a reminder before your 65th birthday and your spouse's or domestic partner's birthday. Your premiums decrease when either of you are enrolled in Medicare (both parts A and B). You will need to submit the form ETF sends you and provide a copy of your Medicare card(s) to ETF. You must notify ETF when you or any insured person covered on your family plan is eligible for Medicare before age 65 (i.e. 24 months of Social Security disability benefits).

If you and/or your insured dependents do not enroll for Medicare Parts A and B, when first eligible, you may be liable for the portion of claims that Medicare would have paid beginning on the date Medicare coverage would have become effective.

You and/or your dependents are not required to be enrolled in Medicare until the subscriber terminates employment or health insurance as an active employee ceases.

### **How do I prepare to enroll in Medicare?**

1. Contact the Social Security Administration at 1-800-772-1213 or visit [www.ssa.gov](http://www.ssa.gov).
2. Obtain the [Medicare Eligibility Statement \(ET-4307\)](#), available at [etf.wi.gov](http://etf.wi.gov) or by request.
3. Complete the statement and mail or fax it to ETF.

For detailed instructions, consult [\*Steps to Prepare for Medicare \(ET-4114\)\*](#), available at [etf.wi.gov](http://etf.wi.gov) or by request.





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# Contact ETF

## Visit us online at [etf.wi.gov](http://etf.wi.gov)

Find Wisconsin Retirement System benefits information, forms and publications, benefit calculators, educational offerings, email and other online resources.

## Call us toll free at 1-877-533-5020 or 608-266-3285 (local Madison)

Benefit specialists are available 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. (CST) Monday-Friday

Self-Service: Order forms and brochures, or change your address information  
24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Wisconsin Relay Service for hearing and speech impaired: 7-1-1  
1-800-947-3529 (English), 1-800-833-7813 (Spanish)

### Write or Return Forms

P.O. Box 7931  
Madison, WI 53707-7931

### Visit by Appointment

801 West Badger Road  
Madison, WI 53713  
7:45 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

