

**THIS ISSUE: Additional Contributions for Cities,
Administering the HELPS Provision, other Communications Initiatives**

Additional Contributions

Beginning in January 2008, cities will have the option of making additional contributions to TMRS to reduce their unfunded actuarial accrued liability. We have already heard from a number of cities interested in doing this.

A form to be used with the contributions will be available next week on the TMRS Website, and cities can call Deputy Executive Director Eric Davis at TMRS if they want more details about making additional contributions.

It is important to note that payments made in 2008 will not reduce your monthly contributions in 2008. Additional contributions will be added to your city's municipal accumulation fund and be applied in the next actuarial valuation. Early in 2008, we will have modeling software to help you see the effect voluntary contributions have on your city's unfunded actuarial liability.

What City Correspondents Need to Know about HELPS Administration

The HELPS provision allows retired or permanently disabled public safety employees to elect an amount to be deducted from their TMRS benefit payment on a pre-tax basis to pay for health care or long-term care insurance premiums. The amount a retired officer excludes from taxable income on his or her tax return may not exceed \$3,000 in one year.

To qualify for this program, an employee must meet the law's definition of a "public safety officer" at the time of retirement –

- An individual involved in crime and juvenile delinquency control or reduction, or enforcement of the criminal laws (including juvenile delinquency), including but not limited to police, corrections, probation, parole, and judicial officers.
- Professional firefighters
- Officially recognized or designated:
 - Public employee members of a rescue squad or ambulance crew
 - Chaplains of fire departments and police departments

If a retired (or retiring) officer wishes to make this election, they need to fill out the [Application for Insurance Premium Deductions for Retired Public Safety Officers](#) form. After the form has been received by TMRS, payment will be transferred directly to the retiree's insurer.

Last week, TMRS mailed forms to retirees who have been identified as public safety officers. These retirees will be coming to City Correspondents to certify their status as public safety officers at the time of separation. Their ability to use this benefit will depend on your certification. Note that there are probably many eligible retirees who did not receive the TMRS letter (because they are not identified in our data as retired public safety employees), and they may be seeking your assistance too.

If the retiree is in a health plan administered by your city, TMRS will coordinate payments through the city. If retirees are in a separate plan, TMRS will coordinate payments with that plan. The form will remain available in the Forms & Publications section of the TMRS Website.

New Publication for City Officials

A new publication for city officials, called *TMRS Facts for City Officials*, will be available in the coming weeks. We plan to send a copy to all City Correspondents, City Managers, and City Finance Officers by the last week of December, and cities may request additional copies as needed. The booklet will also be available on the TMRS Website.

TMRS Fills Staff Actuary and Internal Auditor Positions

Two important positions have been added to the TMRS staff. An Internal Auditor and an Actuary began working for the System this week.

Actuarial Funding Workshops

Actuarial Funding Workshops are being planned for 2008. Our consulting actuary is developing tools to assist cities with benefit design options in January, and these tools will be available to help the Travel Team assist you beginning in February. After the actuarial tools are in place, we will begin scheduling Regional Funding Workshops around the state. Many cities have already expressed an interest in hosting a workshop. We will provide more details in January as well as a tentative schedule.

COLA Letters

COLA notification letters, for retirees whose cities have this option, will be going out in late January. The COLA letters provide retirees with the amount of increase they will be receiving for their annuities starting in January 2008.

What's Next?

In January, we are planning to send you another letter showing your city's projected rate under several plan design scenarios.

In April, rate letters will be sent to all cities showing the 2009 rate and — for those cities with large increases — the ultimate contribution rate and the schedule of increases through 2016.

As always, please stay tuned to the TMRS Website and e-bulletins for the latest news from TMRS.

NOTE - Previously issued e-bulletins and correspondence are posted in the [“Breaking News for Cities”](#) section on the TMRS Website.