


 A photograph of a city street with modern buildings and trees. The text "Spotlight on retirement" is overlaid in a large, white, serif font. "Spotlight" is the largest word, "on" is smaller, and "retirement" is in a smaller, sans-serif font.

Spotlight on retirement

LOS ANGELES COUNTY EMPLOYEES RETIREMENT ASSOCIATION • DECEMBER 2021 • VOL. 32, NO. 4

STATE OF THE OFFICE

Setting Our Path for 2022 and Beyond



Santos H. Kreimann
Chief Executive Officer

Hello, members. Since this issue of *Spotlight* usually arrives in late December or early January, the executive team is providing a

LACERA “State of the Office” address to coincide with the start of the year and the January kickoff of our first comprehensive strategic planning process—in conjunction with the boards—since 2017. With this baseline of LACERA’s status, we can

keep you updated throughout 2022 and beyond.

LACERA’s other executive team members are Deputy CEO Luis Lugo and Assistant Executive Officers JJ Popowich and Laura Guglielmo. Most of you are probably familiar with Mr. Popowich, who has long served in leadership roles at LACERA. As announced in the last issue, Mr. Lugo started in July, and Ms. Guglielmo started in September (see Accomplishments on page 4 for more details). This is an

accomplished group of public service professionals that I am excited to work with, and each has provided an individual update starting on page 3.

Why We Filed a Lawsuit Against the County

First, I want to address the recent lawsuit filed by LACERA against the County and Board of Supervisors.

You are probably aware through our communications to you that on

cont’d on pg. 2

— IN THIS ISSUE —

4 LACERA Accomplishments

6 USPS Changes Could Delay Your Mail

6 Payday Calendar

8 Staying Healthy Together

11 Three Things: Rose Bowl

12 Upcoming Holidays

BOARD OF RETIREMENT

ALAN J. BERNSTEIN

Chair
Appointed by Board of Supervisors

VIVIAN H. GRAY

Vice Chair
Elected by General Members

GINA ZAPANTA

Secretary
Appointed by Board of Supervisors

ELIZABETH B. GINSBERG

Chief Deputy County Treasurer and
Tax Collector
Alternate Ex-Officio Member

JAMES P. HARRIS

Alternate Member
Elected by Retired Members

SHAWN R. KEHOE

Elected by Safety Members

KEITH KNOX

County Treasurer and Tax Collector
Ex-Officio Member

WAYNE MOORE

Appointed by Board of Supervisors

RONALD A. OKUM

Appointed by Board of Supervisors

WILLIAM R. PRYOR

Alternate Member
Elected by Safety Members

LES ROBBINS

Elected by Retired Members

HERMAN B. SANTOS

Elected by General Members

BOARD OF INVESTMENTS

KEITH KNOX

Chair
County Treasurer and Tax Collector
Ex-Officio Member

JOSEPH KELLY

Vice Chair
Elected by Retired Members

ALAN J. BERNSTEIN

Secretary
Appointed by Board of Supervisors

ELIZABETH B. GINSBERG

Chief Deputy County Treasurer and
Tax Collector
Alternate Ex-Officio Member

DAVID GREEN

Elected by General Members

ELIZABETH GREENWOOD

Appointed by Board of Supervisors

PATRICK L. JONES

Appointed by Board of Supervisors

SHAWN R. KEHOE

Elected by Safety Members

GINA V. SANCHEZ

Appointed by Board of Supervisors

HERMAN B. SANTOS

Elected by General Members

Chief Executive Officer

SANTOS H. KREIMANN

Deputy Chief Executive Officer

LUIS A. LUGO

Assistant Executive Officers

LAURA GUGLIELMO

JJ POPOWICH

State of the Office cont'd

October 18, we filed a petition for a writ of mandate in Superior Court seeking affirmation of LACERA's independence.

The roots of this lawsuit stem from 2017, when the County began substituting its judgment on critical personnel decisions, rejecting or modifying several job classifications and compensation levels approved by LACERA trustees. Until then, for decades the County had acknowledged LACERA's authority to appoint and set employee salaries. We are asking the court to confirm that, under the law, LACERA has autonomous management authority and, specifically, we want the court to allow us to implement the key personnel decisions laid out in the lawsuit.

Resolving this issue ties directly into our strategic planning process and achieving our organizational mission. Having timely control over creating, modifying, and filling staff positions (which are paid for out of our own budget) in coordination with setting our strategic goals is critical. It directly affects our annual budget planning and implementation, and it directly affects our operational capabilities and project management decisions. Any delays or rejections of critical personnel positions by the County or Board of Supervisors keep LACERA in a holding pattern, hampering our ability to manage and develop our divisions as we feel is necessary to produce, protect, and provide the promised benefits to our members, as well as potentially constraining our strategic goals for them.

Please be assured that LACERA has a good working relationship with the County and intends to maintain it, despite the current disagreement. This does not affect your benefits in any way. The lawsuit also does not seek to change the status of LACERA staff as County employees. LACERA only asks the court to confirm that the County is legally obligated to respect the exclusive fiduciary authority of the LACERA boards to decide the positions

and salaries needed to run the retirement system in the best interest of members. We hope to achieve swift, clear resolution from the court and will keep you posted on any major developments.

On to Strategic Planning: What Is It, and Why Is It Important?

Strategic planning is the collaborative process of the boards, executive team, managers, and key staff members to establish our organizational goals, based on our mission, vision, and values. The strategic plan is the layout of those goals. It is a critical management tool for creating our budget and allocating resources.

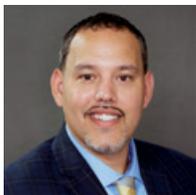
This year, we are taking a fresh approach to strategic planning, and will be enlisting a professional consultant to help us develop a new process and write the plan. Besides reviewing past practices and established policies and procedures, the consultant will conduct extensive information gathering, seeking input from across LACERA before making recommendations about the new process. This will ensure that we receive a wide range of perspectives to create a robust process with organization-wide buy-in.

The planning process will include a series of meetings with all participants to determine priorities, set specific goals, decide which projects we need to undertake to achieve those goals, and set deadlines for completion. Once decided, everything will be put into the final plan that will serve as LACERA's roadmap in the years to come.

Our first set of meetings will focus within, while we simultaneously establish the new process. We will take a close look at how well we are living up to our mission and revisit our vision and values statements. Later meetings will dive into our business operations, looking at everything from member services to technology to investment management.

State of the Office cont'd

Now I'd like you to hear directly from our other executive officers about what they are working on and what they look forward to accomplishing at LACERA.



Luis A. Lugo
Deputy Chief Executive
Officer

Moving Forward With Clear Purpose

Hi, LACERA members! I'm glad to have this opportunity to speak to you for the first time in *Spotlight* to update you on the executive

team's activities and—as a relative newcomer to the team—share more about my core values in serving LACERA and its members.

As Deputy CEO, I work closely with CEO Kreimann and AEOs Popowich and Guglielmo to expedite forward movement on our strategic goals.

I strive to lead with integrity, purpose, and determination. Having a strong moral compass provides clarity in decision-making, ensuring we are doing the best thing for the organization and its members. The destination should always be at the forefront, so I work hard to clearly define, communicate, and align a pathway forward, using roadblocks or constraints as opportunities for learning and adjusting course as needed.

The development and empowerment of others is critical to any organization's success. I value and promote an environment that fosters collaboration, creativity, and problem-solving at all levels of the organization. That's why I'll be taking an active role in analyzing the staff suggestions for improvement that we received in last year's employee engagement survey and focus groups. The staff feedback is being built into action plans that will dovetail nicely with

the upcoming strategic planning process, helping us make LACERA a better place to work and a stronger organization overall.

As we engage in our strategic planning efforts, I'm excited to be a part of LACERA's continued evolution in meeting the changing needs of our members for decades to come. Some of our ongoing modernization initiatives are described in the AEO sections below, but we will be developing many more in the future. Whether you're a new employee, going through a life event such as disability, or preparing to retire, we'll be here for you in the manner of your choosing.



JJ Popowich
Assistant Executive
Officer

Improving Your Member Experience

Happy new year, members! As we wind up the holidays, start the new year, and set the course for LACERA, I naturally

find myself reflecting on your contributions to the good of the community and LACERA's role in your lives. Nothing is more noble than taking care of another person, and I often describe what we do as taking care of our members from the day they start working until they leave this world and then beyond, because we take care of their beneficiaries and survivors even after they are gone.

As the AEO overseeing the Member Operations Group, I help the divisions that directly serve you to provide the best member experience possible. After nearly 30 years in customer service for many companies in many industries, I can tell you that our staff's dedication to our mission is truly unique and inspires me every day. That's why I do everything I can to provide these dedicated professionals the resources they need to efficiently

perform their work, while we all constantly look for new ways to improve service to you.

One of the major ways we are doing that is by advancing several priority projects identified by the trustees and boosting our technical capabilities. We know that being able to conduct your LACERA business online is an important option for many of you. In 2021, we completed a project to allow members to submit required certificates electronically. Previously, members were required to mail original birth, marriage/domestic partnership, death, and other certificates to LACERA, which was time-consuming as well as disconcerting for many, considering the immense personal significance of such documents.

We have several more projects in the pipeline aimed at streamlining important processes for members. First, we are working on the death benefit claims process, to get benefits to survivors faster. We recognize that the loss of a loved one is a sad and stressful time, so making the process easier and more efficient while ensuring we remain compliant with the law is our goal.

We are also redesigning the retirement application. LACERA has used the same basic retirement election form for decades, and we have much better options now for providing personalized information in the retirement packet provided to members. The new application provides a customized, comprehensive overview of the retiring member's benefits, including detailed options pages with allowance estimates, to help them make important decisions. The new application will be entering the beta testing phase soon and is

cont'd on pg. 5



LACERA ACCOMPLISHMENTS

LACERA Welcomes New AEO Laura Guglielmo



Laura Guglielmo

In September, Laura Guglielmo joined LACERA, filling the vacant assistant executive officer (AEO) position to complete the executive team.

Ms. Guglielmo will support LACERA's mission by leading the Administrative Services, Human Resources, Financial and Accounting, and Systems divisions, in addition to other responsibilities. Her immediate high-priority projects include the development of LACERA's new case management and budget systems, and she

will be a key participant in the 2022 strategic planning process.

Ms. Guglielmo has extensive public sector administrative leadership experience in various municipal organizations. Prior to joining LACERA, Ms. Guglielmo served as City Manager for the City of Palos Verdes Estates, Assistant General Manager for the Los Angeles Fire and Police Pension System, and Executive Officer for the City of Los Angeles's Housing and Community Investment Department.

LACERA Honored for Excellence in Financial Reporting

For the 31st consecutive year, LACERA has been awarded the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) Certification of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting for LACERA's Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR) for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2020. The GFOA award represents the highest possible recognition of governmental accounting and financial reporting.

In addition, our annual Popular Annual Financial Report (PAFR)—a condensed version of the ACFR sent to all members with their December newsletter—earned the GFOA award for Outstanding Achievement for the 23rd consecutive year.

Congratulations to the LACERA departments and employees who contributed to the annual reports for earning these prestigious national awards.





LACERA Board Election Results




Vivian H. Gray

Herman B. Santos

In August, LACERA general members voted for the third trustee seats on both the Board of Retirement (BOR) and the Board of Investments (BOI). Members were able to vote via email, telephone, or mail, with nearly 5,800 votes cast.

Incumbent Trustee Vivian Gray was reelected to the BOR, where she has served since 2013, and incumbent Trustee Herman Santos was reelected to the BOI, where he has served since

2004. Their new three-year terms begin in January 2022 and run through December 2024.

Congratulations and welcome back, Trustees Gray and Santos!

Update Your Information with LACERA

To make voting in LACERA Board elections easier, make sure your email address is on file with LACERA. This election, 292 general members still received paper ballots in the mail because we did not have their email addresses. By keeping your contact info up to date, you will receive important election updates from LACERA and be able to take advantage of convenient electronic options for voting.

State of the Office cont'd from pg. 3

the first step in fulfilling a strategic initiative to allow members to retire online.

Finally, I am pleased to share we are in the beginning phase of developing a new case management system. LACERA employees use specialty software programs in their respective divisions, but there is no larger system that all the programs plug into—meaning the various programs aren't designed to work together or share information. The new system will integrate the various applications LACERA uses for everything from first retirement payments to insurance enrollment and will automate certain processes. This will greatly improve our ability to manage member requests throughout their careers and provide data to help us improve operations. This is a big initiative involving several divisions and will be completed in multiple phases over the next few years.



Cultivating Strength From Within

Hello, members! I hope your new year is off to a good start. I appreciate this chance to introduce

myself as well as share updates from the administrative side of the house.

As the AEO overseeing Administrative Services, Human Resources, Financial and Accounting, and Systems divisions, I'm eager to lend my skills and experience toward ensuring we can sustainably and prudently fulfill our commitment to those

of you who have given so much to others. I've spent my entire career in the public sector, with managerial positions in fire and police pensions, community development and investment, and city administration, so I have seen firsthand how public service professionals like you dedicate your careers and lives to helping your community in every way imaginable. You and your families should have total confidence that your promised benefits will be there for you when the time comes. I take my fiduciary duty seriously and want you to know you can count on the LACERA team now and into the future!

A strong leader must have a clear vision for the future of the organization, which includes a workplace culture that reflects its values, and they must be able to consistently communicate that vision and those values through their words and actions. At LACERA, I plan to promote a culture of professionalism, ingenuity, and respect for others through my own personal behavior and by cultivating such values among our team.

In addition to participating in strategic planning and major initiatives like developing the new case management system, one of my top priorities is to evaluate, streamline, and improve our employee recruitment and retention methods. Ensuring we have a skilled, motivated workforce with the resources they need for top performance is vital to addressing our operational needs today and into the future.

We are currently in the middle of developing a systematic hiring and recruitment plan to bring our vacancy rate down to more sustainable levels, but this will be greatly influenced by the outcome of our lawsuit against the County. We are also ready to revamp our telework policy to provide our employees greater flexibility and quality of life without sacrificing member service or security. This is only possible due to the tremendous innovations implemented by our Systems Division in the past 18 months, so a special shout-out to our technical team for all your hard work!

Closing Thoughts From the CEO

I hope you enjoyed hearing from the rest of the leadership team about our major initiatives. These are significant projects that will take many months to accomplish, but we will keep you informed about our progress via *Spotlight*, lacera.com, and email announcements.

Thanks to the leadership and support of the LACERA trustees, there is a high degree of energy and engagement at all levels of LACERA leading into our strategic planning meetings, and we are motivated to examine, improve, and innovate the way we do things. We want to continually raise the bar of your expectations of us—and then exceed them.

Thanks for all you do. Take care, and a happy and healthy new year to you and your families.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Peter M. Thomas".

We wish you peace, health, and happiness this holiday season and throughout the year.

—LACERA Boards, Management, and Staff Members

USPS Changes Could Delay Your LACERA Mail Deliveries



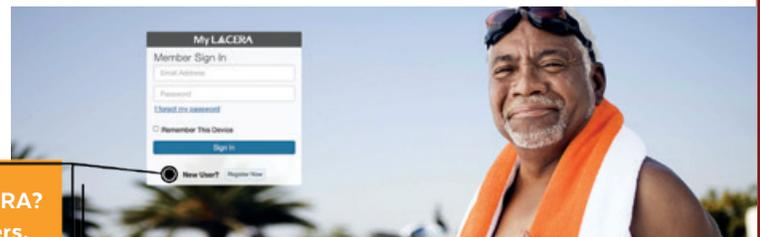
The United States Postal Service (USPS) implemented new first-class delivery standards on October 1, 2021.

For members receiving mailed allowance checks instead of direct deposit: Because LACERA sends your monthly allowance check via first-class mail, USPS changes could result in an added delay to your check delivery dates. To avoid being adversely affected by these changes, LACERA highly recommends that you switch to direct deposit. Direct deposit is secure and convenient. You'll never have to worry about your check being delayed, lost, or stolen, and your funds are always available on the last business day of the month.

To sign up for direct deposit, simply log in to your My LACERA account, if you are registered. Then select Direct Deposit from the menu and complete the online form.

If you are not registered with My LACERA, you can download or order a form by visiting lacera.com and clicking on Retirees and Families > Retirement Payments > Direct Deposit. Or, if you prefer, you can call us 800-786-6464 and a Retirement Benefits Specialist will help you.

For members receiving direct deposit: Because LACERA sends your automatic deposit receipts (ADRs) via first-class mail, the USPS changes could affect your ADR delivery dates. Your payments will not be affected. Look up your monthly ADRs any time by logging into your My LACERA account.



Not signed up for My LACERA? Register at <https://members.lacera.com>.

Retiree Payday Calendar*

Your monthly retirement allowance check is payable the last business day of the month.

DECEMBER 2021							JANUARY 2022							FEBRUARY 2022							
M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	
			1	2	3	4	5					1	2			1	2	3	4	5	6
6	7	8	9	10	11	12	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	
20	21	22	23	H	25	26	H	18	19	20	21	22	23	H	22	23	M	25	26	27	
27	M	29	D	H			24	25	26	M	28	29	30	D							

M = Check Mailing Date **D** = Direct Deposit **H** = Holiday

*As of the print date, this calendar was preliminary. Please refer to the enclosed finalized Payday Calendar for the confirmed paydays.

Stop! You Don't Have to Go!



Did you know that you can keep your assets in your 457(b) Horizons and/or 401(k) Savings Plans after you separate from County service? Keeping your money in the Plans with Empower Retirement may provide you with better opportunities than other investment products.

Why stay in the Plans?

- **Low fees:** The Plans' 100,000-plus participants help keep fees low and generally more competitively priced than retail investment accounts. The lower the fees you pay, the more money that stays in your account to help you build retirement income.
- **A wide choice of investment options:** You can build a portfolio that matches your goals. Investment options include Target Date Funds, Asset Class Funds, and the self-directed brokerage account (SDBA). The SDBA is intended for knowledgeable investors who acknowledge and understand the risks associated with the investments contained in the SDBA.
- **Convenient account management:** You can contact the County online at www.countyia.com, by phone at (800) 947-0845 or in person (appointments required)

at the local Pasadena office at 300 N. Lake Avenue, Suite 210, Pasadena, CA 91101. Please call to make an appointment.

- **Local noncommissioned representatives:** Empower representatives cannot offer investment advice, but they can help you understand your choices and answer your questions about the features of your Plans.
- **Account consolidation:** You may be able to roll over eligible retirement accounts from other employers and/or IRAs into your 457(b) Horizons and/or 401(k) Savings Plan accounts. Consolidating accounts can make it easier to apply your strategy across all your assets — with fewer statements, less paperwork, and possibly fewer fees to pay!
- **Flexible payout options:** There are many distribution options available, including periodic payments (which you can schedule like a regular retirement paycheck), lump-sum withdrawals, partial withdrawals, or purchase an annuity contract from one of the annuity providers of the Plan. Call (800) 947-0845 to learn more about your options.

Keeping your 457(b) Horizons and/or 401(k) Savings Plan accounts after you stop working for the County may be a smart part of your own plan for the future. Contact your Empower representative at (800) 947-0845.

Money from other types of plans or accounts that are rolled over into a governmental 457 plan may still be subject to the 10% federal early withdrawal penalty upon distribution from the 457 account prior to the investor reaching age 59½.

Under IRS regulations, you must receive at least the minimum amount required at your required beginning date (RBD). Your RBD is April 1 of the calendar year following the calendar year in which you reach age 72 (age 70½ for years before 2020) or leave employment with the County of Los Angeles, whichever is later. If you wait until April 1 of the calendar year following the calendar year in which you reach age 72, you will be required to take a second distribution by December 31 of the same calendar year.

Withdrawals may be subject to ordinary income tax. Withdrawals made prior to the investor reaching age 59½ may incur a 10% early withdrawal penalty.

The 10% federal early withdrawal penalty does not apply to 457 plan withdrawals except for withdrawals attributable to rollovers from another type of plan or account.

Securities, when presented, are offered and/or distributed by GWFS Equities, Inc., Member FINRA/SIPC. GWFS is an affiliate of Empower Retirement, LLC; Great-West Funds, Inc.; and registered investment adviser, Advised Assets Group, LLC. This material is for informational purposes only and is not intended to provide investment, legal or tax recommendations or advice. ©2021 Empower Retirement, LLC. All rights reserved. RO1721431-0721

STAYING HEALTHY TOGETHER

Vol. 15, Issue #4 • December 2021



Here are a few tips to help you stay on a healthy track and get the most out of your LACERA-administered retiree healthcare benefits.



Get vaccinated, if you haven't already. It's easy to find a vaccination site and make an appointment. Please contact your health plan for more information or visit their website, listed below (or on lacera.com under the Retiree Healthcare tab):

- Anthem Blue Cross Plans: www.anthem.com/coronavirus/
- Cigna (Medical): www.cigna.com/coronavirus/
- Kaiser Permanente: www.healthy.kaiserpermanente.org/southern-california/health-wellness/coronavirus-information

- SCAN HealthPlan: www.scanhealthplan.com/members/coronavirus-information?scan_state=CA
- UnitedHealthcare: www.uhc.com/health-and-wellness/health-topics/covid-19

Here are additional resources: In Los Angeles County, check online at www.publichealth.lacounty.gov. If you have trouble accessing the internet, call **833-540-0473** (8 a.m. to 8:30 p.m., seven days a week).



Select a primary doctor. Research shows that people who have a trusting, ongoing relationship with one medical professional over time are more likely to be satisfied with their healthcare. And this applies at any age. Your primary doctor's role, among other things, is to:

- Provide preventive care and teach healthy lifestyle choices
- Identify and treat common medical conditions

- Assess the urgency of your medical problems
- Help you get the right care at the right place
- Direct you to the appropriate labs or X-ray facilities for needed testing
- Make referrals to the right medical specialists when necessary

If you don't have a provider you consider to be your primary doctor, contact your LACERA-administered health plan for more information. The health plan carrier's information is located on your ID card. Your primary doctor will be directly involved in your care and act as your main healthcare provider in non-emergency situations. When choosing the right doctor for you, consider the list above and think about what matters to you. You can also go to lacera.com/healthcare-plans to find links to each carrier's website and phone number.



Catch up on your preventive care screenings.

During the pandemic, many of us postponed our regular care and screenings. That's why we encourage you to get in touch with your primary doctor as soon as possible. Reschedule any appointments you had to cancel in 2020, or take advantage of the virtual visits they offer. It's important! We're talking about potential life-saving preventive care like physical exams, immunizations (including vaccinations for COVID-19, influenza, and pneumonia), mammograms, Pap smears, prostate blood tests, and colonoscopies.



Remain diligent when it comes to your medications. It's important that you stay on top of your medications and take them as your doctor prescribes. To keep your out-of-pocket costs low, follow these tips:

- Take generic medications instead of brand-name medications. If you're taking a brand-name prescription medication, call your doctor and ask if a generic equivalent is available.
- Have your prescriptions filled at network retail pharmacies (for Anthem Blue Cross Plans I, II, and III) or through your health plan's mail order delivery service.



Consider a video chat with your dentist when you have dental questions or concerns. Many dental offices are taking extra measures to keep you and your family safe. If you prefer not to visit a dental office in person, consider teledentistry. Using video chat, dentists are providing virtual consultations, including in an emergency, to determine if you need to schedule an in-person visit. To access the teledentistry benefit under the LACERA-administered Cigna dental plan, you must log in to www.myCigna.com and locate the "Connect Now" button. If you have any questions about this benefit or need assistance, contact Cigna directly via its website, or by phone at **800-244-6224**.

This article is for general informational purposes only. Consult with professional advisors regarding medical matters; LACERA does not offer medical advice.

Staying Healthy Together Workshops

Due to the COVID-19 public health emergency and continuing local restrictions on large gatherings, LACERA maintains a pause on planning our semiannual Staying Healthy Together workshops. We will keep you informed of future in-person workshops. You can also check for updates at lacera.com/program-basics/retiree-wellness-program.

2022 Medicare Part B Premium Verification

Attention members enrolled in a LACERA-administered Medicare Advantage Prescription Drug (MAPD) plan such as Kaiser Permanente Senior Advantage, Cigna Preferred Rx (Phoenix, AZ), SCAN Health Plan, UnitedHealthcare (MA), or Medicare Supplement Plan (Anthem Blue Cross III):

If you and/or your eligible dependent(s) have received your 2022 SSA Benefit Verification letter (with the Part B premium amount) from Social Security or your quarterly bill from Medicare (with the Part B premium amount) and are currently enrolled in any of the plans listed above, you may send a copy to LACERA now. Upon approval by the Board of Supervisors to continue the Medicare Part B Premium Subsidy

Program, LACERA will mail a Part B Verification Notice to members with detailed information. Stay tuned and look for this notice in the mail.

The fastest and easiest way to receive the required document(s):

- SSA Benefit Verification Letter for Part B premium: Sign into or create your Social Security account at ssa.gov/myaccount. You can easily view, print, or save your verification letter. Contact your local Social Security Office or call 800-772-1213 for more information.
- 2022 Medicare billing for Part B premium: Sign in or create your Medicare account at www.mymedicare.gov. Contact Medicare at 800-633-4227 or visit their website at medicare.gov for more information.

Enrollment Alert: Do Not Sign Up for Non-LACERA Medicare Part D



Companies and organizations sponsoring Medicare prescription drug plans are aggressively conducting massive marketing campaigns seeking to enroll Medicare-eligible beneficiaries, such as you, in other Medicare prescription drug programs. **Ignore these advertisements and solicitations!**

Proceed with caution, remembering the following important information:

- **No action is required** on your part.
- **You do not need any additional prescription drug insurance.** You currently have a prescription drug plan

through your LACERA-administered medical plan that is as good as and likely better than other Medicare Part D plans.

- **If you wish to keep your LACERA-administered medical coverage, do not enroll in other Medicare Part D plans.** Signing up for another Medicare Part D plan may jeopardize your LACERA-administered medical plan, and you may not get it back until later!



3 THINGS: *Rose Bowl*

Every January brings annual traditions to Southern California—the Tournament of Roses Parade, Golden Globes, and so on—but for football fans, one tradition remains the granddaddy of them all: the annual Rose Bowl Game. Whether you're tailgating at the stadium or watching from your couch, here are three facts about the big game:



The first Rose Bowl was played in 1902, with the University of Michigan besting Stanford at Tournament Park. The Valley Hunt Club hosted the game to gain national attention for the Tournament of Roses Parade.



The Rose Bowl Stadium was built in 1922 specifically to accommodate the size of the crowds coming to the annual event. Architect Myron Hunt based his design of the stadium on the Yale Bowl in Connecticut.



1947 was the first year when the traditional matchup of the winner of the Pacific Coast Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (now the Pac-12 Conference) played the winner of the Big Ten Conference.



Sources: www.tournamentofroses.com; www.britannica.com; www.discoverlosangeles.com; and www.heavy.com



LACERA appreciates the contributions of every member and knows that all of you are uniquely important to our community. In that spirit, we recognize and celebrate February as Black History Month, a time to remember and honor the rich and diverse history and achievements of Black and African Americans.

Black History Month was first proposed in 1926 by Dr. Carter G. Woodson and his organization the Association for the Study of African American Life (ASALH) to recognize the birthdays of Abraham Lincoln (February 12) and Frederick Douglass (February 14). ASALH continues to support the event and designate the annual theme, which for 2022 is Black Health and Wellness (see www.asalh.org/black-history-themes/).

Many other organizations across the county will be celebrating Black History Month, including the L.A. County Public Library, which holds both virtual and in-person programming, events, and educational opportunities. You can find out more information by visiting www.lacountylibrary.org/aabhm.

For a list of more local events, visit www.discoverlosangeles.com/things-to-do/black-history-month-events-in-los-angeles.

Update: Public Pension Funds Continue Fight to Repeal Windfall Elimination Provision

LACERA and many other public pension funds are still working with legislators to repeal the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) and Government Pension Offset (GPO). The Board of Retirement adopted support positions on House bill H.R. 82 (the Social Security Fairness Act of 2021) and the Senate's

S. 1302 equivalent. In addition, the Board of Retirement has adopted support positions on H.R. 2337 (the Public Servants Protection and Fairness Act of 2021), which is a WEP modification proposal.

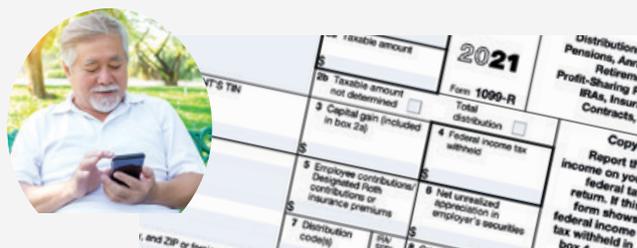


Adjusting Your Tax Withholding Elections

If you need to make a change to your tax situation, you can modify the amount deducted from your monthly benefit payment. LACERA offers two easy ways to adjust your tax withholding election.

1. Use My LACERA to make adjustments securely online.

- Sign in to your My LACERA account.
- Select “Tax/1099-R.”
- Select “Adjust Election.”
 - To adjust your federal tax elections, provide the appropriate information, then click “Confirm.”
 - To adjust your California tax elections, provide the appropriate information, then click “Confirm.”
- After entering your name, click “Submit.”



- Upload your forms by logging in to your My LACERA account or mail forms to:

LACERA
PO Box 7060
Pasadena, CA 91109-7060

Please note, if you do not want to change your existing election, no action is necessary. LACERA does not provide tax advice. Consult with a professional advisor to determine which withholding category is best for your personal situation.

2. Print and mail or upload your forms to LACERA.

- Find your federal and state tax withholding forms on lacera.com. On the homepage, click the Forms & Publications tile, then find the withholding forms under “Manage Your Retirement Payments.”
- Print out and complete the forms.

PAFR Enclosed: Our Financial Condition, at a Glance

This year's Popular Annual Financial Report (PAFR) is enclosed for your review. The PAFR includes LACERA's financial condition and accomplishments for the fiscal year 2020-2021. We encourage you to spend some time reading up on the financial status of our pension plan and retiree healthcare program to see how the trust funds are performing. Our full Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR) is available on lacera.com.



Upcoming Holidays

LACERA will be closed on:

- **Friday, December 24**
For Christmas
- **Friday, December 31**
For New Year's Day
- **Monday, January 17**
For Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- **Monday, February 21**
For Presidents Day



Email: welcome@lacera.com

Editor's Note: *Spotlight on Retirement* is published by the staff of LACERA and is for general informational purposes only. Consult with professional advisors regarding legal, tax, and/or medical matters; LACERA does not offer legal, tax, or medical advice.

Contributing Writers: Thomas Cohen, James Nicholson, Sarah Scott, Retiree Healthcare Division

Senior Editor: Sarah Scott **Editor:** Thomas Cohen **Design:** Courtney Cook