

News for
Retired Members

Spotlight

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LOS ANGELES COUNTY EMPLOYEES RETIREMENT ASSOCIATION

Getting Started With My LACERA: Video Walkthrough



Managing your retirement account doesn't have to be a difficult or time-consuming task. At LACERA, we are constantly working to make the process as simple and stress-free as we can. In 2005, we launched the My LACERA platform to give members access to their account information and conduct basic self-service transactions. Over the last two decades, we've continued to add features, tools, and fine-tune My LACERA to make it as user-friendly as possible.

Many of our members are already using My LACERA to adjust their tax withholding, view their Retiree Healthcare

Summary, print pension verification letters, and more. However, we understand that there are still some members who may be unfamiliar with the platform. To help you get a full understanding of My LACERA and its features, we've published a Getting Started with My LACERA walkthrough video, designed to guide you through My LACERA's features and tools. If you have not yet signed up for My LACERA, or want to familiarize yourself with the platform, we encourage you to watch the video today.

Cont. on pg. 3

IN THIS ISSUE



LACERA
Accomplishments

4



Investments
Snapshot

5



Community Corner

7



Staying Healthy
Together

8



FROM THE EXECUTIVE DESK

SANTOS H. KREIMANN, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

- LUIS A. LUGO, ACTING CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
- LAURA GUGLIELMO AND JJ POPOWICH, ASSISTANT EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

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LES ROBBINS

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Elected by Retired Members

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Vice Chair

Appointed by Board of Supervisors

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Secretary

Alternate Trustee

Elected by Safety Members

NANCY M. DURAZO

Elected by General Members

BOBBIE FESLER

Appointed by Board of Supervisors

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Ex-Officio Trustee

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Alternate Trustee

Elected by Retired Members

ALEEN LANGTON

Elected by General Members

WAYNE MOORE

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LISA PROFT

Chief Deputy County Treasurer and

Tax Collector

Acting Ex-Officio Trustee*

DAVID E. RYU

Appointed by Board of Supervisors

BOARD OF INVESTMENTS

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Vice Chair

Appointed by Board of Supervisors

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Secretary

Appointed by Board of Supervisors

MIKE GATTO

Appointed by Board of Supervisors

ELIZABETH B. GINSBERG

County Treasurer and Tax Collector

Ex-Officio Trustee

ALEEN LANGTON

Elected by General Members

DEBBIE MARTIN

Elected by Retired Members

ALMA K. MARTINEZ

Appointed by Board of Supervisors

NICOLE MI

Elected by General Members

LISA PROFT

Chief Deputy County Treasurer and

Tax Collector

Acting Ex-Officio Trustee*

*When ex-officio trustee is absent

Hello members! I hope you enjoyed the fall holidays and end-of-year celebrations.

As we near the first anniversary of the January wildfires and reflect on the challenges we faced last year, let's continue demonstrating our values of compassion, resilience, and community as we move into 2026. By working together, we can overcome whatever comes our way and set the foundation for future progress.

Favorable Financials

I'm pleased to share that LACERA's pension and healthcare benefits trusts closed out the fiscal year on a positive note, as summarized in the enclosed Popular Annual Financial Report (PAFR). The PAFR presents the growth in total fund balances across recent fiscal years, providing graphical information on return percentages, funded status, asset allocations, and additional data that demonstrate strong performance over time.

For even more detailed financial, investment, actuarial, and statistical information, you can review the Annual Comprehensive Financial Report, posted at lacera.gov > *About LACERA* > *Annual Reports* (under Accountability).

For the most recent investment activities, I encourage you to read our Investments Snapshot on page 5, which covers the latest Board of Investments' (BOI) meetings and motions. To see firsthand how LACERA is managing the trusts and securing your future, we invite you to join our livestreamed BOI meetings—held at 9 a.m. on the second Wednesday of the month, unless noted otherwise. Visit lacera.gov > *About LACERA* > *Board Meetings* (under Leadership) to see the schedule and participate. The livestream window appears on the page when the meeting is underway.

Progress on Priorities

LACERA has made considerable progress in advancing the objectives outlined in our 2023–2028 strategic plan, having accomplished over half of the milestones

associated with our five strategic priorities.

Our top priority continues to be providing you a superior member experience at every stage of your retirement journey. Beyond ensuring consistency and seamless service (whether you interact with us in person, over the phone, on lacera.gov, or on My LACERA), we are also expanding our digital engagement and educational tools to inform you about your benefits.

For just one example, our cover story describes how our new My LACERA video is designed to help you manage your account. Being familiar with the features on My LACERA ensures you have access to your account and self-service tools 24/7.

Internally, we have made considerable progress toward the development of an advanced knowledge management system, which will revolutionize how we organize, access, and share information. This ambitious project directly supports our superior member experience priority and is expected to roll out at the end of 2028.

We are also focused on cultivating our work culture and enhancing professional development for our staff members, as well as implementing robust ethics, compliance, and governance frameworks for safeguarding the security and stewardship of your retirement benefits.

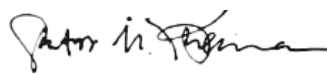
Lifetime Maximum Benefit: More Good News

We are currently working with the County CEO's office to further increase the lifetime maximum benefit (LMB) cap on the LACERA-administered Anthem Blue Cross I, II, and Prudent Buyer retiree healthcare plans. In 2026, we will phase in an increase that bumps the LMB to \$2.25 million (following an increase from \$1 million to \$1.5 million in July 2025). These increases reflect our ongoing commitment to providing you with robust retiree healthcare benefits and our goal of eliminating the LMB entirely.

Welcome Back, Trustees Kehoe and Green

Our safety members have spoken! In August, they reelected Trustees Shawn Kehoe and Jason Green to LACERA's boards, and on October 21, the Board of Supervisors certified the results. We look forward to the start of the trustees' new terms in January and are glad to have them both back for the next three years.

Thank you for your continued trust in LACERA. I wish you and your loved ones a safe and healthy 2026.



Getting Started With My LACERA, cont. from cover

Here's an overview of what's covered in the video:

- **How to sign up for My LACERA:** Step-by-step instructions for registering your My LACERA account
- **Account Maintenance Tools:** Update your personal information, upload documents, view and send secure messages, and more
- **Customized Tools for Active Members:** Apply for retirement, update your beneficiaries, calculate your retirement allowance, purchase service credit, and more

- **Customized Tools for Retired Members:** Access documents, update beneficiary contact information, set up direct deposit, modify your tax withholding election, and more

The video also provides guidance on where to find additional information about important retirement topics.

To access the videos walkthroughs, visit lacera.gov and click the *Resource Center* tile, then the *Video Library* tile. Under the My LACERA category, select the *Getting Started with My LACERA* page.

There's a Webinar for You—Join Us!

LACERA offers convenient online workshops to help you make the most of your benefits, even after you've retired. To browse upcoming sessions and register online, visit lacera.gov, then click on the *Resource Center* tile on the homepage to access the *Workshop Schedule* page.

Webinars offered on a rotating basis include:

- **LACERA Special Durable Power of Attorney:** Provides you and your family options in the event you become incapacitated or unable to handle your LACERA benefits. This webinar takes you through completing all the appropriate paperwork, including filling out the LACERA Special Durable Power of Attorney form.
- **My LACERA:** Shows you how to sign up for My LACERA, access your information, and securely and conveniently conduct self-service transactions with our easy-to-use tools.
- **LACERA Active and Retired Death Benefits:** Covers the various benefits available to your loved ones should the worst happen—helping you make sure your survivors will have the ability to take care of themselves and giving you peace of mind.
- **LACERA Domestic Partnership:** Helps you understand the many details regarding the domestic partnership



requirements and the types of domestic partnerships LACERA can accept for benefit eligibility.

- **Empower Mini-Webinars** for managing your savings accounts post-retirement, such as: Living in Retirement (new!); Comprehensive Account Review; Stay in the Plan; Inflation Risk/Equity Risk: What Is It and How to Manage It; Navigating the Website; Market Volatility and Your L.A. County Investment Strategy; and Fraud Prevention.

PAFR Enclosed: A Picture of Our Financial Status



This year's Popular Annual Financial Report (PAFR) is enclosed for your review.

The PAFR is a snapshot of LACERA's finances, investment returns, and accomplishments for the fiscal year 2024–2025. We encourage

you to read the financial status of our pension and retiree healthcare funds to see how the trusts are performing. Our full Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR) is available at lacera.gov > *About LACERA* > *Annual Reports*.



LACERA Accomplishments

Trustees Kehoe and Green Reelected to Boards



Shawn R. Kehoe

In August, the L.A. County Board of Supervisors held elections for the safety member trustee positions on the LACERA Boards of Retirement and Investments. For the Board of Retirement, members elected Shawn R. Kehoe to the seventh seat and Jason E. Green to the alternate seat. For the Board of Investments, Mr. Kehoe was elected to the fourth seat.



Jason E. Green

Mr. Kehoe and Mr. Green both currently serve on the LACERA boards, so members will continue to benefit from both trustees' leadership and experience. Congratulations, Trustees Kehoe and Green. We are glad to welcome you back for your new terms from January 1, 2026 through December 31, 2028!

LACERA CIO Appointed to CFA Institute's Inclusion Committee



Jon Grabel

In September, LACERA Chief Investment Officer Jon Grabel was appointed to the CFA Institute's Inclusion Committee. The CFA Institute is a global association of investment professionals focused on promoting the highest standards, ethics, and professional excellence to deliver better investor outcomes and contribute

value to society. As a member of the committee, Mr. Grabel will help provide strategic oversight for the CFA Institute's inclusion initiatives.

Jason Choi Nominated for Rising Stars Honor



Jason Choi

Senior Investment Analyst Jason Choi has been nominated by *Pensions & Investments* as part of its inaugural WorldPensionSummit Rising Stars class—honoring individuals who are reshaping the future of institutional investing.

Nominees for this honor were required

to possess at least a decade of investment experience, provide evidence of their progress and contributions to the field, and demonstrate leadership as role models within the industry.

Jason's nomination is a testament to his hard work and dedication. We are grateful for his contributions and proud to have him represent LACERA!

Wishing you good health, happiness, and a wonderful holiday season.

—LACERA Boards of Retirement and Investments, Executive Team, and Staff Members

BOI Offsite

From September 9–10, the Board of Investments (BOI) held its annual BOI Offsite meeting. The Investments Division, along with subject-matter experts from around the world, discussed some of today's most pressing topics, including energy transition, blockchain and tokenization, and the implications of artificial intelligence (AI).

The Investments Division also updated the Board on current initiatives, like the design and implementation strategy of LACERA's credit portfolio, as well as the macro environment, its impact, and the importance of LACERA's strategic asset allocation. The Financial and Accounting Services Division and consultants also provided an update on LACERA's actuarial experience study.

October BOI Update

At the October 8 BOI meeting, LACERA CIO Jon Grabel provided an update on the pension fund (fund) and Other Post-Employment Benefits (OPEB) Trust, which funds retiree healthcare and other non-pension benefits. As of the end of August, the fund posted a monthly net gain of 1.2 percent. Assets under management (AUM) reached a total market value of \$86.8 billion, setting a new high-water mark for the fund, and cash remained steady at \$1.28 billion.

The OPEB trust also ended August on a positive note, with a monthly net return of 2 percent. The AUM for the Trust closed at \$5.2 billion, setting another high-water mark, with a cash balance of \$1.4 billion. Together with the fund, these gains underscore the continued strength of LACERA's overall investment strategy and asset allocation.

Looking Ahead

Also in the October 8 meeting, the Financial and Accounting Services Division and actuarial consultants presented the first of a series of presentations concerning the actuarial experience study, with the goal of updating and analyzing economic assumptions. Future presentations at upcoming BOI meetings will update economic and demographic assumptions, analyze financial impacts, and present an experience study report for the BOI to consider.

The Board also reviewed and made a motion on the following:

- The Board voted in favor of updating both the credit and hedge funds guidelines, shifting from an approximate manager count to a maximum manager allocation. Hedge funds are part of the risk reduction and mitigation portfolio.

To watch the entire meeting, as well as other BOI and BOR meetings, visit our YouTube channel at www.youtube.com/@lacera2580.

Adjusting Your Tax Withholding Elections

As of the Spotlight publication date, changes to the federal W-4P tax withholding form are pending. LACERA will alert you to any significant changes. Be sure to watch your email, My LACERA dashboard, or lacera.gov for announcements. You can also visit lacera.gov > Retirees and Families > Tax Requirements > Changing Your Withholding for the latest forms and information.

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, then Adjust Election.
- Provide the appropriate information for your federal and state elections and confirm.
- After entering your name, click Submit.
- Tip: To watch a video walk-through on completing the 1099-R section, visit lacera.gov, then click on the Resource Center tile > Video Library > Getting Started with My LACERA > Customized Tools for Retired Members.

2. Complete your forms and submit to LACERA.

- Find your federal and state tax withholding forms at lacera.gov > Retirees and Families > Tax Requirements >



Changing Your Withholding.

- Download or print out and complete the forms.
- Upload your forms by logging in to your My LACERA account, or
- Mail forms to: LACERA, PO Box 7060, Pasadena, CA 91109-7060

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.

Celebrating Black History Month

Each February, Black History Month invites us to reflect on the struggles, triumphs, and enduring contributions of Black Americans throughout our country’s history. The celebration began in 1925 when historian Carter G. Woodson established Negro History Week, timed to honor the birthdays of Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass. The week grew in recognition over the years and expanded into the full month of February in 1976 with support from President Gerald R. Ford.

Black history is particularly ingrained into Los Angeles’ history. The city was founded in 1781 by 44 nonindigenous settlers which included 26 Mexicans of African descent. The city’s Black community continued to grow throughout the 19th century and became the largest Black urban population in the West by 1910. Since then, Los Angeles has been home to many notable African American historical figures, including Bridget “Biddy” Mason, one of the first Black female landowners in Los Angeles and co-founder of the First African Methodist Episcopal Church; Hattie McDaniel, the first Black actor to



win an Academy Award; and Leon H. Washington Jr., who founded the Los Angeles Sentinel newspaper to fight against segregation and discrimination.

Sources: americanenglish.gov, blackhistory.gov, inmotionaame.org

Lunar New Year

February 17 will mark the Lunar New Year and kick off a two-week festival celebrated by many Asian cultures, beginning with the new moon and continuing to the following full moon. Typical activities include fireworks, parades, and lantern-lighting ceremonies. Each year is tied to a zodiac animal, with 2026 year being the Year of the Horse—a symbol of energy, freedom, and adventure. Lunar New Year will be celebrated with events throughout Los Angeles, including Monterey Park’s historic Lunar New Year Festival and the annual Golden Dragon parade downtown, the longest-running Lunar New Year parade outside China.



Payday Calendar

Your monthly retirement allowance check is payable on the last business day of the month. We have enclosed the 2026 Retiree Payday Calendar for your reference, so you can track your payments and plan around holidays that may affect processing.

December 2025						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	H	26	27
28	M	30	D			

January 2026						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
				H	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	H	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	M	29	D	31

February 2026						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	H	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	M	26	D	28

M = Check Mailing Date

D = Prepaid Mastercard/Direct Deposit

H = Holiday

Community Corner

County Service and Donation Opportunities

LACERA members contribute to the well-being of our community through both their professional and volunteer efforts. Because of your engagement, we regularly receive requests from County partners to share meaningful donation, volunteer, and work opportunities, with current ones listed below. Thank you for giving back and making a positive impact—on and off the job!

Donate to the Department of Public Social Services' Toy Loan Program

The DPSS's free Toy Loan program allows children across L.A. County to borrow toys in the same way they borrow books from the public library. Donations of new toys and books are always welcome and accepted year-round.

DPSS will gladly pick up donated items from your home, office, or other location. For more information, visit <https://dpss.lacounty.gov/en/community/toy-loan.html> or email toyloan@dpss.lacounty.gov.

To schedule a free pick-up or find a drop-off location, contact DPSS at 323-986-2741. To make a tax-deductible monetary

donation, send a check, money order, or cashier's check made payable to Los Angeles County - DPSS to the following address:

DPSS Toy Loan Program, 2200 N. Humboldt Street, Los Angeles, CA 90031



Thank you for making a brighter and happier day for local children!

Join Our L.A. Food Bank Fundraiser Today—Because No Veteran Should Go Hungry



Every day, thousands of veterans in Los Angeles struggle with food insecurity. These men and women served our country with courage and honor, yet too many now face the harsh reality of empty pantries and skipped meals.

The Retired Employees of Los Angeles County (RELAC)

believes **no veteran should ever have to wonder where their next meal will come from**. That's why RELAC has been working tirelessly to get donations to feed veterans and their

families throughout L.A. County. Help us reach our goal of raising \$10,000 for the L.A. Food Bank this year—we can't do it without your help!

Your donation makes a real difference. Just \$1 helps provide up to four meals. Imagine the impact of your generosity—filling plates, lifting spirits, and showing our heroes that their service has not been forgotten.

Hunger is a battle that no one should fight alone. Join us today in standing with those who once stood for us.

Donate Now by scanning the QR code or visiting <https://give.lafoodbank.org/relac2025>, and help ensure **no veteran goes hungry**.

Together, we can turn gratitude into action. Contact us at:

RELAC (626) 308-0532 | www.relac.org



L.A. County Self-Help Legal Centers Seek Volunteers

Los Angeles County retirees are invited to make a difference in their community by volunteering with the L.A. County Department of Consumer and Business Affairs (DCBA). Through DCBA's Self-Help Legal Access Centers, volunteers support residents who are representing themselves in court.

Located in courthouses across the County, these nine centers provide essential assistance to people navigating the legal system without an attorney. Volunteers play a vital role by guiding the public through forms, explaining procedures, and connecting individuals with resources—helping people help themselves with dignity and respect. No prior legal experience

is required; training and support are provided.

By sharing your time and skills, retirees can contribute to a more accessible, compassionate justice system while staying engaged in meaningful public service. If you are interested in volunteering, please apply to one of the Self-Help Legal Access Centers below.



- Long Beach, Torrance, Inglewood, or Santa Monica: Apply at www.lafla.org > *Get Involved* > *Volunteer*
- Compton: Apply at www.communitylegalsocal.org > *Get Involved* > *Volunteer* > *Apply Now*
- Pomona, Van Nuys, Chatsworth, or Lancaster: Apply at <https://nlsa.org/get-involved> > *Pro Bono* / *Volunteer*

STAYING HEALTHY TOGETHER

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Scams and Frauds and Tricksters— Oh My!

As the world continues to change and evolve, so do the ways of malicious individuals finding new methods to gain access to your personal information, financials, and data. Now, with the advances of AI-assisted technology, there's no better time to refresh your knowledge of the potential frauds and scams you can encounter and how best to protect yourself against them.

Types of Scams

Scammers are only getting more and more clever year to year with their varying methods of tricking information out of you. Most scams are done by phone, mail, email, or text message, by someone claiming to be somebody you know or a trusted organization to get personal information from you.

While everyone can be susceptible to scams, individuals age 60 and older are increasingly targeted due to the belief that seniors have larger financial savings and don't keep up with the ever-growing technological landscape. Plus, falling for schemes and cons can be an embarrassing blow, not only monetarily wise, but emotionally and mentally as well. Fraudsters want their victims to feel trapped, scared, and ashamed for falling for one of these schemes and to be too self-conscious to ever report the crime or seek out help. The psychological component of scams can be just as, if not more, devastating and life-altering than the financial loss for many victims and their families.

To avoid ever falling for a scam, you must first learn about them. Here are the top five most well-known scams and how they work:

Grandparent scam: This scam preys on your emotional and personal bonds, as the scammer will pretend to be a close family member in financial need, typically someone younger and vulnerable like a grandchild. It usually involves an everyday excuse such as car troubles or a late bill where you can send cash quickly via wire transfer or gift cards to help out and the scammer does not need an official ID to accept it (and with no ID to trace, it's next to impossible to recover your finances once reported). Another version of this scam involves the scammer pretending to be an arresting officer, doctor, or lawyer declaring your loved one is in trouble and needs cash urgently to post bail or for a medical procedure. With the development of artificial intelligence (AI), scammers can now

copy voices and/or images of individuals to trick you, so these kinds of scams are getting harder to catch every year.

Emotional exploitation scam: The internet is a great way to meet people and, unfortunately, is where scammers thrive. By taking their time and gaining your trust, scammers can pretend to be a lover, friend, or companion, and get you to send them money, gifts, or even access your bank account directly by convincing you to give them permission. This is usually successful, as scammers toy with the idea of meeting face-to-face as leverage or by promising to eventually pay you back, but they never have the intention to and will only keep asking for more.

Financial services scam: A savvy scam that tricks people by making it appear as if the calls, texts, and emails are coming from a legitimate source such as a bank, mortgage company, or debt collection agency. Scammers will start off claiming a bill is overdue, an account has been compromised, or that you may be eligible for a special offer but that they need your passwords and Social Security Number (SSN) to verify. In these cases, threatening language may be used to scare you into providing sensitive information or money.

Tech support scam: In this scam, the uncertainty and confusion that many people feel about computers is preyed upon. When browsing a site, your screen may freeze or go black and a pop-up with instructions to call tech support is shown. The fake "tech support" representative you contact will ask your permission to log on to your device remotely and even demand a fee to resolve the issue.

Government impersonation scam: For this particular scam, a caller declaring to be a government official working for the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), Social Security Administration, or Medicare may call threatening to arrest or deport individuals over "unpaid taxes." This scare tactic is effective as many scammers use special technology to make the call look as if it's coming from a valid source. They often threaten to cut off Social Security or Medicare benefits unless you provide them money immediately or private information so they can commit identity fraud.

Other Methods

There are endless ways bad actors try to access your information or scare you into sending money. While these are the top five most common scams, there are other methods to be aware of. Many scammers try to get away with “get rich quick” scams. This can include calling with a “low-risk, guaranteed returns” investment or saying you’ve recently won the lottery or a sweepstakes—but you must send money first to claim your prize.

Robocalls are a common scam where a robotic recording prompts your response and scammers record your voice to use for later when authorizing unwanted charges on items like stolen credit cards. Robocalls also often pretend to be some official government or law agency and try to scare you into paying a fine with threats of being sued or arrested.

The truth is, there is nothing scammers won’t do to gain access to you and your private information. Whether it’s posing as your favorite charity asking for donations or promoting something simple, like antivirus software, only to compromise your computer and your data entirely, it can be hard to keep up with every scam that exists. The best way to keep yourself protected is to remain aware that scammers are out there and stay vigilant.

Be On Guard

Verify identity during phone or video calls:

- Use a shared secret word with a loved one whenever possible.
- If you don’t have one, ask the caller to describe a specific time and place you were together and what you did. This simple step can help confirm whether the person on the other end is truly who they claim to be.

Nothing is urgent, so always follow these steps no matter what the situation:

- **Pause and reflect:** Take five minutes to think about what you’ve just read or heard before taking any action.
- **Be skeptical:** If something sounds too good to be true, it probably is.
- **Verify:** If you ever have doubts about a call, email, or letter you received, call the organization at a number you know is theirs and ask if they contacted you. It’s a great way to verify that the contact is legitimate.
- **Double-check emails:** Before clicking links or taking action, get at least two people you know to review the email.
- **Know the signs:** Banks and government agencies do not make unsolicited calls.
- **Protect your accounts:** Enable multifactor authentication on all accounts, including social media.

Now that you know how to identify a scammer, what comes next? It’s best to stay educated and share the information you know with those around you, so they can remain protected as well. If you or someone you know has been scammed, contact relevant authorities immediately, such as the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) at **877-382-4357**. You may also use the following tips to stay protected:

- **Stay cautious:** Legit companies and agencies will never contact you unsolicited and demand private information. If you do receive a call like this, it’s best to hang up immediately.

- **Security software and services:** Investing in legitimate antivirus software and subscribing to identity theft protection services are great ways to keep your devices safe from viruses, monitor your personal information for signs of fraud, and more.
- **Don’t panic, verify:** Many scammers act in a way to catch you off guard and send you into a panic. If you’re contacted with urgent demands from a government official or loved one, take a moment to think, and don’t react quickly. Hang up and call them back at a trusted or verified number to confirm if the call was real.
- **Contact LACERA:** We’re here to help! If you’re in need of assistance or suspect a LACERA member’s benefits are being exploited, contact us at 800-786-6464 to speak with a retirement benefits specialist.
- **Other resources:** You can visit the official Medicare Social Security Administration, and Federal Trade Commission websites for more resources and ways to report fraud and elder abuse:
 - www.medicare.gov/basics > Reporting Fraud and Abuse
 - <https://blog.ssa.gov/category/fraud-2>
 - <https://reportfraud.ftc.gov/>
- **Report abuse:** If you suspect a case of elder abuse, including imposter scams and financial fraud, contact the L.A. County Elder and Dependent Abuse Hotline at **877-477-3646** or your state’s Adult Protective Services office, as well as your local police department. You may also contact the National Elder Fraud Hotline at **833-FRAUD-11** (833-372-8311).

Source: ncoa.org

Questions About Your Healthcare Coverage or Benefits?

The LACERA-administered retiree healthcare plans provide you and your eligible dependents with comprehensive benefits designed to offer you well-rounded care. No matter the concern, whether it be mental, emotional, or physical, you have programs and resources to support you, including disease management programs with support, tools, and information specific to those with certain chronic conditions.

If you have any questions about your coverage or want to learn more about your benefits, contact the LACERA Retiree Healthcare Division or your plan directly, or visit your plan’s website:

AccordantCare (Disease Management Program for the Anthem Blue Cross Plans I, II, and III Plans)
844-393-0864
www.accordant.com

Anthem Blue Cross Prudent Buyer, I, II, and III Plans
800-284-1110
www.anthem.com/ca

CVS Caremark (Pharmacy Benefit Manager for the Anthem Blue Cross I, II, and III Plans)
800-450-3755
www.caremark.com

CarelonRx (Pharmacy Benefit Manager for the Anthem Blue Cross Prudent Buyer Plan)
800-284-1110
www.anthem.com/ca

Cigna Network Model Plan

800-244-6224

www.mycigna.com

Kaiser Permanente

800-464-4000

www.kp.org

Kaiser Permanente Senior Advantage (MAPD)

800-443-0815

www.kp.org

SCAN Health Plan (MAPD)

800-559-3500

www.scanhealthplan.com

UnitedHealthcare

800-624-8822

www.myuhc.com

UnitedHealthcare Group Medicare Advantage (MAPD)

800-457-8506

www.retiree.uhc.com

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

The Fall *Staying Healthy Together* Retiree Workshop Was a Hit!

We'd like to thank all who attended the recent *Staying Healthy Together* retiree workshop, dedicated to whole-person support and resources for care management programs. These workshops are great opportunities for retirees to reconnect and engage with one another while learning great tips on how to create and maintain a healthy lifestyle. If you couldn't make it, no need to fret! The next LACERA workshop will be announced soon, so be on the lookout for more details. In the meantime, you can visit lacera.gov > *Retiree Healthcare* > *Healthcare Resources* > *Retiree Wellness Program* for photos from this event as well as videos and presentations from this past workshop event. Here's what some of the attendees had to say about their experience:

"Everyone was very friendly and welcoming! Thank you for organizing for the retirees, it's great to have a gathering with old co-workers in person."

"These events show that LACERA cares about the members by providing them with presentations and information beneficial to their lives."

"LACERA cares about its members' wellbeing. Thank you for hosting these workshops!"

"I would like to say thank you to everyone from LACERA! We appreciate you providing these workshops, they are always fun to attend!"

"This was our first LACERA workshop and it was wonderful!"

"The presentations were very meaningful! We appreciate you doing this workshop for LACERA retirees. Thank you!"

Stay safe, stay healthy—and remember, your well-being is in your hands!

Retiree Healthcare for Registered Domestic Partners: Federal Taxes and Reporting

If your registered domestic partner is a covered dependent on your LACERA-administered retiree healthcare plan, the amount of the County subsidy provided for your domestic partner may be subject to federal tax. The federal government does not recognize a domestic partner as a legal dependent. Therefore, the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) considers the amount the County pays toward your domestic partner's health benefits to be imputed income (a non-cash, employer-provided benefit for any person who is not qualified as your tax dependent, except your legal spouse).

The IRS requires LACERA to report, on a separate Form 1099-R, the annual imputed income of any member who covers a registered domestic partner on their LACERA-administered health plan. If you cover a registered domestic partner, LACERA will mail two Form 1099-Rs to you by the end of January—one reporting your imputed healthcare income and one reporting your annual retirement benefit income. The IRS decision to treat legally married same-sex couples as married for federal tax purposes does not apply to registered domestic partners.

Cont. on pg. 12

Form 1099-R

Department of the Treasury - Internal Revenue Service

Distributions From Pensions, Annuities, Retirement or Profit-Sharing Plans, IRAs, Insurance Contracts, etc.

For Recipient's Use Only

1 ☒ Total distribution

4 ☐ Federal income tax withheld

6 Net unrealized appreciation in employer's securities

Navigating Your Finances in Retirement

Carefully planning and navigating your financial situation in retirement is important, and with it comes important decisions about how to manage your savings. Keeping your money with your 457(b) Horizons and/or 401(k) Savings Plan(s) after you've retired can offer meaningful benefits—such as lower fees, a wide choice of investment options, and the ease of managing your nest egg in a familiar setting.

Once you've decided to stay with the plans, it's important to know that you can't keep all the funds in your account indefinitely. The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) generally requires that you start taking withdrawals by April 1 following the calendar year in which you reach age 73 or the year you leave employment with the County of Los Angeles, whichever is later. These mandatory annual withdrawals are known as required minimum distributions, or RMDs. Here are a few things you should ask yourself about RMDs.

Q: How much am I required to take?

A: There's no fixed amount for an RMD. The RMD is determined by using your December 31 prior year-end account balance and dividing that account balance by a denominator that is determined by the IRS. The most commonly used is the Uniform Lifetime Table.¹

Q: Will you receive penalties for not taking an RMD, or not taking enough?

A: If you fail to take your entire RMD, you could face a strict penalty known as an excise tax of 25 percent on the amount of the RMD that's not withdrawn timely. Note: RMDs are a tax reportable event.

Q: How will I know how much to take every year?

A: Every July, Empower will mail you a letter to the address on file letting you know how much your RMD amount is for the year. If you have already established periodic payments that cover your RMD, you will not receive this letter. If you're curious about how much you'll need to take, you can call us at **(800) 947-0845**.

Q: What are the distribution options available to meet your annual RMD?

A: You have several different options available. Pick the one that may best meet your needs:

- **Automated required minimum distribution request:** You can choose to receive the required minimum annual payment required under current U.S. Treasury regulations by authorizing Empower to calculate the minimum amount each year and make payments to you.
- **Periodic payments:** You can schedule periodic payments from your account for a fixed dollar amount or for a fixed number of years. However, neither payment selection may exceed your life expectancy.² Please compare your periodic payments against your RMD amount annually. If your periodic payment does not cover your entire RMD, you are responsible for taking an additional distribution(s) to meet your total RMD amount by December 31 of each calendar year, otherwise you may be subject to an excise tax penalty of 25 percent.

- **Partial lump-sum distributions:** You can take a partial distribution each year in an amount sufficient to meet the RMD. You are responsible for determining the annual RMD amount and ensuring the RMD requirement is met each year. Please note that RMDs are not eligible for rollover.
- **Full lump-sum distribution: You can take a single lump-sum distribution of your entire account balance.** By taking a full lump-sum distribution, you will have satisfied the RMD for the year of the distribution. Please note that RMDs are not eligible for rollover. If you choose a lump-sum distribution of your entire account balance, the responsibility for managing the money shifts from your employer/plan to you. Additionally, you increase the risk of outliving your money or losing your money. Please consider this option carefully.

Consider all your options, including taxes, fees and expenses, before moving money between accounts. Assess all benefits of current accounts before moving money.

- **Annuities:** An annuity is designed to provide you with a guaranteed,³ long-term or even lifetime income stream regardless of market performance or interest rate changes. As a Plan participant, you can purchase an annuity with a portion or all your account balance. Keep in mind that with any annuity purchase, the decision is final. You cannot receive a refund of the funds that were used to make the purchase unless it's specified in your contract. It's a good idea to consult with a financial professional regarding the suitability, RMD eligibility, and tax consequences before making any annuity purchase.

Still confused about RMDs? Don't worry, we're here to help. If you have questions about when you should begin your RMD or would like to set up automated RMD distributions, call **(800) 947-0845**, Monday – Friday, 7am – 5pm, Pacific Time.

There are other resources available as well at www.countyla.com. Click *Things to Consider* under the *Plan Resources* dropdown menu, and you can learn about the **Benefits of Staying in the Plan** or read the questions you should ask yourself **Before You Move Your Account**. Finally, click on *Videos* under *Plan Resources* to watch Oso the Bear highlight more benefits of staying in the plan.

¹Required Minimum Distribution calculation worksheets can be found here: www.irs.gov/retirement-plans/plan-participant-employee/required-minimum-distribution-worksheets.

²More information on life expectancy and RMDs can be found here: www.irs.gov/retirement-plans/plan-participant-employee/retirement-topics-required-minimum-distributions-rmds.

³Guarantees are subject to the terms and conditions of the contract and the claims-paying ability of the insurer.

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Investment options and their underlying funds have been selected by the Plan Administrative Committee. This material is for informational purposes only and is not intended to provide investment, legal, or tax recommendations or advice.

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Important Information for Members Enrolled in LACERA-Administered Medicare Plans

If you and/or your eligible dependents are enrolled in one of the following plans, please read the timely and important information below regarding upcoming Medicare Part B Premium verifications and Part D solicitations.

Medicare Advantage Prescription Drug (MAPD) plans (with Medicare Part A and B):

- Kaiser Permanente Senior Advantage
- SCAN Health Plan
- UnitedHealthcare Medicare Advantage

Medicare Supplement Plan (with Medicare Part A and B):

- Anthem Blue Cross Plan III

2026 Medicare Part B Premium Verification

If you or your eligible dependent have received your 2026 Medicare Part B Premium Amount verification notice from Social Security or Medicare, are currently enrolled in one of the LACERA-administered Medicare Advantage Plans or the Medicare Supplement Plan, and **meet all eligibility requirements**, you may now submit a copy of the notice to LACERA. To see sample copies of Social Security correspondence, including the Part B verification letter, visit lacera.gov > *Retiree Healthcare* > *Medicare* > *Premium Reimbursement*.

Once the Board of Supervisors approves the continuation of the Medicare Part B Premium Reimbursement Program (limited to the standard rate), LACERA will process the

verification for you and/or your eligible dependent after verifying the documentation. We will contact you if additional information is required. Watch your mail for more information.

Please note: Individuals who are **not enrolled** in one of the MAPD Plans or the Medicare Supplement Plan are **not eligible** for Medicare Part B reimbursement, and no action is necessary.

Don't Sign Up for Non-LACERA Medicare Part D Plans!

During this time of year—the Medicare open enrollment period—private insurance companies sponsoring Medicare prescription drug plans conduct aggressive marketing campaigns aimed at enrolling Medicare-eligible beneficiaries in their Medicare Part D prescription drug programs. Ignore these advertisements and solicitations, and do not sign up for a non-LACERA Part D plan!

If you are enrolled in a LACERA-administered Medicare plan, it's important to remember your current coverage includes a prescription drug plan and is creditable, meaning it is as good as, if not better than, the average individual non-LACERA Medicare Part D plan. Furthermore, signing up for a non-LACERA Medicare Part D plan may jeopardize your LACERA-administered medical plan, and delay your reenrollment!

Proceed with caution. If you wish to keep your LACERA-administered medical coverage, no action is required on your part. Contact the LACERA Retiree Healthcare Division if you have any questions.



Three Things: Winter Solstice



On December 21, the North Pole will reach its maximum tilt of 23.5 degrees away from the sun. This marks the shortest day and longest night of the year in the Northern Hemisphere—the winter solstice. Here are some interesting facts to ponder as we enjoy increasingly longer days until the summer solstice, after which the days start getting shorter again!

- 1** The precise moment of the winter solstice occurs when the sun is directly overhead at noon along the Tropic of Capricorn, a latitude south of the Equator.
- 2** Shadows are longer in winter because the sun travels at its lowest arc across the sky. Your noontime shadow on the winter solstice is at its longest all year.

- 3** All cultures have their own versions of celebrating the winter solstice, with observations going back as far as 10,200 B.C. The origin of Christmas trees can even be traced to early solstice celebrations in Egypt and Europe.

Sources: www.history.com, www.brittanica.com, www.livescience.com

Upcoming Holidays

LACERA will be closed on:

Thursday, December 25
For Christmas

Thursday, January 1
For New Years Day

Monday, January 19
For Martin Luther King Jr. Day

Monday, February 16
For Presidents Day

Email: welcome@lacera.gov

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.

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