

NEWSLETTER

FITCHBURG CONTRIBUTORY RETIREMENT BOARD



NOTICE OF DEPOSIT UPDATES

Effective August 2025, the Fitchburg Retirement Office will only mail Notice of Deposits if and when a benefit is modified.

Notice of Deposits will be mailed in June (to reflect health insurance premium changes), July (to reflect cost-of-living-adjustments), and December (to reflect Medex premium changes). Members are encouraged to access their pay information electronically via our self-service portal. Please keep reading to learn more about our new Member Self-Service Portal.

MEMBER SELF-SERVICE PORTAL



In December, the Fitchburg Retirement Board migrated to a new software platform-Bay State Pension Solutions, Inc. The new platform offers a powerful yet easy to use Member Self-Service Portal that will allow retirees to view and print their monthly Notice of Deposit(s), 1099-R Forms, and Income Verification Letters. In addition, retirees can view their bank, tax, payment, and contact information, as well as communicate with retirement staff directly through the portal. Using state of the art identity verification software to ensure security, retirees should feel confident utilizing the platform. Interested retirees can access the portal by entering the following into their web browser <https://selfservice.BayStatePension.com/fitchburg> and selecting "Create An Account". Once your identity has been verified, you will be prompted to create a username and password. Please contact our office should you experience technical difficulties.

PERSONAL TIME BUYBACKS

On January 8, 2025, Governor Healey signed Chapter 377 of the Acts of 2024 into law, thereby enacting the Fitchburg Retirement Board's ("FRB") Home Rule Petition and allowing the FRB to recognize personal time buybacks as retirement-eligible earnings for members who meet the criteria outlined in the statute, similar to M.G.L. c.32, §106 for vacation buybacks. Retirement staff have begun identifying eligible retirees who retired after January 1, 2019, to calculate contributions due and recalculate their retirement benefits retroactive to their date of retirement. If you are eligible, a staff member will contact you directly. Please be patient as staff must review every retiree record since 2019 to determine eligibility.

REPEAL OF WEP AND GPO

On January 5, 2025, President Biden signed the Social Security Fairness Act into law repealing the Windfall Elimination Provision (“WEP”) and the Government Pension Offset (“GPO”) Provision. The law is retroactive to January 1, 2024. **Retirees that did not previously apply for SSA benefits because they believed their benefits would be reduced or eliminated, are encouraged to apply for SSA benefits immediately as full payments will only be effective to the date of their application. Please contact your local Social Security Office to apply for benefits if appropriate.**

EARNINGS RESTRICTIONS

M.G.L. c.32, §91(b) restricts post-retirement earnings and hours of employment derived from the public-sector. Retirees working in the public sector are limited to working a maximum of 1200 hours in a calendar year in addition to having earnings restrictions.

M.G.L. c.32, §91A imposes post-retirement earnings and hours restrictions for disability retirees regardless of whether they work in the private-sector or public-sector.

Please contact the Retirement Office to learn more (978-829-1843).

PENSION PAYMENT SCHEDULE

Retirement benefit checks are issued on a monthly basis and dated the last business day of the month. Direct Deposit payments are automatically credited to the retiree bank accounts on the last business day of each month. The 2025 Pension Payment Schedule is below for reference.

FITCHBURG RETIREMENT BOARD’S 2025 PENSION PAYMENT SCHEDULE

<u>Benefit Period</u>	<u>Pay Date</u>	<u>Benefit Period</u>	<u>Pay Date</u>
January	Friday, January 31 st	July	Thursday, July 31 st
February	Friday, February 28 th	August	Friday, August 29 th
March	Monday, March 31 st	September	Tuesday, September 30 th
April	Wednesday, April 30 th	October	Friday, October 31 st
May	Friday, May 30 th	November	Friday, November 28 th
June	Monday, June 30 th	December	Wednesday, December 31 st