

Inside...

- Are Your PSERS Emails Lost in Cyberspace?
- 2020 Payment Calendar
- PSERS Real Estate Investments

& More...

Retired Members to Vote in Board Election this Fall

In mid-October 2019, all retired members of PSERS will receive a ballot to vote in a Board election to select a retired member representative for the PSERS Board of Trustees. The term is for three years beginning January 2020. Biographies of the candidates are included below:

RUSSELL J. DIESINGER

Mr. Diesinger is a retired teacher from the Reading School District where he taught Government, Economics, and Criminal Justice. For the past 16 years, Mr. Diesinger has served as a Board member, VP, and curriculum chair at the Exeter Township School District and his responsibilities include oversight of a \$75M annual budget, bond swaps, bond issuances, refinancing, and investments. In addition, he's been responsible for managing two new building projects and three major renovations. Mr. Diesinger also served as the VP of the Reading Education Association, PSBA Regional Director, legislative coordinator, PASR County Chapter President, PASR Region 2 – director elect, public relations chair, and is a member of PSEA-R.

Mr. Diesinger and his wife have four adult children and eight grandchildren.

MELVA S. VOGLER

Melva S. Vogler seeks re-election representing annuitants on the PSERS Board. She has been a member of the PSERS Board since 1994 and Board Chair since 2007. Ms. Vogler earned her bachelor's degree from Susquehanna University and her master's degree from Marywood College. She retired from the Wallenpaupack Area School District in 2013. Ms. Vogler currently serves on PSEA's Staff Pension Board and was a member of PSEA's Board of Directors. She is currently serving on the National Council on Teacher Retirement (NCTR) Legislation Committee and has been President of NCTR. She has also served on the executive committee of the Council of Institutional Investors (CII). Ms. Vogler is currently a member of PASR and PSEA-R.

Ms. Vogler and her husband have two adult children.

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Are Your PSERS Emails Lost in Cyberspace?

Members with a Member Self-Service (MSS) account are automatically enrolled in paperless delivery, which means that they will receive communications from PSERS electronically. Members with paperless delivery are sent an email notifying them when a document is generated and available on the “My Documents” tab in their MSS account.

As of June 30, 2019, 96% of members on MSS have paperless delivery. PSERS has saved more than \$330,000 in printing and mailing costs since March 2018!

If you have paperless delivery, ensure that you receive important updates from PSERS by:

- Checking your Spam folder
- Adding the following email addresses to your contacts:
 - RA-PSERS_Alert@pa.gov
 - RA-PSV3_Email@pa.gov
 - RA-PSERSNEWS@pa.gov

Need help? Visit psers.pa.gov for instructions on adding email addresses to your contacts.

PSERS will never send you emails asking for your password or personally identifiable information (e.g., social security number, birth date, etc.). Refer to “How to Spot a Phishing Email” for tips on how to avoid phishing emails and keep your information secure.

How to Spot a Phishing Email

So, what is “phishing”? It usually involves some type of “bait” but not the kind you would use to catch a real fish. No, this bait is used to try and trick you in some way for the scammer’s benefit. The phishing email includes a request to click on a link, open an attachment, or provide sensitive information such as your user ID and password. Some of these emails are well crafted and designed to look legitimate. Here are some ways to identify phishing emails so you can avoid getting “hooked.”

- Poor grammar, spelling mistakes and/or unusual characters
Most, if not all, corporations use some method of spell check before a message is sent. Look at the example below. If you notice spelling errors (Noitication), it’s probably a phishing email. Also, some of the words have strange characters, such as the first “e” and “i” in SharëPoíntFile in the example below.

From:
Sent: Monday, March 19, 2018 5:46 PM
To:
Subject: FW: SharëPoíntFile Noitication

- A sense of urgency that demands you act immediately before your account is closed or you are threatened with legal proceedings. The attacker wants you to hurry in hope that you will make a mistake.
- A message with a generic greeting, such as “Dear Customer,” “Dear User,” or “Account Owner.”
- Something that is too good to be true, like winning the lottery even though you didn’t enter a drawing.
- The email appears to come from a reputable source, such as a company, but has a Reply-To address going to someone’s personal email account.
- You receive an email from a friend, but the wording or tone does not sound like them. Best action is to call them directly to confirm that they sent it.

Ultimately, common sense is your best defense. If an email appears suspicious or odd it may be a phishing attack. Don’t take the bait!

Stay cyber secure!

Option Selection for 2020 Will Take Place in October

Each fall, members enrolled in the Health Options Program have the opportunity to change their medical plan and/or prescription drug option for the coming year.

In October, we'll conduct our annual Option Selection Period. At this time enrolled members can evaluate the materials we'll send and decide if they want to make any changes to their Health Options Program coverage for 2020. The Option Selection Period materials, which are mailed to enrolled members in early October, will explain what's changing for 2020 and all the choices. Consider them carefully—particularly if you have moved, or are about to move, to a new area.

If you are currently enrolled in the Health Options Program and don't want to make any changes to your current coverage, there's no need to submit any forms or take any action. Your current coverage (updated for 2020) will continue automatically. The Option Selection Period will run from early October through November 15, 2019.



Pennsylvania Public School
Employees' Retirement System (PSERS)

Health Options Program

Watch Your Mail

in early October for important information about your 2020 health insurance options.

MetLife Dental Plan Open Enrollment for 2020.
If you're enrolled in the HOP Medical Plan or Value Medical Plan, you can enroll for dental benefits.



PSERS Board of Trustees Meeting Schedule

October 11, 2019

December 6, 2019

PSERS Board meetings are held in Harrisburg at PSERS, located at 5 N 5th Street.

In addition to Board meetings, Committee meetings are held throughout the year. All PSERS Board meetings are open to the public.

For exact meeting times or if you would like to attend and require an accommodation to participate, please call Dennis Filipovich, PSERS Executive Office at 1.888.773.7748, extension 4617.

PSERS provides visually impaired readers with our publications in large print or on a CD. Please contact us to request these free services.

Keeping Your Address Current

As a retiree, you must maintain an up-to-date mailing address to ensure you receive important information from PSERS, including your yearly *Form 1099-R*. A current address also ensures that you continue to receive your monthly benefit payment. Regardless of how you receive your monthly benefit, whether direct deposit or a paper check, your payment may be stopped if your mailing address is not valid.

Through the MSS Portal, you can change your address anytime, anywhere. You may choose to have your new address take effect immediately or submit a new address with a future effective date. To register for an MSS account, you need only your PSERS ID, social security number, date of birth, and a valid email address.

To change your address without an MSS account, send your changes in writing to PSERS. You can do this either by sending a letter to PSERS or by completing the *Change of Address for PSERS Retirees and Non-Active Members* (PSRS-1301) form that is on the PSERS website. You may also call PSERS at 1.888.773.7748 and request that the form be sent to you. Be sure to include your signature, your PSERS ID or last four digits of your social security number, and the effective date of the change when you write to us.

Need Your PSERS ID?

Look for your PSERS ID in the top right corner (with the exception of your 1099-R) of any recent PSERS correspondence sent to you. You can also connect with PSERS at ContactPSERS@pa.gov or 1.888.773.7748 to have your ID mailed to you.

PSERS
5 N 5th Street
Harrisburg PA
17101-1905

Toll-Free
1.888.773.7748

Local Calls
717.787.8540

FAX
717.772.3860

Phone Hours
Weekdays
(except holidays):
8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Web Address:
psers.pa.gov

Email Address:
ContactPSERS@pa.gov

PSERS is proud to be an equal opportunity employer supporting workforce diversity.

2020 Payment Calendar

PSERS pays monthly retirement benefits on the last business day of the month for which they are due. Because PSERS group health insurance premiums are payable in advance, your medical deduction is for the following month. For example, PSERS will pay your January benefit on January 31, but the medical deduction is for February.

Benefit for Month of:	In 2020 Paid on:	Medical Deduction for Month of:
January	January 31	February
February	February 28	March
March	March 31	April
April	April 30	May
May	May 29	June
June	June 30	July
July	July 31	August
August	August 31	September
September	September 30	October
October	October 30	November
November	November 30	December
December	December 31	January 2021

Missing Payments

Payments sent via electronic transfer (direct deposit) to your financial institution should be in your account on the last business day of the month. If your electronic deposit is not in your account on that date, ***you should contact your financial institution to make sure the delay was not within its system.*** If you are new to direct deposit or recently submitted a change to where your benefit is being deposited, please verify the account number and routing number with your financial institution.

Payments mailed to your home address may take additional time to reach you. Contact PSERS if your check does not arrive by the 10th of the following month (e.g., your January check has not arrived by February 10). Waiting until the 10th of the month allows the post office sufficient time to forward your check to you or reroute misdirected mail. You should contact PSERS immediately if you know that your check was stolen or destroyed.

PSERS Real Estate Investments

Your PSERS pension benefits are made from three ingredients outlined in state law: employee contributions, employer contributions, and the investment earnings on those contributions.

Investments make up 60% of that pie. But did you ever wonder how PSERS invests for your retirement?

One of the roughly 17 investment strategies PSERS utilizes is real estate.

Since the 1980s, PSERS Investment Professionals, with the input of staff attorneys, outside consultants, and the Board of Trustees, have selectively and purposely purchased real estate. They look for long-term appreciation value.

Those investments are paying off.

PSERS' real estate holdings have earned 8.9%, net of fees, since program inception. That return rate is nearly 23% higher than PSERS' long-term investment goal.

The real estate portfolio was worth \$5.5 billion or about 10% of PSERS' total assets as of September 30, 2018.

In some cases, PSERS owns a portion of the real estate holdings through portfolios and co-investments managed by outside entities. In other cases, PSERS is the sole proprietor.

Between September 2014 and September 2018, PSERS bought seven more properties to increase its direct holdings to 14. Those acquisitions, coupled with the appreciation value of the older properties, increased the collective net value of PSERS' direct holdings to nearly \$508 million.

So, what does PSERS – and as an extension our members – directly own?

How about more than 7,000 acres of farmland in Florida and California. PSERS grows oranges, pistachios, walnuts, almonds and cherries and then sells those commodities to companies that make juice or snacks.

PSERS' direct real estate holdings are not relegated solely to agriculture, either. PSERS owns a high-end mall, the Galleria at Fort Lauderdale in Florida, and a Marriott hotel near Atlanta's international airport.

So next time you are down South for business or pleasure, check out PSERS' digs. And, remember, orange juice and pistachios are not just good for your health, they are good for your retirement, too!



Photo courtesy of PSERS

PSERS Retiree Spotlights

The Pennsylvania Public School Employees' Retirement Act became law on July 18, 1917, and PSERS began operations on July 1, 1919. PSERS is proud to serve public school employees in Pennsylvania by providing secure retirement income for the past 100 years and we will continue our commitment to our members in years to come.

After a long career in public education, PSERS retirees continue their service by positively impacting their communities. A secure retirement benefit provides more freedom to give back and volunteer within local communities, at charities, and non-profits. PSERS worked with the Pennsylvania State Education Association-Retired (PSEA-R) and the Pennsylvania Association of School Retirees (PASR) to identify some retired members volunteering and doing outstanding work in their communities after their retirement. Additional Retiree spotlights are available in the previous issue of PSERS Retired Member Newsletter.

Susan Luce Owen J. Roberts Retiree

Since her retirement Susan has been very active with the Women's Auxiliary of Chester County Hospital, the Henrietta Hankin Library of Chester County, and the Mill at Anselma, a national historic landmark since 2005. The Mill became operational before the United States of America declared its independence. Nestled along the Pickering Creek in Chester Springs, Pennsylvania, the Mill at Anselma is an extraordinary artifact of over 250 years of Chester County's industrial history. The 22-acre property and surviving historical buildings demonstrate a heritage engineered to last. Susan is an untiring volunteer in her community!

Marie Robinson Owen J. Roberts Retiree

Marie has devoted countless hours working with the Chester County Hospital Women's Auxiliary. She is currently serving as the President of the Women's Board to Chester County Hospital. Under her leadership \$1.25 million was raised over a two-year period to help improve the hospital's Neonatal Intensive Care Unit. Chester County Hospital hosts the only Level 3 NICU in Chester County. Marie is also an active member of Chester County PSEA-Retired and has been co-coordinator for the retired track at PSEA's Gettysburg Leadership Academy for several years.

Ann D. U'Halie Sharon City Retiree

Ann continues to give back to her Sharon City community after retiring. For 38 years, she has been the volunteer co-chair for Buhl Day, a Labor Day community celebration. Ann has been active in the Sharon Historical Society (board member and secretary), the Sharon Beautification Commission (board member), Sharon Revitalization Committee (co-chair of GIS Mapping Initiative and volunteer), Shenango Valley Gardeners (president), Saint Joseph Church Pastoral Council (secretary), and Waterfire Sharon (volunteer). She also helps students register to vote and volunteers for Education Funding Works.

Ann serves the Mid-western region PSEA-Retired as PACE co-chair.

Alice J. Keiner Hanover Area Retiree

After retiring, Alice became a Master Gardener and volunteers by giving presentations to schools or youth programs, especially about Earth Day activities. She also volunteers at the Wilkes-Barre VA Medical Center every Tuesday and on an as-needed basis. Most of this time is spent with the Alzheimer/Dementia wing and the Community Living Center taking veterans on outings for bowling, movies, shopping, or to eat. Alice also enjoys creating "flowers" for the garden by painting and putting glass dishes/bowls and other items together.



Photos courtesy of Alice Keiner

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5 N 5th Street
Harrisburg PA 17101-1905

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Public School Employees' Retirement System
Important Information from the
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania