

Spotlight on retirement

LOS ANGELES COUNTY EMPLOYEES RETIREMENT ASSOCIATION • DECEMBER 2023 • VOL. 34, NO. 4

Tax Matters How to Read Your New Paystub or Change Your Withholding

Tax season is just around the corner, so we want to help make sure you are prepared!

You should have received notification with your November and December allowances that LACERA is making some paystub changes starting with the January payments. We made these changes to include information requested on the most recent versions of the federal and state tax withholding forms used by

retired members and to be consistent with information provided on paystubs by other California employers. We are also moving to a new paystub envelope style.

See page 5 for a sample of the changes, and what you can expect, according to your withholding on file.

For more about the changes and a full list of paystub fields, codes, and descriptions, visit lacera.com/retirement-payments/your-paystub.

Cont'd on pg. 5

IN THIS ISSUE

- | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|------------------------|----|------------------------------|
| 2 | From the Executive Desk | 4 | LACERA Accomplishments | 7 | Pull Up a Chair With InfoSec |
| 3 | Why You Should Consider a Durable Power of Attorney | 6 | 3 Things: Snow | 8 | Staying Healthy Together |
| | | 7 | Black History Month | 12 | Upcoming Holidays |

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Elected by Safety Members

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Appointed by Board of Supervisors

*When ex-officio trustee is absent



FROM THE EXECUTIVE DESK

SANTOS H. KREIMANN, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

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

Happy 2024!

Hello, members! I hope you had a wonderful holiday season, and I wish you a happy and healthy new year! We have had a lot in the works from the end of 2023 and heading into 2024, so let's get right into it!

Strategic Planning Update; Mission, Vision, and Values

In my last article, I outlined the five strategic priorities from our Board of Retirement's 2023–2028 strategic plan. We are now in the execution stage, as we work to implement the vision approved by the Board of Retirement. In mid-October, our executive team, divisional managers, and supervisors held the first in a series of meetings dedicated to developing action plans for achieving each priority. The action plans will include the objectives and projects assigned to each priority as well as the milestones and metrics for tracking and measuring our progress. Be sure to follow along with us at lacera.com/leadership/strategic-plan, where we have posted each strategic priority, along with its progress tracker.

As part of our strategic planning process, LACERA delved deep into our mission, vision, and values statements to assess if they were aspirational, inspirational, and aligned with our members' evolving needs and expectations. In September, the Board of Retirement and Board of Investments approved LACERA's new mission, vision, and values statements, as follows:

- **Mission:** To produce, protect, and provide the promised benefits to our members
- **Vision:** Empowering our members to enjoy a healthy and secure retirement

- **Values:** Accountability, Collaboration, Inclusivity, Innovation, Integrity, and Transparency

While LACERA's mission statement remains consistent, we have updated it to emphasize that our focus is always on *you*, our members. LACERA's vision now directly reflects our strategic priorities—particularly creating a superior member experience, innovating through technology, and ensuring fiscal durability. Lastly, our values have been thoughtfully revised to serve as our organizational compass, shaping our daily actions as we build a better future for you.

Our mission, vision, and values are posted at lacera.com/who-we-are/mission-vision-and-values as well as throughout the LACERA building, serving as constant reminders of our team's shared purpose.

Tech Updates

In September, we completed and deployed the first module of our new internal case management solution. This is a major achievement as we work toward connecting all of our member account management processes into one platform to provide you with seamless, accurate, and more efficient service. Our staff members have reported dramatic reductions in the amount of time needed to complete frequently performed tasks, one of our goals for this important strategic project. The team is currently focused on first payments processing for retiring members, with the next phases projected to include processes for legal review, administrative and felony forfeiture appeals, and healthcare insurance enrollment.

I'm also excited to announce we will soon launch a step-by-step "self-retirement" feature on My LACERA as part of our efforts to provide

From the Executive Desk continued

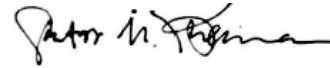
members with the services they want on the platform they choose. This online capability will benefit retired members by helping decrease phone call volumes, especially during the busy retirement season.

Board Election Results

Thanks to all of you who participated in the August elections! The County Board of Supervisors certified the election results on October 17. We are excited to welcome our new and returning trustees to both Boards for their three-year terms, commencing January 2024, as follows: Nancy Durazo, Les Robbins, and

JP Harris (Board of Retirement); and Nicole Mi and Debbie Martin (Board of Investments). We will provide more biographical information about our new trustees in the next issue.

That about wraps up this issue of *Spotlight*. I look forward to updating you on all of our exciting projects as 2024 unfolds. Thank you for your membership and everything you do to support your community. Stay safe and healthy!




Wishing you a season filled with blessings, good health, and abundant joy, extending throughout the coming year.



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

Why You Should Consider a Durable Power of Attorney



It's always a good idea to make sure that you have the right estate planning documents in place, especially if you have a spouse, domestic partner, and/or dependents. But if you haven't already, you should also look into filing a durable power of attorney (POA) with LACERA. A POA is a legal document used to delegate authority to another person to make decisions on your behalf. Having a POA can be extremely helpful in situations when you are unable to make your own decisions or would prefer someone else to act for you. If the POA is "durable," it will remain in effect even if you should become incapacitated.

LACERA Offers a Special Durable Power of Attorney for Members

The LACERA special durable power of attorney (SDPOA) allows you to designate someone as your attorney-in-fact to make LACERA-specific decisions on your behalf. It is limited to your LACERA retirement and healthcare benefits, and you may choose to grant or withhold authority over specific actions, such as designating or changing your beneficiaries.

Without a valid durable POA in place, no one else can manage your LACERA retirement benefits, even if you are unable to. In such a situation, a court-ordered conservatorship would be necessary.



For more information, you can access our Special Durable Power of Attorney page at lacera.com/retirement-planning/power-attorney, which includes a guide, instructions, and fillable digital form. You can also contact us with questions, and one of our retirement benefits specialists will be happy to help you.

Remember that LACERA cannot offer legal advice. If you have legal questions about whom to appoint as attorney-in-fact or which powers to grant them, or if your questions are regarding a non-LACERA power of attorney, you will need to consult an attorney.



LACERA Accomplishments

New and Incumbent LACERA Trustees Elected

Elections were held in August for general and retired trustee seats on the Board of Retirement (BOR) and Board of Investments (BOI). The results were certified by the Board of Supervisors on October 17.

Congratulations to our newly elected trustees: Nancy M. Durazo (BOR, second seat), Nicole Mi (BOI, second seat), and Debbie Martin (BOI, eighth seat).

Congratulations are also in order for Les Robbins, who ran unopposed and returns to the BOR (eighth seat), and James P. Harris, reelected to the BOR (alternate retired seat).

All trustees will begin their three-year terms January 1, 2024. Welcome (and welcome back)!

CIO Jonathan Grabel Nominated for PRI Board



Jonathan Grabel

In July, the Board of Investments nominated Chief Investment Officer Jonathan Grabel for the vacant asset owner seat on the 13-member, UN-affiliated Principles for Responsible Investment (PRI) board, with a shared commitment to advancing LACERA's mission for its members.

The PRI is a global membership-based organization composed of asset owners, asset managers, and related service providers that was established in 2006 to advance consideration of financially relevant environmental, social, and

corporate governance (ESG) factors in investment practices. LACERA has been a PRI signatory since 2008. The PRI currently has over 5,000 signatories in more than 80 countries representing over \$120 trillion in assets.

Grabel currently serves on the PRI's Asset Owner Technical Advisory Committee. If elected, he intends to closely collaborate with fellow board directors with the goal of advancing the PRI as the world's leading proponent of responsible investment, and says he is committed to positioning the PRI for sustainable success, consistent with LACERA's mission.

Consistent Excellence: LACERA Receives Financial Reporting Awards



The Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) has again awarded LACERA its Certification of Achievement for Excellence in Financial

Reporting for LACERA's 2022 Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR) and Award for Outstanding Achievement for LACERA's 2022 Popular Annual Financial Report (PAFR). These awards represent the highest possible recognition of governmental accounting and financial reporting.

"We are proud to receive these prestigious awards for the 33rd consecutive year for our ACFR and 25th consecutive year for our PAFR," said LACERA CEO Santos Kreimann in response to the announcement. "This recognition from the GFOA is a testament to LACERA's unwavering commitment to transparency, accountability, and outstanding financial stewardship."

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

PAFR Enclosed: Our Financial Status, at a Glance

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

The PAFR is a snapshot of LACERA's finances and accomplishments for the fiscal year 2022–2023. 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 on lacera.com.



LOS ANGELES COUNTY EMPLOYEES RETIREMENT ASSOCIATION 300 N. LAKE AVE. PASADENA, CA 91101					
Statement of Earnings and Deductions - Retain for Your Records					
Payee's Name					1 Payee's LACERA ID
LACERA MEMBER					*****B1CD
Reference No.	Payment Type	Issue Date			
9000012345	SERV RET	09/03/2023			
Total Gross YTD	Total Taxable YTD	Total Non-Taxable YTD			
71,592.37	71,388.21	204.16			
Federal Withholding					
Tax Withholding Status	Exemptions	2 Additional	3 Other Income	4 Credits	5 Deductions
MARRIED		100.00	25,000.00	500.00	15,000.00
California State Withholding					
Tax Withholding Status	Exemptions	6 Addtnl/Desig.			
MARRIED	03				

This sample shows a portion of the paystub to highlight upcoming changes. The size, layout, and formatting will remain mostly the same.

1) New Payee ID field: This is the last four characters of your LACERA-assigned ID. (Displaying only the last four characters helps protect your data security in case an unauthorized person views your paystub. This is **not** your County ID or Social Security number.)

2) Field header change to "Additional": The field header has changed from Additional Withheld to Additional, but there will be no changes in the displayed amount.

6) Field header change to "Addtnl/Desig.": The field header has changed from Additional Withheld to Addtnl./ Desig., but there will be no changes in the displayed amount.

Amounts for Members With a 2022 or Later Version of the W-4P on File

If you based your federal tax withholding on a 2022 or later version of the W-4P form and had amounts for the following steps, you will see those amounts on your paystub.

3) New field header "Other Income": Additional income from W-4P Steps 2 and 4(a) will be included in the paystub Other Income field.

4) New field header "Credits": Claimed tax credit amounts from Step 3 will be included in the paystub Credits field.

5) New field header "Deductions": Claimed deductions amount from Step 4(b) will be included in the paystub Deductions field.

If you based your federal tax withholding on a 2022 or later version of the W-4P form but did not have amounts for any of the steps listed above, you will see the new fields on the paystub but no amounts.

Members With No Withholding or a 2021 or Older W-4P on File

You will see the new federal withholding fields 3, 4 and 5 but no amounts if:

- You elected not to have federal income tax withheld (regardless of the W-4P version).
- Your federal withholding is based on a 2021 or older version of the W-4P.

How to Adjust 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."

2. Print and mail or upload your forms to LACERA.
 - After entering your name, click "Submit."
 - 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."
 - Download, print out, and complete the forms.
 - Upload your forms by logging in to your My LACERA account, or
 - Mail forms to: LACERA, P.O. Box 7060, Pasadena, CA 91109-7060

If you do not want to change your existing election, no action is necessary.

3 Things: Snow

Every winter, landscapes across the world transform into white wonderlands as they get draped in snow. Here, we drift into some intriguing facts about this frozen phenomenon that turns even the most familiar scenes into serene masterpieces.

1 Snowflakes form from water vapor in the atmosphere, and their intricate designs emerge as they encounter different temperatures and humidity levels during their descent. So, it's theoretically possible but extremely unlikely for two snowflakes to be identical.

2 Snow acts as a natural sound absorber. The open spaces between snowflakes trap and minimize soundwaves, creating a muted ambiance, which is why winter walks after a fresh snowfall are so tranquil and quiet.

3 Snow appears white because of the way light interacts with the ice crystals, scattering and reflecting the entire spectrum of light. However, snow's color can be influenced by many factors, such as ice depth and presence of water, algae, or sand, which can make snow appear blue, pink, or even orange.

“In the depth of winter, I finally learned that there was in me an eternal summer.” — Albert Camus

Retiree Payday Calendar

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

December 2023						
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	M	28	D	30
31						

January 2024						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
	H	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	H	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	M	30	D			

February 2024						
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	H	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	M	28	D		

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

Celebrating African American Legacy in L.A. County



Every February, Black History Month offers opportunities for reflection, celebration, and acknowledgment of the profound impact of African Americans on the fabric of Los Angeles County. From its early settlers to present-day influencers, the African American community has profoundly shaped our region in areas such as arts, civil rights, science, sports, and politics.

Los Angeles has been a pivotal stage for key moments in African American history, from the historic jazz clubs on Central Avenue that hosted legends like Ella Fitzgerald and Duke Ellington to the political strides made by figures like Tom Bradley, L.A.'s first Black mayor. Moreover, neighborhoods such as Leimert Park continue to be vibrant centers of Black culture, music, and entrepreneurship.

Chinese New Year

February 10 marks the beginning of the Chinese New Year, a festival that celebrates the beginning of the lunar calendar. Each year corresponds to an animal zodiac sign, and 2024 ushers in the Year of the Dragon, symbolizing power and luck. Rooted in centuries-old customs, Chinese New Year is a time for families to come together, honor ancestors, and look forward to prosperity, happiness, and good health. In Los Angeles County, the festival is marked by vibrant parades, dragon dances, and the lighting of lanterns.



Chaitanya Errande,
Information Security
Officer

Pull Up a Chair With InfoSec

The newest LACERA office, Information Security (InfoSec) has a mission to develop processes, procedures, and policies required for the protection of confidential information; identify risks to the security of information and systems; and assist in securing those systems.

Overseen by Information Security Officer Chaitanya Errande, InfoSec is committed to protecting you, your data, and LACERA intellectual property. Chaitanya (Chait) joined LACERA in September 2023 and is InfoSec's first full-time, permanent Information Security

Officer. Chait brings 23 years of knowledge and experience as a technology executive and industry leader in cybersecurity and business continuity at global organizations. He holds a Bachelor's in Engineering from Bangalore University, a Master's in Engineering from Utah State University, and an MBA from Pepperdine University.

LACERA continues to prioritize the security and integrity of our members' data and our intellectual property by investing in the best human and technological resources and cybersecurity infrastructure, elevating and tightening our protective measures, and providing ongoing staff and member education. We understand the importance of your trust and reaffirm our commitment to safeguarding your information in partnership with you!

Protect Yourself From Seasonal Illnesses

Every winter, we like to remind our members about the importance of staying up to date with your seasonal vaccinations, especially the flu and COVID-19. These vaccines play a crucial role in protecting not only our individual health but also the well-being of our colleagues, families, and communities.

Year after year, seasonal flu vaccines have proven to reduce the risk of flu-related illnesses and the

potential strain on our healthcare system. Similarly, the COVID-19 vaccine, updated to counter emerging strains, remains our strongest shield against severe illness, hospitalizations, and potential complications.

For more information about where and how to get your seasonal vaccines, speak to your healthcare provider and schedule an appointment today.

STAYING HEALTHY TOGETHER

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Be on Guard Against Scammers

Please be on your guard! Scams against the elderly are ever-present and steadily increasing. Individuals age 60 and older are increasingly targeted because scammers see you as less tech-savvy and more financially stable. You may receive a letter, phone call, email, or text message from people you don't know who claim to be someone they're not as a means to scam you out of your money.

It's important to understand the nature of these dangerous schemes in order to minimize your risk of being defrauded. Here's some information and tips that can help you avoid being vulnerable to scammers.



Be on the lookout for the following scams.

There are many different kinds of scams. Here are a few:

- Medicare fraud:** A scammer will ask you for your Medicare number or card, which they will use to submit fraudulent claims in your name. You can prevent this from happening by refusing to provide your information to anyone.

Tip: Medicare will never call you unprompted and ask you for your Medicare number or personal information. If you suspect fraud, call 800-MEDICARE (800-633-4227) to report it.
- Government impersonation:** Someone will call and identify

themselves as a representative of a government agency, like the Social Security Administration, IRS, or FBI, and claim that a warrant has been issued for your arrest. They then say that a U.S. Marshal will appear at your door within the next 24 hours, and that you should get a gift card from the store to provide to the U.S. Marshal as payment. You'll also be instructed not to tell anybody about the call.

Tip: If someone calls you claiming to be a government representative, hang up immediately. Also, don't open the door for anyone you don't know, and don't pay strangers anything. The Social Security Administration,

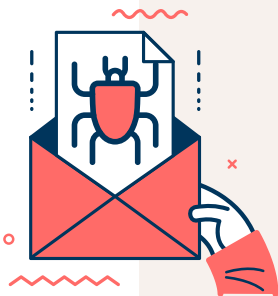


IRS, FBI, or other government agency will never call and threaten you or ask you for money. Call the police if you ever get such a call.

• **Social Security Administration**

impostor: Imposters will call you and claim that your Social Security number (SSN) has been suspended due to suspicious activity. They will ask you to confirm your SSN, or they may say they need to withdraw money from your bank for “safekeeping.” You may also be told that your bank account will be seized or frozen if you fail to act quickly.

Tip: Hang up! Even if there appears to be a caller ID that makes it look like the Social Security Administration is calling or you are told to “press 1” to speak to a government “support representative” for help to reactivate your SSN, just hang up!



Stay educated when it comes to scams.

It's important that you remain knowledgeable when it comes to the varying types of scams that exist so that you do not become a victim. The following are reliable resources you can use:



- **Medicare.gov:** This is the official source for Medicare information and where you can go to learn more about preventing Medicare fraud. Visit: www.medicare.gov/basics/reporting-medicare-fraud-and-abuse.

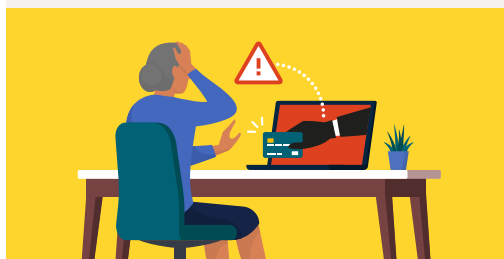
- **Social Security Administration:** The SSA site has articles about detecting elder abuse and preventing fraud, as well as other issues important to seniors. You can connect to it via LACERA's website at [lacera.com/program-](http://lacera.com/program-basics/retiree-wellness-program)

www.blog.ssa.gov/category/fraud-2.

- **LACERA:** Before responding to a questionable email, give us a call at 800-786-6464. Official LACERA email communication will always come from the one of the following addresses: welcome@lacera.com, notifications@lacera-email.com, or healthcare@lacera.com. Remember, LACERA's Information Security team is dedicated to finding and sharing

helpful tools and educational opportunities to help you spot phishing emails. To learn how to identify and avoid malicious emails, watch the video from Microsoft available at lacera.com/who-we-are/news/urgent-member-compromised-phishing-scam-heres-how-stay-safe.

- **Federal Trade Commission (FTC):** 877-382-4357 (877-FTC-HELP). You can learn how to spot, stop, and report government imposter scams by visiting the Federal Trade Commission's How to Spot, Stop, & Report Government Imposter Scams infographic. You can also call the FTC hotline at 833-372-8311 to report continual scams so the FTC can track their frequency. You can report scams on the FTC's website, here: <https://reportfraud.ftc.gov>.



Take action if you suspect an elderly person is being scammed.

If you suspect elder financial abuse, call the National Elder

Fraud Hotline at 833-372-8311 (833-FRAUD-11), Monday through Friday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. (Eastern Time). This hotline is a free resource created by the U.S. Department of Justice Office for Victims of Crime for people to report fraud against anyone age 60 or older.

Questions?

If you have any questions about your coverage, you can always reach out to our vendor partners directly at the phone numbers or websites provided below. You can also refer to the phone number on your ID card or go to lacera.com under the Retiree Healthcare tab for provider contact information:

Anthem Blue Cross PPO Plans

800-284-1110
anthem.com/ca

Cigna Network Model Plan

800-244-6224
mycigna.com

Kaiser Permanente Group Model HMO

800-464-4000
kp.org

Kaiser Permanente Senior Advantage MAPD HMO

800-443-0815
kp.org

SCAN Health Plan

800-559-3500
scanhealthplan.com

UnitedHealthcare

800-624-8822
myuhc.com

UnitedHealthcare Group Medicare Advantage (MAPD HMO)

800-457-8506

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

Recipe:

Gluten-Free Angel Food Cake

Based on reviews, this is an unbelievably delicious angel food cake recipe, and tasters will not be able to tell it's gluten-free.

Prep Time: 30 minutes	Cook Time: 45 minutes	Total Time: 1 hour and 15 minutes	Servings: 8
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Ingredients

- 1 1/2 cups egg whites from 10–11 large eggs
- 3/4 cup gluten-free all-purpose flour
- 1/4 cup cornstarch
- 3/4 cup powdered sugar
- 3/4 cup + 2 tablespoons granulated sugar
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1 1/2 teaspoons cream of tartar
- 1 tablespoon vanilla
- 1/4 teaspoon almond extract

Instructions

- Separate the egg whites and allow them to sit at room temperature for at least 30 minutes.
- Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. In the bowl of a food processor, process the flour, cornstarch, and powdered sugar together until smooth, about 30 seconds. Set aside.
- Process the granulated sugar slightly, about five to seven pulses. You don't want to turn it into powdered sugar, just a little finer than it is normally. Set aside.
- Place the egg whites in the bowl of a stand mixer. Beat on high until starting to foam, then add the salt and cream of tartar.
- Add the vanilla and almond extract and continue whipping on high speed.
- Add the granulated sugar slowly, about 1 tablespoon at a time, to the egg whites while they are whipping.

- Continue whipping until stiff peaks form.
- Slowly fold in the dry ingredients, one-third at a time, with a spatula. Do this carefully and slowly so you don't deflate the egg whites. (This is the key to good angel food cake.)



- Scoop into an ungreased 10-inch round pan.
- Bake at 350 for about 35 to 40 minutes until lightly golden. Immediately invert pan onto a cooling rack when you remove it from the oven. Cool completely, then run a knife along the edges of the pan and carefully plate the cake.

Enjoy!

Sources: www.ovc.ojp.gov/program/stop-elder-fraud/common-scams-and-warning-signs; www.benefitnews.com/news/scams-against-retirees-soared-to-crisis-levels-in-2022; www.ovc.ojp.gov/program/stop-elder-fraud/providing-help-restoring-hope; www.lacera.com/who-we-are/news/urgent-member-compromised-phishing-scam-heres-how-stay-safe; www.medicare.gov/basics/reporting-medicare-fraud-and-abuse; www.justice.gov/elderjustice/senior-scam-alert; www.ncoa.org/article/top-5-financial-scams-targeting-older-adults; www.reportfraud.ftc.gov; www.log.ssa.gov/category/fraud-2/; www.consumerfinance.gov/educator-tools; meaningfuleats.com/perfect-gluten-free-angel-food-cake/

2024 Medicare Part B Premium Verifications for Qualified Retirees

The following information is for enrollees in the following LACERA-administered Medicare Advantage Prescription Drug Plans (MAPDs) only: Cigna HealthSpring Preferred Rx (Phoenix, Arizona); Kaiser Permanente Senior Advantage; UnitedHealthcare Medicare Advantage; SCAN Health Plan; or Medicare Supplement Plan, Anthem Blue Cross Plan III. **If you are not in one of these plans, no action is required on your part.**

When you and/or your eligible dependent receive your 2024 Medicare Part B Verification Premium amount from Social Security or Medicare, please submit a copy of the document to LACERA for verification and adjustment of your Part B reimbursement amount. Completion of the verification process and adjustment will be subject to the County Board of Supervisors' approval to continue the Medicare Part B Premium Reimbursement Program. Upon the Board of Supervisors' approval, LACERA will mail notices to qualified retirees.

Retiree Healthcare Subsidy for Registered Domestic Partners Subject to Federal Tax



If you have a registered domestic partner as a covered dependent on your LACERA-administered healthcare plan, 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 IRS considers the amount the County pays toward your domestic partner's healthcare benefits to be imputed income—a non-cash, employer-provided benefit for any person who is not qualified as your tax dependent. The IRS decision to treat legally married, same-sex couples as married for federal tax purposes does not apply to registered domestic partners. 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 healthcare plan. Under this scenario, LACERA will mail two Form 1099-Rs to you by the end of January: one reporting your imputed income and one reporting your annual retirement fund distributions.

Important: If the status of your dependent has changed from domestic partner to spouse, please submit a photocopy of your certified marriage certificate along with a signed Certificate Attestation Form. Contact LACERA for a copy of the Certificate Attestation Form or visit members.lacera.com/Impublic/forms/pdf/attestcert.pdf.

Coming Soon:

Staying Healthy Together Workshop for Spring 2024!

We have great news! LACERA will host a retiree wellness workshop called Staying Healthy Together in-person in April 2024, and you're invited. We'll contact

you when the date of the event gets closer, and information will be posted on lacera.com. Stay tuned!



Quick Clicks 

How to Find Retiree Healthcare Forms and Publications

Every issue, we provide navigation tips to help you find what you are looking for on our website, fast.

Looking for medical plan enrollment/change forms, brochures, rates, or healthcare packets? You can find them at lacera.com in the Healthcare Resources section.

1. Click on the Retiree Healthcare tab, then select Healthcare Resources from the dropdown menu (under Program Basics).
2. On the lefthand side navigation bar, select RHC Forms and Publications to access downloadable PDFs.

Bilingual Election Workers Needed!



Hello members! My name is Breanna Clifton, and I am the Supervisor over at Staff Development and Outreach with the Los Angeles County Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk's Office—Election Worker Services.

I'm reaching out to all LACERA members (both past and present) to discuss the need for election workers who speak any of the 18 languages we provide in our outreach—Armenian, Farsi, Burmese, Gujrati, Indonesian, Khmer, Mongolian, Spanish, Telugu, Vietnamese, Bengali, Chinese, Hindi, Japanese, Korean, Russian, Tagalog, and Thai.

You can earn income while helping us better serve our community members of differing demographic and socioeconomic statuses. Bilingual election workers who speak a qualified language will earn a \$100 stipend, and you can receive compensation of up to \$1,180 for your service.

Our strategic priority is to ensure we serve every

community, near and far, with their best interests in mind. Our goal is to properly market, canvass, and dedicate time to attending local workshops, outreach events, and other similar outings to further our representation, instill trust, and ensure that all individuals are serviced within Los Angeles County at every applicable vote center. Our values include: 1) delivering services with trust, integrity, and high-level customer service, 2) cultivating strong relationships with community organizations and partners, and 3) valuing every person, regardless of location.

If you are interested in helping us with our outreach efforts, I would love to hear from you! Let us continue to inspire, cultivate relationships, and build connections within the County of Los Angeles. Please contact me via email at bcclifton@rrcc.lacounty.gov or call me at 562-345-8345. I look forward to our partnership in advance!

How Account Consolidation Can Help You Keep It Simple

One recent study estimates there are 24 million “forgotten” retirement accounts representing \$1.35 trillion in assets.¹ Is any of it yours? If you have retirement accounts from previous employers, you may want to consider rolling those accounts into your County of Los Angeles Horizons 457(b) and/or Savings 401(k) Plans. The roll-in process—also called account consolidation—offers several potential benefits, including:

- **The potential for lower fees:** The County of Los Angeles works to keep fees as low as possible, so more from every dollar you invest stays in your account to help you maintain future retirement income. Visit the fees page on www.countyla.com to see how the fees from your previous accounts compare to those in your current plan.
- **Simplicity:** By consolidating accounts, you have one account to monitor and manage — and one statement to read. Also, it may be easier to apply your investment strategy to assets in a single account rather than repeating the process for multiple accounts.
- **A single set of account management tools:** When you consolidate accounts, you can use the same online tools to manage all your retirement assets. You can see your estimated future retirement income based on all your assets and apply any needed adjustments to all your assets at one time.
- **A wide range of quality investment options:** Your plan features a diverse lineup of investment options in multiple asset classes. When you consolidate your accounts, you

can invest the assets from your other plans to create a single portfolio that matches your retirement income goals and your tolerance for risk.

Consider all your options and their features and fees before moving money between accounts.

Are you ready to make your life a little simpler by rolling eligible accounts from previous employers into your current plan? Then make an appointment with your local retirement plan counselor at Empower today by calling 800-947-0845. Representatives are available Monday through Friday, 5 a.m. to 7 p.m. Pacific Time. You can also reach us online by logging into your account at www.countyla.com and using the chat function.

¹MarketWatch, “Opinion: Americans are leaving old 401(k) accounts behind — and paying the price,” www.marketwatch.com/amp/story/americans-are-leaving-old-401-k-accounts-behind-and-paying-the-price-11627055031.

Investing involves risk, including possible loss of principal.

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Donate to the Department of Public Social Services Toy Loan Program

The Department of Public Social Services (DPSS) promotes imagination, exploration, and discovery to children across Los Angeles through their Toy Loan program. It’s a free service that allows children to borrow toys from a Toy Loan Center in the same way they borrow books from the public library. There are multiple Toy Loan programs across Los Angeles County.

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. To schedule a free pick-up or drop-off location, contact DPSS at 213-744-4344. Monetary donations are also accepted. All donations are tax-deductible.

To mail a donation, send to:

DPSS Toy Loan Program
2615 South Grand Ave., 2nd Floor
Los Angeles, CA 90007

In addition, toys and books can be donated through our AmazonSmile registry list. Visit toydrive.lacounty.gov or email toyloan@dpss.lacounty.gov for more information.



Upcoming Holidays



LACERA will be closed on:

- **Monday, December 25**
For Christmas
- **Monday, January 1**
For New Year’s Day
- **Monday, January 15**
For Martin Luther King Day
- **Monday, February 19**
For Presidents Day

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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