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# NEWS to USE

FOR EMPLOYERS

Public Employee Retirement System of Idaho

May 2021

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## DO YOU KNOW WHO QUALIFIES AS AN EIGHT-MONTH SEASONAL EMPLOYEE?

Each year, employees are hired by cities, counties, irrigation districts, cemetery districts, and mosquito abatement districts to fill certain seasonal positions that last 8 months or less, are seasonal or casual, and are affected by weather. Idaho Code 59-1302(14)(B)(h) specifically exempts these positions from being eligible for PERSI.

### IDENTIFYING A SEASONAL WORKER

At the time of hire, the employer must submit a Certification of 8-Month Seasonal Employment Status form to PERSI for each seasonal employee. Both the employer and the employee are required to sign the form to acknowledge that the employee is being hired for a seasonal position that is determined by weather within a calendar year.

Only employees of cities, counties, irrigation districts, cemetery districts, and mosquito abatement districts are eligible for 8-month seasonal status and very few positions qualify.

### EXAMPLES OF QUALIFYING POSITIONS

- Groundskeepers for parks and golf courses
- Irrigation district positions
- Snow removal positions
- Lifeguard positions

Employers are responsible for determining whether their employees meet the requirements for PERSI membership. Including a job description when submitting the form makes it easier for the employer and for PERSI to ensure that an employee qualifies for 8-month seasonal status.



At the time of termination, the employer is required to resubmit a copy of the certification form to PERSI showing the employee's termination date.

### EMPLOYMENT EXCEEDS 8 MONTHS

If the employment exceeds eight (8) consecutive months of employment within a calendar year, then the position is not considered seasonal and all employment during the 8-month period is eligible for PERSI membership. This means that employee and employer contributions (plus interest)

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would be required, retroactive to the date of hire.

### **TERMINATED AT 8 MONTHS & HIRED FOR DIFFERENT POSITION**

If a seasonal employee is terminated at the end of eight (8) consecutive months and immediately hired for a different (non-seasonal) position with the same employer, that employee is not eligible for service credit for the time they were employed as an 8-month seasonal employee.

### **NOT APPLICABLE TO STATE AGENCIES**

The 8-month seasonal employee eligibility status does not apply to employees of state agencies. These employees are eligible for PERSI membership after they have worked for five (5) consecutive months.

If you have questions about 8-month seasonal employees, or eligibility requirements in general, please contact the Employer Service Center (ESC) toll-free at 1-866-887-9525 or 208-287-9525.

## **PUBLIC SAFETY EMPLOYEES NEW STATUTE & CONTRIBUTION RATE**

Idaho lawmakers passed and the Governor signed Senate Bill 1096 – Public Safety Officer Catastrophic Line of Duty Benefits.

Effective July 1, 2021, Idaho Statute 59-1352 will now include a new section, Idaho Statute 59-1352B – Public Safety Officer Catastrophic Line of Duty Benefits.

This new section provides a new classification for the catastrophic benefit under the Public Employee Retirement System of Idaho (PERSI). This will apply to public safety employees who are catastrophically injured in the line of duty. It provides benefit enhancements, specific conditions for payments, and periodic Cost-of-Living Adjustments (COLA). It also clarifies that a member receiving the benefit may return to work under certain conditions.

This amendment will result in a contribution rate increase for public safety employees, but will have no impact on employer contribution rates.

Beginning July 1, 2021, the contribution rate for public safety employees will increase from 8.81% to 9.13%.

Representatives from PERSI's Employer Service Center (ESC) have started reaching out to public safety employers to help prepare employers for the increase.

If you have questions, call the PERSI Employer Service Center at 1-866-887-9525 or 208-287-9525.

## **ENCOURAGE YOUR EMPLOYEES...**

### **PROTECT YOURSELF**

#### **REGISTER & CLAIM YOUR *myPERSI* ACCOUNT**

PERSI strongly urges all members to register and claim their *myPERSI* account.

By doing this, you can greatly reduce the risk to your account, and stop potential fraudsters in their tracks!

Keep your account, and your personal information out of the hands of bad actors.

Learn how to register and claim your account here: <https://www.persi.idaho.gov/docs/brochures/myPERSI-Registration.pdf>

If you have questions, call the PERSI Answer Center at 1-800-451-8228 or 208-334-3365 from the Treasure Valley area.

