



LACERS DISABILITY RETIREMENT WEBINAR

(Tier 1 & Tier 3 Only)

**PRESENTED BY
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Attention

1. This presentation is intended to provide a summary of the benefits established by the Los Angeles City Charter, Los Angeles Administrative Code, and LACERS Board Rules (referred to as the Plan provisions). In the event of discrepancies in this presentation the Plan provisions will govern at all times.
2. Representatives of LACERS cannot offer financial, legal, or tax advice. Please consult with your financial planner, attorney and/or tax advisor as needed.
3. This presentation is for **Tier 1 Members and Tier 3 Members Only**. Not for Tier 1 Enhanced Members.

As a covered entity under Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, the City of Los Angeles does not discriminate on the basis of disability and, upon request, will provide reasonable accommodations to ensure equal access to its programs, services and activities.

Overview

- What is a Disability Retirement?
- Eligibility Requirements
- Application Process
- Loans for Disability Retirement
- Re-Examination Process
- Other Important Information

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What is a Disability Retirement?

What is a Disability Retirement?

- A retirement option available to eligible members who become physically and/or mentally incapacitated and are no longer able to perform their regular or accommodated job duties.
- Pays approximately **33%** of a member's final average compensation.
- Administered separately and independently from the disability insurance provided by the City's LAwell Benefits Program (Standard Insurance).
- A disability retirement is considered a lifetime benefit, unless a member recovers and returns to work through the re-examination process.
- A disability retirement does not convert to a service retirement when a member reaches normal retirement age.

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Eligibility Requirements

Eligibility Requirements

- The disabling injury and/or illness does not have to be work related.
- No minimum age requirement.
- Members must have five (5) or more years of Continuous City Service.
- Applications must be submitted within **one year** of the member's last day on active payroll.
- A related Workers' Compensation claim can extend the filing deadline, as long as the claim has not yet settled. If the claim has settled, an application must be received within **one year** of the settlement date.

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Application Process

Application Process

- Eligible members who receive counseling and request a disability retirement will be mailed an application.
- Most applications are processed within **6 to 12 months**.
- Upon receipt of an application, LACERS will request the following documents:
 - A Duties Assessment from the employing department.
 - Medical records from a member's private treating physician(s).
 - Medical records and fact sheets from Workers' Compensation (if applicable).
- Members must be examined by at least three (3) physicians specializing in the member's claimed area(s) of disability.*

*Only one (1) examination is required for a member diagnosed with a terminal illness.

Application Process (Cont'd)

- If the examining physician(s) finds the member disabled, but able to return to work with specific restriction(s), LACERS will contact the employing department to inquire as to whether the department is able to accommodate the cited restrictions.
- The medical examination reports, and other evaluation materials, are presented to the Board of Administration for decision-making.

Application Process (Cont'd)

- If the Board approves the application, the member will receive a monthly benefit retroactive to the effective date of the disability (usually, the day after member's last day on payroll).
- If a member is determined not to be disabled by the examining physician(s), the case will be scheduled for a hearing.
- As part of the hearing process, the member may present previously unavailable information in support of their application. The Board will consider this new information in making the final decision.

Application Process (Cont'd)

If the Board denies the application at the hearing:

- Members should communicate with their employing department to possibly return to work.*
- Members may request reconsideration within 90 days of notification of the decision.
- Members may seek consideration pursuant to California Civil Code 1094.6.

*Unless City employment has been terminated.

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Loans for Disability Retirement

Loans for Disability Retirement

- Loans are available for active members only.
- Members can apply to receive a loan equal to four times their bi-weekly salary.
- Loans may not exceed half of the contributions and interest in member's LACERS account.
- Loans may not exceed \$50,000.
- Loans must be repaid within four years.

Loans for Disability Retirement (Cont'd)

- Loans payments are made on a monthly basis, beginning three months after the loan is received and there are no prepayment penalties.
- Any outstanding loan balance will be collected first from the member's retroactive allowance payment. If the retroactive allowance payment does not cover the remaining loan balance, then automatic payments will be taken from their monthly benefit allowance.

Loans for Disability Retirement (Cont'd)

If your disability retirement application is denied:

- You must repay your loan.
- If you return to work, payments will be automatically deducted from your paycheck.
- If you leave city service and request a refund of your contributions, the outstanding balance of the loan will be automatically deducted from your contributions before you receive your refund check.

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Re-Examination Process

Re-Examination Process

- All disability retirees, up to the age of 60 are subject to re-examination (unless the Board specifies a different re-examination period or permanently excludes the retiree from re-examination).
- At any time, if a retiree believes they are no longer disabled, they may request to be re-examined.
- If a retiree is found no longer disabled by the LACERS Board of Administration (hearing process), the retiree will be returned to active duty, provided they were not terminated or resigned from City service.

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Other Important Information

Other Important Information

- **Health Benefits** - Members must be at least 55 years of age with a minimum of 10 years of Service Credit to be eligible for a health subsidy from LACERS. The subsidy amount is based on whole years of service.
- **Standard Insurance Disability Benefits** may be offset by benefits received from LACERS. Members should contact Standard Insurance or Employee Benefits for further details.

Employee Benefits/Standard Insurance

(213) 978-1655

Other Important Information (Cont'd)

- Members participating in the **Benefits Protection Plan**, should contact Employee Benefits once their disability application is approved, as this change in status may affect medical coverage.
- Upon approval of a member's disability retirement application, members should contact their employing department regarding any possibly accrued sick or vacation payout.

How to Contact LACERS



CALL

(800) 779-8328
RTT (888) 349-3996



MAIL

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DISABILITY INQUIRIES ONLY

Lacers.DRU@lacers.org



WEBSITE

LACERS.org



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YOUTUBE

youtube.com/lacersyoutube

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Q&A