

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

FCERA's Public Records Request Policy	1
Reciprocity!	2
Health Insurance Open Enrollment Plan Year 2011	3
Payment Schedule	3
Calendar	3
Live Audio Broadcast	3
Board members	3
Meet Staff	4

The Retirement View

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From the Retirement Administrator: FCERA's Public Records Request Policy



In the last year, FCERA received several requests for documents and information regarding its individual members' benefits, including the benefit amounts and the components used to calculate each member's "final compensation." FCERA Administration has heard from many of you regarding your concerns that disclosing the information could lead to identity theft or harm to you and your families. Please note that each letter or email received from concerned members was provided to the Board of Retirement.

FCERA is committed to protecting your confidential information while, at the same time, complying with its obligations to the general public as a public agency under the California Public Records Act. Under a written Policy that has been in place since 2003 (available on FCERA's website), the Board of Retirement has interpreted the California Public Records Act to require disclosure of each retired member's benefit amount and the components used to calculate each member's "final compensation." Thus, FCERA has provided this type of information upon request for many years. Please note that FCERA's interpretation of the California Public Records Act has been upheld by all the courts throughout the state that have reviewed this issue in recent years.

One of the arguments presented by concerned members was that, as active members, they paid contributions towards their retirement, and so their records should be private and not public. Although it is a true that members make such contributions, those contributions come directly from their public employment income, which the California Supreme Court has said is public information.

Under law and FCERA's Policy, certain information is treated as personal and confidential and will not be released without a specific court order or the member's written authorization to release the information. Personal and confidential information includes, for example: social security numbers, dates of birth, addresses, telephone numbers, e-mail addresses, ages at entry into service, spouse and/or beneficiary designation (before they are in pay status), disability applications and other medical records.

Please note that FCERA Administration carefully considers each request for documents and information and works closely with legal counsel, as appropriate, before providing any information to anyone. Further, FCERA Administration will continue to notify each member whose records are specifically requested, as is required under FCERA's Policy.



Reciprocity!

You ask, "What is reciprocity?"

The County Employees Retirement Law of 1937 (CERL) defines reciprocity as a mutual agreement between retirement systems that allows members to move between systems without losing eligibility for retirement. Reciprocity gives the members employed by public agencies the ability to preserve and enhance their total system benefits.

What is the advantage to a member establishing reciprocity?

The contribution rates used to determine the retirement deductions will be based on the entry age from the reciprocal agency. Example: If you were 26 when entering public employment and you become a member of FCERA at age 30, your contribution rates will be based on age 26. Also, the service credit earned in the reciprocal agency can be used toward determining vesting and retirement eligibility in our system. Last, but not least, upon retirement, the average annual compensation computed using pay elements from either agency will be used to determine your retirement benefits.

How does a member establish reciprocity?

A member must elect to establish reciprocity by informing all agencies of his/her intentions. Membership must be established within six months of the termination date from the reciprocal agency and the member's retirement contributions must remain on deposit with all reciprocal agencies.

What are the requirements for retirement for a member with reciprocity?

The member must retire concurrently (same date of retirement) from all reciprocal agencies. Please note that you must meet the required retirement eligibilities in all systems to retire with reciprocity. Generally, to be eligible in our system, you must have at least 10 years of active service and be at least age 50.

Which systems have reciprocal agreements with FCERA?

FCERA has agreements with California counties that are governed by the 1937 Act, including Alameda, Contra Costa, Imperial, Kern, Los Angeles, Marin, Mendocino, Merced, Orange, Sacramento, San Diego, San Joaquin, San Mateo, Santa Barbara, Sonoma, Stanislaus, Tulare, and Ventura. We also have agreements with the California Public Employees' Retirement System (PERS), the California State Teachers' Retirement System (CalSTRS), Judges Retirement Systems and other municipalities and special districts that have established reciprocity through PERS.

Please contact FCERA or review the member retirement handbook on our website at fcera.org for any additional questions.



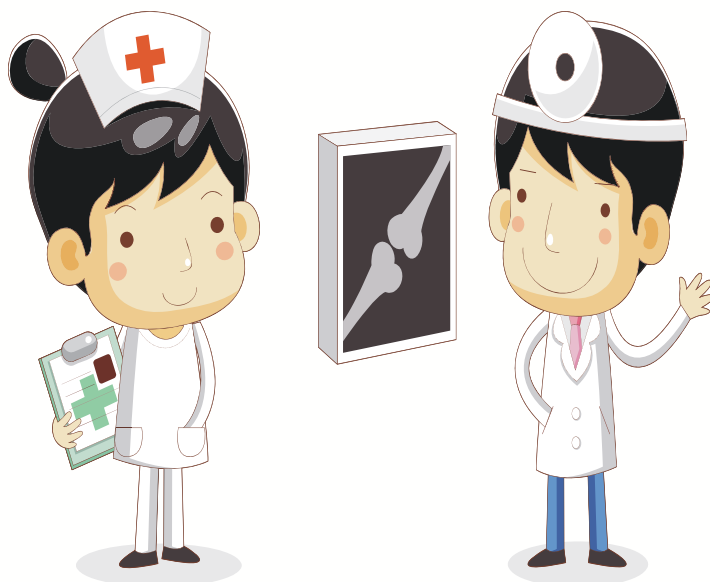


Health Insurance Open Enrollment Plan Year 2011:

Open Enrollment for Plan Year 2011 began on **Monday, October 18, 2010** and will continue through **Wednesday, November 10, 2010**. Open Enrollment is the one time during the year that participants in the county health insurance program may change from one health plan to another and add or delete eligible dependents to their coverage. It is also the one time of year that retirees who are not currently participating in the County sponsored plans may elect to do so.

There are some major changes taking effect next year. The County of Fresno strongly encourages participants to read the Open Enrollment materials carefully and attend one of the Health Fairs. For more information, please visit the Open Enrollment website at www.co.fresno.ca.us/openenrollment

For additional information, please call the Open Enrollment office at: (559) 488-3069.



Calendar



Next Regular Board Meeting:

November 3, 2010

December 1, 2010

December 15, 2010

Location:

FCERA Boardroom

1111 H Street

Fresno, California 93721

Time: 8:30 A.M.

Pension Payroll Payment Schedule

Friday, October 29 2010

Tuesday, November 30 2010

Thursday, December 30 2010

Live Audio Broadcast

FCERA broadcasts all board meetings live via streaming audio. Visit www.fcera.org for more information.

Board of Retirement

- Eulalio Gomez, Chair
- James E. Hackett, Vice Chair
- Michael Cardenas
- Franz Criego
- Vicki Crow
- Nick Cornacchia
- Steven J. Jolly
- Phil Larson
- John P. Souza
- Ron Frye, Retiree Alternate
- Roberto L. Peña, Retirement Administrator





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Intranet: <http://www2.co.fresno.ca.us/9200/default.htm>

Email: FCERAwebmail@co.fresno.ca.us

Meet FCERA Staff: Kim Jantz — Retirement Coordinator



Kim was hired with FCERA as an Account Clerk in September 2000. In October 2001, she was promoted to a Retirement Coordinator and has been in this position since then. She enjoys her job because it allows her to meet and help members as they prepare for their retirement. Her co-workers are very special to her.

Kim was born and raised in Fresno. Kim has three grown children and spends a lot of time with her six grandchildren. Kim's favorite pastimes are taking trips to the coast with her husband Billy and playing cards with friends. Kim also enjoys cooking and having her family and friends over for a barbeque. She enjoys the holidays with family and friends.

