



# ***Retirement Updates: 2017 Legislative Session***

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# **S.B. 21, Retirement Systems Amendments**

(Sen. Hemmert):

These are administrative and technical amendments to Utah Code Title 49 recommended to the Legislature annually by URS:

1. Clarifies that the function of making certain estimates is the responsibility of the Retirement Office rather than the Executive Director;
2. Clarifies when certain benefit conversions due to death or divorce take effect, after notification to the Retirement Office;
3. Establishes the business names by which the Public Employees' Health Program (PEHP) may also be known and function; and
4. Restores one line of Utah Code language relating to the judges' exemption from the reemployment earnings limitation that was unintentionally omitted in last year's recodification bill.

# **S.B. 19, Retirement Systems Payments to Survivors Amendments**

(Sen. Dayton):

The most recent beneficiary designations signed by a member and filed with URS, including online electronic designations, are binding in the payment of benefits due to the member's death.

This bill:

1. Adopts the emerging rule that the divorce or annulment of a member's marriage shall revoke the member's former spouse as a beneficiary from any of the member's beneficiary designations; and
2. Allows a former spouse to be named as a beneficiary in a beneficiary designation made after the date of the divorce or annulment.

# **S.B. 18, Firefighters' Disability Retirement Benefit Amendments**

(Sen. Mayne):

Tier I firefighter disability benefits administered by URS are unique since they are covered within the statutory firefighters' retirement defined benefit system rather than administered as a separate Long-term Disability (LTD) insurance program as happens with the other retirement systems.

This bill modifies the standard for determining a disability for members of the Firefighter's Retirement System, including using the “objective medical impairment” standard that is used for the other LTD programs.



# **H.B. 28, Public Employees Long-term Disability Act Amendments**

(Rep. Duckworth):

Makes a few changes to PEHP's LTD Program, including:

1. Affirmatively requiring an eligible employee that is under a total disability to inform the LTD program of certain compensation received or employment;
2. Clarifying that compensation from employment in excess of the limits will require the disability benefit to be reduced or reimbursed; and
3. Providing penalties if an eligible employee knowingly misrepresents or fails to disclose required information to the LTD program, including suspension or termination of monthly benefits.



# **S.C.R. 1, Concurrent Resolution on Increasing Pay for Certain Public Safety Officers and Firefighters**

(Sen. Weiler):

This resolution encourages the State of Utah, as well as the other employers of public safety officers and firefighters throughout the state, to provide a pay increase for its public safety officer and firefighter employees who are Tier II members.

# **H.B. 165, Retirement Amendments for Higher Education**

(Rep. Westwood):

Gives the authority and responsibility to the Board of Directors of each applied technology college, rather than the State Board of Regents, to designate the public or private retirement systems, organizations, or companies for the applied technology college employees who do not participate with URS.

# **H.B. 212, Incentive for Effective Teachers in High Poverty Schools**

(Rep. Winder):

Creates a new program to award \$5,000 bonuses to eligible teachers in high poverty schools and excludes such bonuses from compensation for URS purposes.

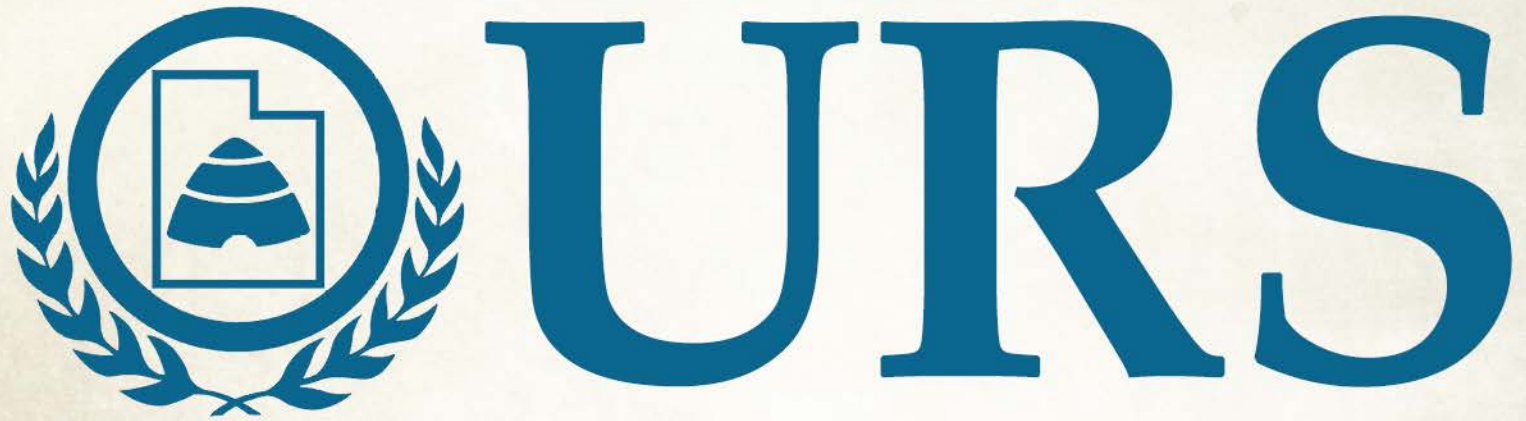


# **S.B. 20, Phased Retirement Amendments**

(Sen. Hemmert):

In preparing to implement and administer the new "Phased Retirement" program, which went into effect on January 1, 2017, a few issues required minor statutory clarifications:

1. A member must apply for phased retirement prior to the member's retirement date;
2. Phased retirement shall begin after the retiree's retirement date, but no later than 120 days after the retiree's retirement date;
3. The retirees and alternate payees will receive the same cost-of-living adjustments to their benefits; and
4. Payment of a retiree's full retirement allowance will begin following notice to the Office that the retiree's phased retirement has been irrevocably terminated.



Utah Retirement Systems

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