



**PEBA**<sup>SM</sup>  
SC Retirement Systems  
and State Health Plan

# Select Your Retirement Plan

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**2023**



## Member Access

*Are you registered?*

Member Access offers easy access to your PEBA-administered retirement account. Visit [online.retirement.sc.gov](https://online.retirement.sc.gov) to create your account today and start managing your retirement information.

With Member Access, you can:

- 1 Review your service credit.** Along with age, service credit determines whether you are eligible for retirement.
- 2 Create benefit estimates.** The estimates use your retirement account information, a potential average final compensation and a selected retirement date.
- 3 Manage service credit purchases.** You can calculate an unofficial cost estimate to buy service credit. You can also submit a service purchase request.
- 4 Submit a service retirement application.** Apply for retirement up to six months before your retirement date. You can also upload required documentation and view the status.
- 5 Change your State Optional Retirement Program (State ORP) service provider, if applicable.** You can make changes during annual open enrollment.
- 6 Update your contact information.** This helps PEBA keep in touch with you now and in retirement. You can expect occasional emails about important issues or changes.
- 7 Review and update your beneficiary information.** You can name primary and contingent beneficiaries, as well as incidental death benefit beneficiaries, if eligible.
- 8 Review your account balance.** The balance does not affect the calculation of your monthly retirement benefit, but may be payable as a death benefit to your beneficiaries. The balance also reflects the amount payable if you terminate employment and take a refund of your contributions.

### Need help registering?

We've got resources to help! Visit our *Navigating Your Benefits* page at [peba.sc.gov/nyb](https://peba.sc.gov/nyb) to view our "How to Register for Member Access" video and access our *Setting Up a New Member Access Account* flyer.

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## Disclaimer

Benefits administrators and others chosen by your employer to assist you with your participation in the employee benefit programs administered by the South Carolina Public Employee Benefit Authority (PEBA) are not agents or employees of PEBA and are not authorized to bind PEBA or make representations on behalf of PEBA.

# Your retirement. Your choice.

We know your financial goals are different from your coworkers', and your savings strategy is different, too. The good news is you have the option to enroll in either the South Carolina Retirement System (SCRS) or the State Optional Retirement Program (State ORP). This guide provides general information about and a comparison of the two plans to help you make your choice.

## Eligibility

All newly hired state, public higher education institution and public and charter school district employees, as well as first-term individuals elected to the South Carolina General Assembly, are eligible to choose between the two plans. This includes all permanent full-time employees, temporary and part-time employees, and political appointees. You must select one of the two retirement plans within 30 days from your date of hire unless your position is exempted by state law. Your employer can tell you whether your position is exempt from mandatory participation/membership. If you do not timely select a plan or, if eligible, decline membership, PEBA will automatically enroll you in SCRS, and the enrollment is irrevocable.

## Defined benefit plan versus defined contribution plan

SCRS is a defined benefit plan. In a defined benefit plan, the plan provides a monthly benefit at retirement based on a predetermined formula rather than basing your benefit on your account balance. The formula includes average final compensation, years of service and a 1.82% benefit multiplier. The plan bears all the risk for investment performance and ensures assets are available to pay benefits.

State ORP is a defined contribution plan. In a defined contribution plan, you choose how to invest your funds within the plan's investment options. Your State ORP retirement benefit consists of the balance in your account when you retire, and you will not receive a monthly benefit from PEBA. With the State ORP, you bear the investment risk and longevity risk.<sup>1</sup>

## Contributions

The plans' employee and employer contribution rates are set in statute by the South Carolina General Assembly.

Your contribution rate is 9%, regardless of which plan you choose. You will contribute on a pretax basis. This means your employer will deduct your contribution before calculating federal and state withholding taxes.

For State ORP participants, your employer will make an employer contribution to your State ORP account equal to 5% of your compensation. For SCRS participants, all employer contributions are kept separate from member contributions and do not become part of your member account balance.

<sup>1</sup> See Pages 18-19 for more information on investment and longevity risk.

## Retiree insurance eligibility

No matter which retirement plan you choose, if your employer participates in the State Health Plan, you may be able to continue health insurance coverage in retirement. See the Retiree group insurance chapter of the [Insurance Benefits Guide](#) for more information.

## Disability benefits

Disability retirement benefits may be available to SCRS members who have also been approved for Social Security disability benefits. Learn more on Page 12. There is no disability protection available for State ORP.

## SCRS basics

The SCRS benefits outlined in this guide are for Class Three membership, which applies to members who initially joined the system on or after July 1, 2012. Information about SCRS Class Two membership, which applies if you were a member prior to July 1, 2012, is available in the [SCRS Member Handbook](#).

### Transferring positions

- Your SCRS membership is transferable between participating SCRS employers. Participating employers include state agencies, public higher education institutions, public school districts and many local governments and special purpose districts. If you change jobs between covered employers, you may maintain your account and continue to earn service credit.

### Retirement benefits

- Under SCRS, you are eligible to retire with an unreduced benefit if you have at least eight years of earned service credit and:
  - Met the Rule of 90 requirement; or
  - Reached age 65.
- The Rule of 90 means your age and your years of service total 90. For example, under the Rule of 90, if you begin covered employment at age 22 and remain with a covered employer, once you reach age 56, you will have 34 years of service. Your age (56) plus your years of service (34) total 90, which would make you eligible for service retirement.
- You can also retire early and receive a reduced benefit if you:
  - Have at least eight years of earned service credit; and
  - Reached age 60. Your benefit is permanently reduced 5% for each year of age less than 65.
- Your monthly SCRS benefit is based on a predetermined formula and is payable to you for your lifetime. The formula includes average final compensation, years of service and a 1.82% benefit multiplier. You have several payment options, including options for survivor benefits.

# State ORP basics

If you choose State ORP, you must:

- Choose a service provider that will administer your account, including your investment elections;
- Select the investment options with your service provider for the investment of your contributions;
- Designate a beneficiary with your service provider for your State ORP account balance; and
- Designate a beneficiary with PEBA for the incidental death benefit.

## Service providers

When you enroll in State ORP, PEBA shares your basic demographic information with your chosen service provider. Your service provider will establish an account in your name. Your employer remits your employee contributions and an employer contribution equal to 5% of your compensation to your service provider. Those contributions accumulate in your account and are invested as you direct through your service provider. You can also review and redirect your investments in the future and update your beneficiary at any time.

You select from the investment options available through your service provider to reach the desired asset allocation for your investment objectives and retirement goals. The prospectus for each investment option provides details on that option.

The four service providers are Corebridge Financial, Empower Retirement, TIAA and Voya Financial. Contact information is available [online](#).

## Cost of participation

Service providers charge an administrative fee to cover the cost of administering your State ORP account. That fee, also called an asset-based fee, differs among service providers. Administrative fees are charged directly to your State ORP account on a quarterly basis.

Investment options also have annual fees, often called expense ratios, that go toward the operating costs of the fund. The expense ratio directly reduces the fund's investment return, which impacts the value of your investment. Investment expense ratios are disclosed in the fund's prospectus.

## Portability

Your entire State ORP account balance is portable. If you terminate covered employment<sup>2</sup> or reach age 59½, you can transfer the assets to another eligible retirement account or Individual Retirement Account (IRA).

<sup>2</sup> Employment with an employer that offers the defined benefit plans or State ORP.

## Retirement benefit

- Your State ORP retirement benefit consists of your State ORP account balance when you retire. The balance will continue to fluctuate based on the performance of your investment options. Although you are eligible to take a distribution from your State ORP account once you terminate all covered employment<sup>2</sup> or reach age 59½, you may leave your balance on deposit with your service provider until you elect to receive the funds, or you are required by the IRS to begin receiving annual required minimum distributions. Once you are eligible to take a distribution, you may choose from a variety of payment options, including a lump-sum distribution or periodic withdrawals. You may also use a portion or all your account balance to purchase an annuity from your provider, which could provide guaranteed income for life.

## Annual open enrollment

- Each year, there is an open enrollment period (January 1 to March 1) during which you may:
  - Change service providers; or
  - Irrevocably switch to SCRS if it has been at least one year, but not more than five years, since your initial enrollment in State ORP.
- More information about open enrollment is available at [peba.sc.gov/state-orp](https://peba.sc.gov/state-orp).

## Things to think about

Keep the following in mind when choosing your retirement plan:

- Your willingness to assume investment and longevity risk;<sup>3</sup>
- The period of time remaining before you retire;
- The importance of retirement plan portability to you;
- Your age and the years of service you think you will have as an employee with your organization or the state, or your service in the S.C. General Assembly;
- The importance of disability protection to you;
- Your preference of having your retirement benefit determined by the performance of the investment options you select or receiving a lifetime retirement benefit based on a formula;
- The importance of survivor benefits to you; and
- The flexibility of each plan to best suit your personal situation during your working years and throughout retirement.

<sup>3</sup> See Pages 18-19 for more information on investment and longevity risk.

## Consider SCRS if you:

- ✓ **Want a guaranteed monthly benefit. The plan bears all the risk for investment performance and ensures assets are available to pay benefits.**  
*Benefit is defined by a formula.*
- ✓ **Plan to stay with a covered employer for many years.**  
*If you have many years of service, the defined benefit formula may provide a larger benefit. Your benefit increases with each year you work and contribute as an active member.*
- ✓ **Prefer that someone else makes investment decisions.**  
*The South Carolina Retirement System Investment Commission contracts with and monitors professional investment managers.*
- ✓ **Need disability protection as part of your plan.**  
*Disability retirement benefits are available if you have at least eight years of earned service.*
- ✓ **Need continuing survivor benefits for your beneficiary.**  
*Monthly survivor benefit for your beneficiary is available if you die in service with at least eight years of earned service and either have at least 15 years of total service credit or you are at least age 60.*

## Consider State ORP if you:

- ✓ **Want a portable retirement plan.**  
*Portability provides you an opportunity to transfer your State ORP assets to a new employer's retirement plan.*
- ✓ **Are interested in selecting how to invest your money and monitoring the growth of your account.**  
*You choose and direct your investments in the investment options available through your service provider.*
- ✓ **Want flexibility in the way you or your beneficiaries receive your benefit.**  
*Once eligible, you could use a portion or all your account balance to purchase an annuity from your service provider. You could also take a lump-sum distribution or periodic withdrawals depending on your unique circumstances.*



# Retirement plan comparison

## SCRS

## State ORP

### Plan type

SCRS is a 401(a) qualified governmental defined benefit plan that provides a monthly benefit at retirement. The contributions made by you and your employer, and the investment earnings on those contributions, are used to fund retirement benefits. Your retirement benefit is based on a formula that includes your average final compensation, your years of service and a 1.82% benefit multiplier. Your retirement income is not based on your account balance.

State ORP is a 401(a) qualified governmental defined contribution plan that provides an account into which you and your employer contribute. Your retirement benefit consists of the account balance accumulated throughout your years of employment. Your account balance is made up of contributions, as well as changes in the value of your chosen investment options.

### Who control investments

The South Carolina Retirement System Investment Commission (RSIC) invests the funds, and professional investment managers approved by the RSIC manage the portfolios.

You assume all investment risk<sup>4</sup> and are responsible for your investment choices with your chosen service providers.

<sup>4</sup> See Pages 18-19 for more information on investment and longevity risk.

### Employee contributions

You contribute a pretax percentage of your gross pay. The current employee contribution rate is 9%. Your contributions are credited to your account and accrue 4% interest annually until you retire or your account becomes inactive. An account is considered inactive when no contributions have been made to the account in the preceding fiscal year and no other active, correlated system or State ORP account exists.

You contribute a pretax percentage of your gross pay. The current employee contribution rate is 9%.

## SCRS

## State ORP

### Employer contributions

Your employer remits an employer contribution to SCRS. This employer contribution rate is set by law as a percentage of earnable compensation for covered employees. Employer contributions are not credited to individual member accounts.

Your employer remits an employer contribution to your account with your service provider equal to 5% of your earnable compensation. You immediately vest in the 5% employer contribution, which means those contributions immediately belong to you. Your employer also makes a separate employer contribution to SCRS, which is not credited to individual member accounts. Employer contribution rates are set by law as a percentage of earnable compensation for covered employees.

### Incoming rollovers

Active members may roll over tax-deferred funds to establish additional service credit for various types of previous employment and leaves of absence, and up to five years of non-qualified service, which is a type of service credit not associated with any specific employment. Funds can come from an Individual Retirement Account (IRA), 401(k) plan, 401(a)-eligible plan, 403(b) plan or 457 plan. A valid service purchase invoice and pre-approval from PEBA is required to initiate a rollover.

You may roll over eligible pretax contributions into your State ORP account if it would otherwise be included in gross income. Account types include a qualified plan described in § 401(a), 401(k) or 403(a) of the Internal Revenue Code (IRC); an annuity contract described in § 403(b) of the IRC; an eligible governmental deferred compensation plan described in § 457(b) of the IRC; or the portion of a distribution from an IRA or annuity described in § 408(a) or 408(b) of the IRC. The Plan does not accept rollovers of after-tax contributions.

### Loans

No loans available.

No loans available.

### Minimum service requirement for retirement benefits

#### Normal retirement (unreduced benefit)

You are eligible to retire with an unreduced benefit if you have at least eight years of earned service credit and:

- Met the Rule of 90 requirement;<sup>5</sup> or
- Reached age 65.

#### Early retirement (reduced benefit)

You can retire early and receive a reduced benefit if you:

- Have at least eight years of earned service credit; and
- Reached age 60.

Your benefit is permanently reduced 5% for each year of age less than 65.

<sup>5</sup> See Page 5 for information about the Rule of 90.

There are no minimum years of service required to receive your benefit. You become eligible to receive distributions when you terminate all covered employment<sup>6</sup> or reach age 59½. You may leave your account balance on deposit with your chosen service provider until you elect to receive the funds or until you are required by the IRS to begin receiving annual required minimum distributions. You may be required by the IRS to pay an additional tax if you take a distribution prior to age 59½. You may want to contact a tax consultant or a financial advisor for more information.

<sup>6</sup> Covered employment means you are employed by and receiving compensation from an employer that participates in the system.

## SCRS

## State ORP

### Retirement benefit calculation

Your monthly retirement benefit is based on the following formula:

1. Total your 20 highest consecutive quarters of earnable compensation and divide by 5 to calculate your average final compensation (AFC).
2. Multiply the result of Step 1 by 1.82% (0.0182).
3. Multiply the result of Step 2 by your years of service credit.
4. Divide the result of Step 3 by 12. Deduct early retirement reductions, if applicable.

Deduct early retirement reductions, if applicable.

Your retirement benefit consists of the balance in your State ORP account when you retire. The balance will consist of employer contributions, employee contributions and changes in the value of your selected investment options. As a result, your account balance may fluctuate. You bear the investment risk<sup>7</sup> associated with your State ORP account.

You are responsible for determining how to withdraw your account balance during retirement and bear the longevity risk<sup>7</sup> associated with your State ORP account.

<sup>7</sup> See Pages 18-19 for more information on investment and longevity risk.

### Retirement payment options

Your retirement benefit will be paid as a monthly retirement benefit for your lifetime and your survivor's lifetime if you choose a survivor benefit.

- **Option A** Maximum, retiree-only monthly benefit.
- **Option B** 100% - 100% joint retiree-survivor monthly benefit.
- **Option C** 100% - 50% joint retiree-survivor monthly benefit.

If you choose Option B or Option C, you will receive a reduced (from Option A) benefit. Age differential restrictions apply to the designation of a sole, non-spousal beneficiary under Option B.

Once you are eligible to take a distribution, you may choose from a variety of payment options, including a lump-sum distribution or periodic withdrawals. You may also use a portion or all your account balance to purchase an annuity from your service provider, which could provide guaranteed income for life. To request a distribution from your State ORP account, contact your service provider or log in to your account with your service provider.

In the event of your death, your beneficiary will be entitled to any remaining balance.

### Benefit adjustments

Under current state law, effective each July 1, eligible SCRS retirees receive an annual benefit adjustment of 1% of their annual benefit up to a maximum of \$500 per year. The earliest you can receive a benefit adjustment is the second July 1 after your date of retirement.

Not applicable.

## SCRS

## State ORP

### Leaving covered employment before retirement

If you terminate employment with at least eight years of earned service and leave your contributions plus interest in your SCRS account, you will be eligible to receive a deferred retirement benefit upon reaching retirement eligibility based upon your age or combination of age and years of service.

If you terminate employment, you may request a refund of your employee contributions plus interest, but you forfeit your rights to any future retirement benefits. Employer contributions are not refunded. There is a 90-day waiting period from your termination date before a refund can be made. You are not required to withdraw your contributions and interest at termination. Your refund may be rolled over to another eligible retirement plan or an Individual Retirement Account (IRA) as allowed by the Internal Revenue Code. Eligibility to establish SCRS service with another retirement plan depends on the other plan's provisions.

You may be required by the IRS to pay an additional tax if you take a distribution prior to age 59½. Contact a tax consultant or a financial advisor for more information.

You have immediate rights to your State ORP account balance, which includes employee and employer contributions, as well as changes in the value of your selected investment options, when you terminate all covered employment or reach age 59½.

Your State ORP assets remain with your selected service provider unless you request a withdrawal or direct rollover to another eligible retirement plan. To request a distribution from your State ORP account, contact your service provider or log in to your account with your service provider. Eligibility to establish State ORP service with another retirement plan depends on the other plan's provisions.

You may be required by the IRS to pay an additional tax if you take a distribution prior to age 59½. Contact a tax consultant or a financial advisor for more information.

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### Beneficiaries

Multiple beneficiaries and/or trustees available. Beneficiaries share equally in survivor benefits.

Multiple beneficiaries and/or trustees available.

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### Disability benefits

An active member of SCRS with at least eight years of earned service credit may receive disability retirement benefits from SCRS if they have also been approved for Social Security disability benefits. If approved, the member will receive a disability retirement benefit equal to the service retirement benefit payable based upon the member's years of credited service and average final compensation at the time of retirement, without any reduction for retiring prior to normal retirement age. To qualify for disability retirement benefits, the member's application must be timely filed while in service with a participating employer and other restrictions apply.

No disability protection through State ORP even if approved for Social Security disability benefits.

**SCRS****State ORP****In-service death benefits**

If you die while employed at any age and have 15 or more years of service (eight of which must be earned service), or after reaching age 60 with eight years of earned service, your beneficiary may choose a monthly survivorship benefit in lieu of a refund of your employee contributions plus interest.

The monthly annuity is not available if you do not meet the requirements above or if your designated beneficiary is not a living person.

If you die while employed, your beneficiary is entitled to your State ORP account balance upon submission of a claim to your chosen service provider. Keep in mind the balance will continue to fluctuate based on the performance of your investment options. Your beneficiary may receive the account balance through a lump-sum distribution, periodic withdrawals or an annuity.

**Active member incidental death benefit**

If your employer provides incidental death benefit coverage and you die in service with at least one year of service, a payment equal to your current annual earnable compensation will be made to your designated beneficiary. If your death is the result of a job-related injury, the one-year requirement is waived.

If your employer provides incidental death benefit coverage and you die in service with at least one year of service, a payment equal to your current annual earnable compensation will be made to your designated beneficiary. If your death is the result of a job-related injury, the one-year requirement is waived.

**Retired member incidental death benefit****Non-working retired member**

If you die and your last employer prior to retirement provides incidental death benefit coverage, a payment based on your service credit at retirement will be made to your designated beneficiary:

- 10-19 years: \$2,000;
- 20-27 years: \$4,000; or
- 28 or more years: \$6,000.

**Working retired member**

If you die while you are a retiree working for a covered employer and your employer provides incidental death benefit coverage, a payment equal to your current annual earnable compensation will be made to your designated beneficiary.

Not available.

## SCRS

## State ORP

### Disability benefits

An active member of SCRS with at least eight years of earned service credit may receive disability retirement benefits from SCRS if they have also been approved for Social Security disability benefits. If approved, the member will receive a disability retirement benefit equal to the service retirement benefit payable based upon the member's years of credited service and average final compensation at the time of retirement, without any reduction for retiring prior to normal retirement age. To qualify for disability retirement benefits, the member's application must be timely filed while in service with a participating employer and other restrictions apply.

No disability protection through State ORP even if approved for Social Security disability benefits.

### In-service death benefits

If you die while employed at any age and have 15 or more years of service (eight of which must be earned service), or after reaching age 60 with eight years of earned service, your beneficiary may choose a monthly survivorship benefit in lieu of a refund of your employee contributions plus interest.

The monthly annuity is not available if you do not meet the requirements above or if your designated beneficiary is not a living person.

If you die while employed, your beneficiary is entitled to your State ORP account balance upon submission of a claim to your chosen service provider. Keep in mind the balance will continue to fluctuate based on the performance of your investment options. Your beneficiary may receive the account balance through a lump-sum distribution, periodic withdrawals or an annuity.

# Plan comparison examples

Here are some examples of what a new employee's future retirement benefit under each program might look like. Remember that your benefit depends on your personal situation, and that these examples are for illustrative purposes only.

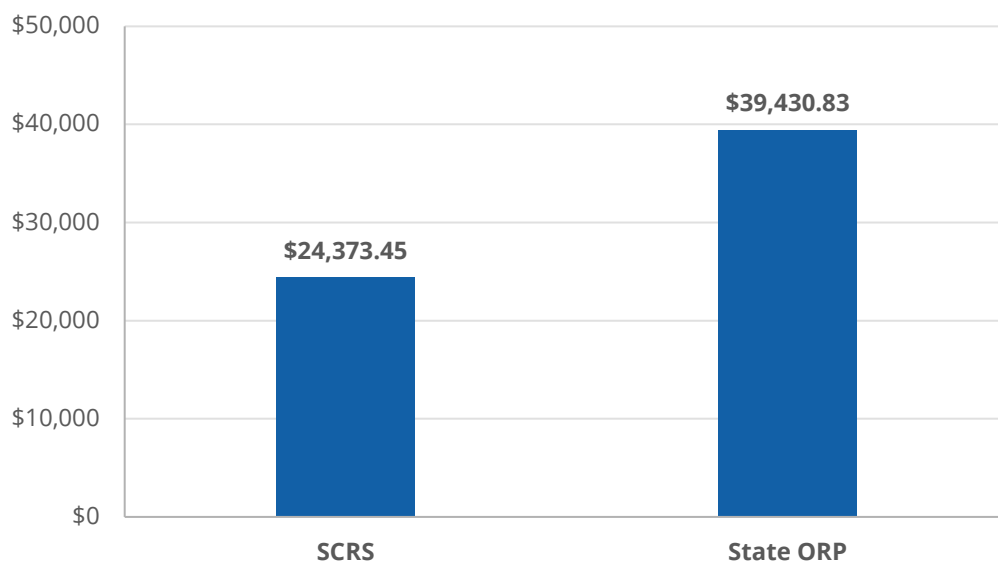
## Example 1 | Leaving employment before retirement

### Assumptions

- No growth in salary assumed.
- Rate of return is assumed to be the same for SCRS and State ORP for comparison purposes only. Rate of return in example equals the interest rate credited to SCRS account under state law.
- SCRS balance includes interest credited on prior June 30 account balance (employee contributions only) while account is in active status. An account is considered inactive when no contributions have been made to the account in the preceding fiscal year and no other active, correlated system or State ORP account exists.
- Investment gains or losses, based on investment elections, impact State ORP account balance as soon as contributions are invested.

<b>Age at initial enrollment</b>	30	<b>Years of service</b>	5 years
<b>Salary</b>	\$50,000	<b>Rate of return</b>	4%

### Portable balance at termination of employment



## Example 2 | Leaving employment at retirement

### Assumptions

- No growth in salary assumed.
- Rate of return is assumed to be the same for SCRS and State ORP for comparison purposes only. Rate of return in example equals the interest rate credited to SCRS account under state law.
- Age at retirement assumes continuous employment from the date of initial enrollment.
- SCRS benefit is an annual benefit for life. Amount is based on selection of maximum retiree benefit option. Selection of a survivor option will result in a reduction to this amount. Post-retirement benefit adjustments may apply.
- State ORP benefit is the accumulated account balance at retirement. Gains and losses will continue to accrue as long as the account remains open. Participant bears investment risk and longevity risk related to account balance and must determine a spend-down strategy for the account balance during retirement.

<b>Age at initial enrollment</b>	30	<b>Years of service</b>	30 years
<b>Salary</b>	\$50,000	<b>Rate of return</b>	4%
<b>Age at retirement</b>	60		

### SCRS

- ✓ \$2,275 per month per life.
- ✓ An SCRS benefit is a monthly benefit for life.

### State ORP

- ✓ \$408,298.35 total account balance.
- ✓ Gains and losses will continue to accrue.
- ✓ You determine how much and when to withdraw your money.



# Selecting your retirement plan

Your employer will initiate the retirement enrollment process. You will need to provide a valid email address to your employer. Then, you will make your plan election when you respond to the Retirement Plan Election email you receive from PEBA. Your benefits administrator can also assist you with your election. If you choose to enroll in State ORP, you will also need to complete the application with your selected service provider to select your desired investment options and designate beneficiaries. The application must be submitted directly to your selected service provider, or by visiting the provider's website to set up your State ORP account. View the [Retirement Enrollment Guide for New Hires flyer](#) for more information.

You have 30 days from your date of hire to make your decision. If you do not select a plan within 30 days, you will automatically become a member of SCRS. You must complete an enrollment election regardless of the plan you intend to select.

If you are a newly elected General Assembly member, you have 30 days after your term of office begins to make your decision. For members elected in the general election in November, terms of office begin on the Monday following the election.

## Electing non-membership

- You must enroll in either SCRS or State ORP unless your position is exempted from mandatory membership by state law.
- Your employer can tell you if your position qualifies for non-membership.
- If you are receiving a monthly benefit as a retired member of SCRS or PORS and you return to covered employment, you must make contributions as a working retired member.
- You are not eligible to elect non-membership if you already have funds on account in SCRS. If you are eligible and choose to elect non-membership, you must select non-membership within 30 days of your date of hire. You will need to provide a valid email address to your employer to initiate the enrollment process, which will include a non-membership option.
- Your decision to elect non-membership is irrevocable.

# Frequently asked questions

## **Can my employer help me choose a plan?**

Your employer cannot tell you which plan is better for you; only you can make that choice. You may contact PEBA if you have questions about the plans, but remember that PEBA employees cannot make your selection for you either.

## **How will investment risk affect my retirement account?**

Investment risk is the uncertainty of how a given investment will perform. With SCRS, the calculation of your monthly benefit amount is not affected by investment performance. With State ORP, you choose how to invest your State ORP account balance. Your balance is affected by investment gains or losses because of those choices. You bear all investment risk related to your State ORP account.

## **How will longevity risk affect my retirement account?**

Longevity risk is the risk that you may outlive your retirement savings. With SCRS, your retirement benefit will be paid as a monthly benefit for your lifetime regardless of how long you live. With State ORP, you may choose from a variety of payment options; however, you bear all longevity risk related to your State ORP account.

## **How many State ORP service providers are there to choose from?**

In accordance with state law, there are four service providers, which are listed on Page 6 of this guide and on our website at [peba.sc.gov/state-orp](https://peba.sc.gov/state-orp).

## **What happens if I elect State ORP but don't make my investment selections?**

If you elect State ORP but do not select investment options through your service provider, your contributions will be deposited into the approved default investment option for the plan.

## **If I elect State ORP, can I change my investment options at any time?**

You may make changes to your investment options through your service provider at any time, subject to your service provider's contractual limitations.

## **If I elect State ORP, can I allocate my contributions to more than one investment option?**

Yes. You may allocate all contributions to your account among any of the authorized investment options available through your service provider.

## **What if I have a problem with my State ORP service provider?**

You or your employer should report any problems concerning service providers to PEBA's Customer Service at 803.737.6800 or 888.260.9430.

**If I elect State ORP participation and stay with the same employer, can I ever join SCRS?**

There is an annual open enrollment period (January 1 to March 1) during which you may irrevocably elect membership in SCRS if it has been at least one year, but not more than five years since your initial enrollment in State ORP. If you do not elect SCRS membership during this time, you will automatically continue your State ORP participation and forfeit your opportunity to elect SCRS membership.

**If I change State ORP service providers, what happens to my account balance?**

If you change service providers during an open enrollment period (January 1 to March 1), your account balance prior to the change will remain with your previous service provider. However, you may transfer a portion or all your State ORP account balance to your current service provider at any time, subject to any contractual limitations of your previous service provider. To do so, contact your former service provider and your current service provider for more information about their required process.

**If I retire under SCRS, may I join State ORP?**

No. If you retire under SCRS, you are not eligible for active membership in SCRS and therefore may not join State ORP.

**How does participating in State ORP or being a member of SCRS affect other retirement plan contributions?**

You may still contribute to supplemental retirement plans, such as the South Carolina Deferred Compensation Program, while participating in State ORP or being a member of SCRS. However, your contribution limits and options may depend on the type(s) of other plans you select. You may want to contact a tax consultant or a financial advisor for more information.

**How do I obtain an account balance for either plan?**

State ORP service providers deliver quarterly statements to participants, which contain the account balance and other account details. You will receive paper statements unless you elect to receive statements electronically. Statements may also be accessed by logging in to your account through your service provider's State ORP website or by calling its toll-free State ORP participant service number. SCRS members may obtain a member statement any time online through [Member Access](#) or by contacting PEBA during business hours.

## Additional resources

**Website | [peba.sc.gov](http://peba.sc.gov)**

- [Member handbooks](#)
- [Navigating Your Benefits](#) series
- [Member Access](#)

**PEBA TV | [www.youtube.com/c/pebatv](http://www.youtube.com/c/pebatv)**

- "It's Your Choice: SCRS Plan vs. State ORP" video
- "State ORP at a glance" video

**Customer Service**

- 803.737.6800 or 888.260.9430
- [peba.sc.gov/contact](http://peba.sc.gov/contact)



# PEBA<sup>SM</sup>

SC Retirement Systems  
and State Health Plan

## South Carolina Public Employee Benefit Authority

*Serving those who serve South Carolina*

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