

LACERS NEWS

**RETIRED MEMBERS
SUMMER 2023**



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A MESSAGE FROM FORMER BOARD VICE PRESIDENT, ELIZABETH LEE

Representing the City of Los Angeles' Active and Retired Members is a responsibility I do not take lightly. As the Board of Administration Vice President, I am proud of the collaboration exhibited by the Board during the first half of the year despite experiencing board member changes. The Board has been fortunate to have been led by an exemplary Board President. We appreciate the outgoing Board President, Nilza Serrano, for all her efforts in delivering dignified retirement benefits for all LACERS Members. We look forward with anticipation to the addition of a new board member, which will permit the Board to continue offering advice and vision for the advancement of the LACERS Plan.



Understanding the impact of inflation on LACERS Members, the Board has worked with LACERS staff in communicating with the Los Angeles City Council about the need for a 2.6% discretionary Cost-Of-Living Adjustment (COLA) for Retired Members. Over the past two years, we have all been impacted by historically high inflation, none more so than our retired Members. The Board believes this is the right thing to do as all our Members have contributed to building the great City of Los Angeles. The Board will continue to advocate and monitor the issues that may directly impact the Board's ability to fulfill its mission and departmental priorities.

It has been an exciting time for the LACERS Board. We look forward to the opportunities that the next half of the year brings, and we know that by working hand in hand with LACERS staff, we will achieve great things for our Members.

In partnership,
Elizabeth Lee

A MESSAGE FROM GENERAL MANAGER, NEIL GUGLIELMO



It's been a season of change and excitement for LACERS during the last several months. We couldn't be more excited to have turned the key and moved into our new headquarters at 977 N. Broadway. Each floor was designed with flexible workstations and open floor plans to allow for

collaboration and co-creation. Our LACERS staff have been incredible during this transition, and meeting their practical needs and well-being is of utmost importance as we continue delivering on our mission of protecting and growing our trust fund and providing retirement services to our Members in an ethical, reliable, and efficient manner. To virtually explore our new Headquarters, you can view our tour video on [LACERS YouTube](#) and read the article published in the [June Alive! newsletter](#).

As I have shared at the LACERS Board Meetings, we are closely monitoring the new ordinance, [Council File 20-1537](#), granting Public Safety Officers enhanced disability and death benefits. Additionally, we are pleased to share that the Board approved the LACERS Budget for Fiscal Year (FY) 2023-2024 on

May 23, 2023. We will continue to share updates on these and other policy and business priority changes during the Board of Administration meetings and in our printed and online publications.

In other news, we are excited to have hosted our first in-person Emerging Manager Networking Forum on June 8th at our LACERS Headquarters and look forward to hosting more in the future. This forum demonstrates our commitment to engaging with the Emerging Manager community as we continue diversifying and adding value to the LACERS portfolio.

Undoubtedly, we continue to keep a watchful eye on the war in Ukraine not only because of its impact on the markets with broader consequences for the global economy but also because of its toll on human life.

At LACERS, we look forward to serving our City family by delivering timely and accurate benefits to all Active and Retired Members. We thank you for your contributions to making Los Angeles a great place to live, work, and play.

With appreciation,
Neil Guglielmo

LACERS is Open for Business!

Veiled in Navy Blue and boasting state-of-the-art equipment, our headquarters at 977 N. Broadway is open to serve you! Our team at LACERS is excited to welcome you back to in-person services and to deliver the highest quality of customer service.

The LACERS Front Desk operates Monday through Friday, 7:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.; no appointment is necessary. Whether attending a LACERS Board Meeting, an in-person Planning for Retirement Seminar, or seeking in-person counseling, we look forward to welcoming you to our new home.

Please note that a current government-issued photo identification or City employee badge is required to enter our building except when attending public meetings of the LACERS Board of Administration.

Next Stop: The LACERS YouTube Channel



Where is one place LACERS Members can go to access information about their retirement benefits and the retirement process at any time? The Official LACERS YouTube channel! Members can find videos about LACERS' annual Health Open Enrollment, survivor benefits, the LACERS Well program, and more on the channel. Head to the [LACERS YouTube channel](#) at youtube.com/laceryoutube to subscribe and join over 1,800 other Members who are notified when new content is posted!

Cost Of Living Adjustment Effective July 1



The LACERS Board of Administration has approved the maximum allowable Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) for eligible LACERS Retired Members and Beneficiaries at 3.0% for Tier 1 and Tier 1 Enhanced Members and 2.0% for Tier 3 Members. The COLA is based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI) for the Los Angeles Area, which has been determined to be 7.4% for 2023.

The maximum COLA is set by the City of Los Angeles Administrative Code at 3.0% for Tier 1 and Tier 1 Enhanced Members and is set at 2.0% for Tier 3 Members. Tier 1 Retirees who have been retired for a full year or more will receive a 3.0% increase. The remaining 4.4% will be banked and applied in the future when the COLA is less than 3.0%. According to LAAC §4.1080.17, the Tier 3 COLA benefit is capped at 2.0%, and there is no banked benefit. Therefore, Tier 3 retirees will receive a COLA of 2.0%.

All Tier 1 and Tier 1 Enhanced Members who retired after June 30, 2022, will receive a COLA of 1/12th of the 3.0% for each full month of retirement completed by June 30, 2023. Similarly, all Tier 3 Members who retired after June 30, 2022, will receive a COLA of 1/12th of the 2.0% for each full month completed by June 30, 2023. The COLA will be included in all eligible Retired Members' and Beneficiaries' July 31, 2023, printed check or direct deposit.

Since the average CPI increase for last year exceeds the COLA caps, the LACERS Board of Administration has requested that the City Council review granting a discretionary COLA to its Members according to LAAC § 4.1023 and § 4.1080.17(c). Should City Council decide to consider this item, it will be agendaized and discussed at City Council. LACERS continues to monitor this situation. Refer to the General Manager's article on page 2 for information on how to provide comments on the discretionary COLA to the City Council.



Securely Upload Your Documents: It's Safe and Easy

Many Members assume that providing documents to LACERS is done in one of two ways: Mailing the documents to our Post Office box or emailing the documents to LACERS. While these methods are generally considered acceptable, they may be subject to delays and interception by a criminal. Fortunately, a safer and easier option is available on LACERS' website via the Secure Document Upload link on the homepage.

Securely uploading your documents directly to LACERS helps you fight against fraudulent attempts by securing the transfer of sensitive data. Uploading documents is safer and easier than mailing or emailing documents. It's faster, too. Documents uploaded through our website go directly to LACERS staff for verification and processing.

When it's time to provide LACERS with your documents, do so directly on our website at lacers.org/secure-document-upload.



2023 Mid-Year Check-Up

Keep your Beneficiaries Current

Make it a habit to review your designated beneficiaries on file with LACERS annually so that your benefits are paid out as intended if you pass away before retirement. You can view your current designations via your MyLACERS account and make changes by submitting a new [Designation of Beneficiary Form](#) found on our website.

Designate a Power of Attorney

What if you experienced an illness, an accident, or another life-changing event that left you unable to sign your own documents or make decisions? Whom would you want to step in and handle your affairs?

A Power of Attorney (POA) is a legal document that allows you to designate someone to act on your behalf when you are unable to do so yourself. LACERS has a special [Durable Power of Attorney](#), which allows you to designate someone to manage your LACERS pension. Safeguard your interests and complete the form today.

Sign Up for Direct Deposit

Don't wait for the mail. Sign up to receive your monthly allowance by direct deposit. You can sign up and change the account on file with LACERS by completing a [Direct Deposit Authorization Form](#) found on our website.

LACERS Medicare Requirement

Retirees **and** their eligible dependents are required to be enrolled in Medicare Part B **at age 65** to qualify for a LACERS medical plan premium subsidy and be eligible for coverage in a LACERS-sponsored medical benefit plan. Medicare Part A is only required if it is free to the Retiree. Learn more about Medicare on our website, lacers.org/medicare.

Create a “Live-It” List in Retirement

In retirement, it's crucial to avoid extended periods of boredom and focus on what matters most to you. Having a game plan of what to do with your time, such as a hobby you have always wanted to try or planning and taking your dream vacation, is a good start. With the many possibilities waiting for you, consider creating a “Live It” list of things to do in retirement to help you stay on task.

The list can range from once-in-a-lifetime trips to making fundamental commitments to stay active or foster better relationships with those around you. It can also include everyday routines such as caring for a pet or loved one. The “Live It” list can also help you become more social in retirement. Because while retirement can be an exciting new adventure for many, it has also been shown to lead some toward feelings of loneliness and isolation. This is because the relationships you made before retiring are no longer being nurtured regularly. Your “Live It” list can help. Scheduling social commitments such as meeting with family and friends, having a walking partner, or putting together a weekly game night with others can protect against the loneliness and isolation that some retirees become susceptible to.

Whatever you might add to your “Live It” list, make sure you are flexible and ready for possible changes. The main goal is to keep an overall positive outlook on what you have accomplished in your career and enjoy the moment you are currently in.



A MESSAGE FROM CHIEF INVESTMENT OFFICER, ROD JUNE



Who hasn't felt the impact of recent price increases? Everything from shopping to eating, energy, and other goods and services are breaking our pocketbooks.

Since the Great Financial Crisis of 2008, the Federal Reserve (Fed) has maintained a relaxed monetary policy,

which has kept the financial markets healthy through lower interest rates. With more borrowed dollars flooding the U.S. economy during the past decade came greater consumption and purchasing power. After many years of an economic boom, price inflation became apparent. To curb this economic woe, the Fed can and has raised interest rates, which

started in March 2022. Higher interest rates tend to slow economic activity, which helps to control price inflation.

We benefit from higher interest rates as we earn more interest on our savings accounts and certificate of deposits at the bank. But no good deed goes unpunished: Higher interest rates are harmful to business profitability. Companies have no choice but to pass those costs onto consumers. Higher prices generally mean reduced demand and, thus, an economic slowdown. An economic recovery, which is what market experts anticipate on the horizon, does take time to be realized, so keep an eye on the actions of the Fed as they try to smooth this rough patch of our economic cycle and get us back on our financial feet again.

Rod June

DIVISION SPOTLIGHT:

Service Retirement Unit

LACERS Members ready to begin their dignified retirement from the City of Los Angeles will undoubtedly get to know counselors from the Service Retirement Unit (SRU). As a retiree, you likely met one or more of these counselors during your retirement process. SRU's primary duty is counseling Members through the retirement process. Utilizing specialized and specific knowledge, SRU staff assists Members in making informed retirement decisions and completing the necessary paperwork to receive their retirement benefits accurately and timely.

SRU duties go beyond the act of retiring Members. SRU also provides in-person pre-retirement counseling and separation from City service counseling, complex pre-retirement estimates, notifies Deferred Vested Members when they are eligible for retirement, reviews Reciprocity benefits and requirements, and provides pre-death counseling to Members facing terminal illness, all while focusing on providing the highest levels of customer service.

Perhaps you know someone nearing retirement. Please let them know that the experts in SRU are available to assist them.

Fun Facts: LACERS Retirees

LACERS would like to acknowledge all Retired Members in recognition of their many years of service to the City of Los Angeles. We also wish all our 22 centenarians a special birthday shout-out as they celebrate their 100th birthdays!

Ever wondered about fun facts relating to LACERS Retirees? Here are a few current facts (as of May 2023) from our collection:

- **Retiree with the highest amount of service credit:** 56.1 years
- **Number of Retirees that have celebrated their 100th Birthday:** 22
- **Youngest Service Retiree:** 51 years old
- **Number of Tier 1 Retirees:** 18,221
- **Number of Tier 3 Retirees:** 7
- **Average age of a LACERS Retiree:** 72
- **Number of LACERS Retirees who reside outside of California:** 2,636

Summertime on a Dime: 5 Ways to Save on Summer Fun

Warmer weather brings more opportunities for fun, but don't let inflation damper your plans for a good time this Summer! The cost of entertainment, gas, food, hotel, etc., can add up quickly. Here are 5 money-saving tips to help keep costs down while you enjoy a Summer to remember.

1. **Cook Outside** - Nothing says Summer quite like having a picnic or barbecue. Eliminating excess heat from cooking inside and using less energy to operate ovens and air conditioning units will reduce your energy bill.
2. **Pack a Snack** - Head to a cool or shady place like a library or park, but don't forget your snack from home. Avoid spending money on high-priced food and drinks or only treat yourself to foods unique to the places you visit.
3. **Do your Research** - Check with your City for free movies, concerts, festivals, and fireworks shows.
4. **Plan a Staycation** - Avoid expensive traveling costs by vacationing at or near home. Overnight camping at a local beach is a great way to enjoy a low-cost staycation.
5. **Pay for activities with cash** - Avoid using credit cards and paying interest.

Keep Your Contact Information Current with LACERS

If you've recently moved or changed your contact information, please complete a [Change of Address Request form](#) at lacers.org/forms to avoid delays in receiving your monthly allowance check, direct deposit statement, 1099-R, and other important documents. LACERS sends important communications about your benefits periodically and provides notification of address changes to your LACERS-administered healthcare insurance providers. If we need to send you essential information, we would like to have every possible means of contacting you.

Stay Alert: Be Aware of Phishing Scams



Phishing is a fraudulent practice where cyber criminals send emails or other messages claiming to be from reputable companies to persuade individuals to reveal personal information, such as passwords and credit card numbers. Phishing is one of the oldest and most used scams by cyber criminals, and unfortunately, retirees are often the targets of such insidious acts.

...recognizing a phishing email or message will help keep your personal information safe from cyber criminals...

According to a 2021 Federal Bureau of Investigation Elder Fraud Report, there were 92,371 victims with a total loss of \$1.7 billion.

Recognizing a phishing email or message will help keep your personal information safe from cyber criminals. Here are a few things to consider when opening and replying to messages you receive that should help you avoid phishing scams:

- Do not share personal information.
- Avoid suspicious links.
- Verify who is sending the message by checking that the email address is valid.
- Never provide passwords.
- If you feel intimidated by an email, this is a red flag.
- Take your time when dealing with these queries.
- Contact the companies directly if in doubt.

At LACERS, our goal is always to safeguard your personal information. For more information on Cybersecurity best practices, visit lacers.org/article/cybersecurity-best-practices. If you ever suspect your personally identifiable information (PII) has been compromised in any way, please contact us immediately by phone at (800) 779-8328.

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Retiree Word Search

Try your skills finding key words from this issue's articles.

Word Bank:

- Broadway
- Phishing
- COLA
- Discretionary
- Investments
- Staycation
- Live It List
- Inflation
- Secure Upload
- Centenarian

Answer key available at lacers.org/newsletter.



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LACERS NEWS

**RETIRED MEMBERS
SUMMER 2023**

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 accommodation to ensure equal access to its programs, services, and activities. For additional information or to make a request for documents in an alternative format, please contact (800) 779-8328 or RTT (888) 349-3996.

THERE'S MORE THAN ONE WAY TO REACH US!

Website:
LACERS.org

Secure Document Upload:
lacers.org/secure-document-upload

Email:
LACERS.services@lacers.org
LACERS.health@lacers.org

Mailing Address:
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Los Angeles, CA 90051-0218

Visit LACERS:
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