

*a. "Political subdivision"* means a geographic area or territorial division of the state which has responsibility for certain governmental functions. Political subdivisions are characterized by public election of officers and taxing powers. The following examples are representative: municipalities, counties, school districts, drainage districts, and utilities.

*b. "Instrumentality of the state or a political subdivision"* means an independent entity that is organized to carry on some specific function of government. Public instrumentalities are created by some form of governmental body, including federal and state statutes and regulations, and are characterized by being under the control of a governmental body. Such control may include final budgetary authorization, general policy development, appointment of a board by a governmental body, and allocation of funds.

*c. "Public agency"* means state agencies and agencies of political subdivisions. Representative examples include an executive board, commission, bureau, division, office, or department of the state or a political subdivision.

*d.* Effective July 1, 1994, the definition of employer includes an area agency on aging that does not offer an alternative plan to all of its employees that is qualified under the federal Internal Revenue Code.

Some employers included are: the state of Iowa and its administrative agencies; counties, including their hospitals and county homes; cities, including their hospitals, park boards and commissions; recreation commissions; townships; public libraries; cemetery associations; municipal utilities including waterworks, gasworks, electric light and power; school districts including their lunch and activity programs; state colleges and universities; and state hospitals and institutions. Any employing unit not already reporting to IPERS which fulfills the conditions with respect to becoming an employer shall immediately give notice to IPERS of that fact. Such notice shall set forth the name and address of the employing unit.

**21.3(2)** Name change. Any employing unit which has a change of name, address, title of the unit, its reporting official or any other identifying information shall immediately give notice in writing to IPERS. The notice shall include the former name, address and IPERS account number of the employing unit, the new name and address of the employing unit and the reason for the change if other than a change of reporting official.

**21.3(3)** Termination. Any employing unit which terminates for any reason shall provide IPERS with the following:

- a.* Complete name and address of the dissolved entity;
- b.* Assigned IPERS account number;
- c.* Last date on which wages were paid;
- d.* Date on which the entity dissolved;
- e.* Reason for the dissolution;
- f.* Whether or not the entity expects to pay wages in the future; and
- g.* Name and address of absorbed employing unit if applicable.

**21.3(4)** Reports of dissolved or absorbed employers. An employing unit that has been dissolved or entirely absorbed by another employing unit is required to file a quarterly or monthly report with IPERS through the last date on which it legally existed. Any wages paid after the legal date of dissolution are reported under the account number assigned to the new or successor employing unit, if any.

**21.3(5)** IPERS account number. Each reporting unit is assigned an IPERS account number. This number should be used on all correspondence and reporting forms directed to IPERS.

**21.3(6)** For patient advocates employed under Iowa code section 229.19, the county or counties for whom services are performed shall be treated as the covered employer(s) of such individuals, and each such employer is responsible for withholding and forwarding the applicable IPERS contributions on wages paid by each employer.

This rule is intended to implement Iowa Code sections 97B.5, 97B.9 to 97B.12, 97B.15 and 97B.41(8) "a."

**581—21.4(97B) Definition of wages for employment during the calendar quarter—other definitions.** Unless the context otherwise requires, terms used in these rules, regulations, interpretations, forms and other official pronouncements issued by IPERS shall have the following meaning:

**21.4(1)** “*Wages*” means all compensation earned by employees, including vacation pay; sick pay; bonus payments; back pay; dismissal pay; amounts deducted from employee’s pay at the employee’s discretion for tax-sheltered annuities, dependent care and cafeteria plans; and the cash value of wage equivalents.

*a. Vacation pay.* The amount paid an employee during a period of vacation.

*b. Sick pay.* Payments made for sick leave which are a continuation of salary payments.

*c. Workers’ compensation, unemployment, short-term and long-term disability payments.*

Wages do not include workers’ compensation payments, unemployment payments, or short-term and long-term disability payments made by an insurance company or third-party payer, such as a trust. Wages include payments for sick leave which are a continuation of salary payments if paid from the employer’s general assets, regardless of whether the employer labels the payments as sick leave, short-term disability, or long-term disability.

*d. Compensatory time.* Wages include amounts paid for compensatory time taken in lieu of regular work hours and when paid as a lump sum. However, compensatory time paid in a lump sum shall not exceed 240 hours per employee per year or any lesser number of hours set by the employer. Each employer shall determine whether to use the calendar year or a fiscal year other than the calendar year when setting its compensatory time policy.

*e. Banked holiday pay.* If an employer codes banked holiday time as holiday or vacation pay, the banked holiday pay will be treated as vacation pay when calculating covered wages. If an employer codes banked holiday pay as compensatory time, it will be combined with other compensatory time and subject to the time limits set forth in paragraph “*d*” above.

*f. Special lump sum payments.* Wages do not include special lump sum payments made during or at the end of service as a payoff of unused accrued sick leave or of unused accrued vacation. Wages do not include special lump sum payments made during or at the end of service as an incentive to retire early or as payments made upon dismissal, severance, or a special bonus payment intended as an early retirement incentive. Wages do not include catastrophic leave paid in a lump sum, recruitment bonuses, tips or honoraria. The foregoing items are excluded whether paid in a lump sum or in a series of installment payments. Enforcement of the exclusion of recruitment bonuses from the definition of covered wages shall commence beginning with payments made on or after July 1, 2002.

*g. Other special payment arrangements.* Wages do not include amounts paid pursuant to special arrangements between an employer and employee whereby the employer pays increased wages and the employee reimburses the employer or a third-party obligor for all or part of the wage increase. This includes, but is not limited to, the practice of increasing an employee’s wages by the employer’s share of health care costs and having the employee reimburse the employer or a third-party provider for such health care costs. Wages do not include amounts paid pursuant to a special arrangement between an employer and employee whereby wages in excess of the covered wage ceiling for a particular year are deferred to one or more subsequent years. Wages do not include employer contributions (excluding employee contributions) to a plan, program, or arrangement whereby the amounts contributed are not included in the member’s federal taxable income.

Employers and employees that knowingly and willfully enter into the types of arrangements described in this subrule without making the appropriate wage adjustments, thereby causing an impermissible increase in the payments authorized under Iowa Code chapter 97B, may be prosecuted under Iowa Code section 97B.40 for engaging in a fraudulent practice. If IPERS determines that its calculation of a member's monthly benefit includes amounts paid under an arrangement described in this subrule, IPERS shall recalculate the member's monthly benefit, after making the appropriate wage adjustments. IPERS may recover the amount of overpayments caused by the inclusion of the payments described in this subrule from the monthly amounts payable to the member or amounts payable to the member's successor(s) in interest, regardless of whether or not IPERS chooses to prosecute the employers and employees under Iowa Code section 97B.40.

*h. Wage equivalents.* Items such as food, lodging and travel pay which are includable as employee income, if they are paid as compensation for employment. The basic test is whether or not such wage equivalent was given for the convenience of the employee or employing unit. Wage equivalents are not reportable under IPERS if given for the convenience of the employing unit or are not reasonably quantifiable. Wage equivalents that are not included in the member's federal taxable income shall be deemed to be for the convenience of the employer. A wage equivalent is not reportable if the employer certifies that there was a substantial business reason for providing the wage equivalent, even if the wage equivalent is included in the employee's federal taxable income. Wages paid in any other form than money are measured by the fair market value of the meals, lodging, travel or other wage equivalents.

*i. Members of the general assembly.* Wages for a member of the general assembly means the total compensation received by a member of the general assembly, whether paid in the form of per diem or annual salary. Wages include per diem payments paid to members of the general assembly during interim periods between sessions of the general assembly. Wages do not include expense payments except that, effective July 1, 1990, wages include daily allowances to members of the general assembly for nontravel expenses of office during a session of the general assembly. Such nontravel expenses of office during a session of the general assembly shall not exceed the maximum established by law for members from Polk County. A member of the general assembly who has elected to participate in IPERS shall receive four quarters of service credit for each calendar year during the member's term of office, even if no wages are reported in one or more quarters during a calendar year.

*j. Wages for certain testing purposes.* Wages for testing purposes to ensure compliance with Internal Revenue Code Section 415 shall include a member's gross wages, excluding nontaxable fringe benefits and all amounts placed in tax-deferred vehicles including, but not limited to, plans established pursuant to Internal Revenue Code Sections 125, 401(k), 403, and 457, and excluding IPERS contributions paid after December 31, 1994, by employers on behalf of employees. Effective January 1, 1996, the annual wages of a member taken into account for testing purposes under any of the applicable sections of Internal Revenue Code shall not exceed the applicable amount set forth in Internal Revenue Code Section 401(a)(17), and any regulations promulgated pursuant to that section. The foregoing sentence shall not be deemed to permit the maximum amount of wages of a member taken into account for any other purpose under Iowa Code chapter 97B to exceed the maximum covered wage ceiling under Iowa Code section 97B.1A(26). Effective January 1, 1998, wages for testing purposes to ensure compliance with Internal Revenue Code Section 415 shall include elective deferrals placed in tax-deferred plans established pursuant to Internal Revenue Code Sections 125, 401(k), 403, and 457 by employers on behalf of employees.

**21.4(2)** Wages are reportable in the quarter in which they are actually paid to the employee, except in cases where employees are awarded lump sum payments of back wages, whether as a result of litigation or otherwise, in which case the employer shall file wage adjustment reporting forms with IPERS allocating said wages to the periods of service for which such payments are awarded. Employers shall forward the required employer and employee contributions and interest to IPERS.

An employer cannot report wages as having been paid to employees as of a quarterly reporting date if the employee has not actually or constructively received the payments in question. For example, wages that are mailed, transmitted via electronic funds transfer for direct deposit, or handed to an employee on June 30 would be reported as second quarter wages, but wages that are mailed, transmitted via electronic funds transfer for direct deposit, or handed to an employee on July 3 would be reported as third quarter wages.

IPERS contributions must be calculated on the gross amount of a back pay settlement before the settlement is reduced for taxes, interim wages, unemployment compensation, and similar mitigation of damages adjustments. IPERS contributions must be calculated by reducing the gross amount of a back pay settlement by any amounts not considered covered wages such as, but not limited to, lump sum payments for medical expenses.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, a back pay settlement that does not require the reinstatement of a terminated employee and payment of the amount of wages that would have been paid during the period of severance (before adjustments) shall be treated by IPERS as a “special lump sum payment” under subrule 21.4(1) above and shall not be covered.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, wages restored following the receipt of contributions forwarded pursuant to 21.6(12) shall be credited to quarterly wages which would have been received but for employer-mandated reduction in hours (EMRH).

**21.4(3)** One quarter of service will be credited for each quarter in which a member is paid covered wages.

a. “Covered wages” means wages of a member during periods of service that do not exceed the annual covered wage maximum. Effective January 1, 2002, and for each subsequent calendar year, covered wages shall not exceed \$200,000 or the amount permitted for that year under Section 401(a)(17) of the Internal Revenue Code.

b. Effective January 1, 1988, covered wages shall include wages paid a member regardless of age. (From July 1, 1978, until January 1, 1988, covered wages did not include wages paid a member on or after the first day of the month in which the member reached the age of 70.)

c. If a member is employed by more than one employer during the calendar year, the total amount of wages paid shall be included in determining the annual covered wage maximum. If the amount of wages paid to a member by several employers during a calendar year exceeds the covered wage limit, the amount of the excess shall not be subject to contributions required by Iowa Code section 97B.11. See subrule 21.8(1), paragraph “h.”

**21.4(4)** If certain conditions are met, employer contributions to fringe benefit programs that qualify under IRC Section 125 may be treated as covered wages. The following paragraphs set forth IPERS’ regulations for determining covered wage treatment and for making wage adjustments when employer-paid contributions have been covered or excluded in violation of the standards set forth below.

a. *Section 125 plans.* For purposes of this subrule, a Section 125 plan means an employer-sponsored fringe benefit plan that qualifies under Section 125 of the federal Internal Revenue Code. Some of the common names for this type of plan are cafeteria plan, flexible benefits plan, flex plan, and flexible spending arrangement.

b. *Elective employer contributions.* For purposes of this subrule, “elective employer contributions” means employer contributions made to a Section 125 plan that can be received in cash or used to purchase benefits under the Section 125 plan. Generally, elective employer contributions that are not subject to special eligibility requirements qualify as covered wages.

c. *Mandatory minimum coverage requirements.* The term “elective employer contributions” does not include employer contributions that must be used to purchase benefits under a Section 125 plan. For example, if an employer provides \$2,500 to its employees to purchase benefits in a Section 125 plan, but requires that all employees must use \$1,000 of that amount to purchase single health coverage, the cost of the single coverage is deducted. In this example, \$1,000 would be subtracted from the \$2,500 provided, resulting in \$1,500 of covered wages.

*d. Uniformity determined coverage group by coverage group.* Iowa Code section 97B.1A(26)“a”(1)“b” states that elective employer contributions shall be treated as covered wages only if made uniformly available and not limited to highly compensated employees. The application of the uniformity concept may be illustrated as follows: Employer Z has two major groupings of employees covered under its cafeteria plan, teaching staff and support staff. Teaching staff is provided \$3,000 to purchase benefits under the Section 125 plan. Every member of the teaching staff must take single coverage costing \$1,500. Every member of the support staff is provided \$2,500 and must also take the single coverage costing \$1,500. Each member of the teaching staff would have \$1,500 treated as covered wages, and each member of the support staff would have \$1,000 treated as covered wages. This would be considered uniform treatment.

Uniformity is not destroyed by the fact that the amount available to members of a coverage group varies because the actual cost of mandatory minimum coverage varies depending on actuarial factors that apply to each individual. For example, assume Employer Z above also required each employee to have long-term disability coverage. In Employer Z’s case, the actual cost of disability coverage will vary from individual to individual. In that case, Employer Z would also deduct the actual cost of the required disability coverage, individual by individual, when determining IPERS covered wages.

Uniformity is not destroyed by reason of the fact that an employer has two groups of employees who, as a result of collective bargaining, have differing entitlements to employer contributions. For example, suppose Employer Y has a contract that provides \$3,500 to each employee to purchase benefits under the Section 125 plan. Every employee can take all the cash by waiving participation in the plan, or can use all or part of the employer contributions to the Section 125 plan. In the collective bargaining process, a new contract is adopted which states that the employer will still provide \$3,500 to each employee to purchase benefits under the Section 125 plan. However, under the new contract, persons who waived participation before April 15 can still waive participation in the plan and take all the cash, but persons who did not waive participation and those hired after April 15 must have single coverage costing \$1,700. Employer Y would be treated as having two groups of employees with different elective employer contribution amounts. The grandfathered group (employees who waived participation before April 15) would have covered wages of \$3,500, and the group consisting of those who did not waive participation before April 15 and new employees would have covered wages of \$1,800.

*e. Highly compensated employee test.* Iowa Code chapter 97B provides that in addition to being uniformly available, employer contributions must not discriminate in favor of highly compensated employees (HCEs). For purposes of this subrule, an HCE is an employee who has reported wages and tips subject to Medicare tax in excess of the IRC 414(q) limit then in effect. IPERS shall apply the HCE limitation as follows: If elective employer contributions are made available to HCEs, the total elective employer contributions made available to the HCE group must not exceed 25 percent of the total elective employer contributions made available under the Section 125 plan to all employees, including the HCEs. If the elective employer contributions available to the HCE group exceed the 25 percent limit (or if it is determined that the Section 125 plan discriminates in favor of HCEs under other IRS rules), elective employer contributions for HCEs shall not exceed the highest amount available to a nonexecutive coverage group of employees covered under such plan. The general application of these principles is illustrated below, using the 2002 HCE limit of \$90,000.

Employer W has a Section 125 plan that provides elective employer contributions totaling \$7,000 to executive staff, \$4,500 to teaching staff, and \$3,500 to support staff. There are no other limits or exclusions that apply. It will be acceptable to include these amounts as covered wages for each member of each group, provided that the total amount of contributions made available to HCEs does not exceed 25 percent of the total elective employer contributions for all employees covered under the plan. If elective employer contributions for the executive staff totaled \$70,000, and total elective employer contributions for the remainder of the staff totaled \$500,000, the HCE percentage of total elective employer contributions would be 12 percent (\$70,000 divided by \$570,000), and all elective employer contributions would be treated as covered wages for all groups. However, if elective employer contributions for the executive staff totaled \$70,000, and elective employer contributions for the remainder of the staff totaled \$200,000, the HCE percentage would be 26 percent (\$70,000 divided by \$270,000), and HCEs' elective employer contributions would be limited to \$4,500 per HCE for covered wage purposes.

*f. Elective employer contributions limited to dual coverage employees.* In some cases, a Section 125 plan provides for what appear to be mandatory employer contributions for health plan coverage, but the terms of the Section 125 plan permit dual coverage employees to waive coverage and receive the employer contributions in cash, if the employee can prove coverage under another health care plan. IPERS shall continue to treat the full amount of employer contributions in such cases as not being IPERS covered wages, even though individual employees with the described dual coverage may actually receive the employer contribution in cash.

*g. Bounties.* In some cases, an employer has a Section 125 plan with employer contributions, and what IPERS refers to as a bounty option. A bounty is an amount that may be elected by all employees, or by a subset of that group, such as employees with coverage under another health care plan, either in lieu of any coverage under the employer's health care plan, or in lieu of family coverage. A bounty is generally set at an amount that is less than the amount that would otherwise be available to purchase benefits under the Section 125 plan. IPERS does not treat bounties as covered wages. The uniformity and nondiscrimination principles described in this subrule do not apply to such benefits.

*h. Corrections for overpayments and underpayments of contributions and benefits caused by Section 125 plan covered wage errors.* IPERS shall use the following guidelines in requiring corrections for overpayments and underpayments of contributions and benefits caused by the erroneous inclusion or exclusion of employer contributions to a Section 125 plan.

Corrections must be made for all active, terminated and retired members, subject to the following limitations:

(1) If elective employer contributions that should have been covered were not covered, wage adjustments shall be filed, and employers shall be billed for all shortages plus interest. Employers shall be entitled to collect reimbursement for the employee share of contributions as provided in Iowa Code section 97B.9. If retirement benefits, death benefits or refunds have been underpaid as a result of the error, IPERS shall, upon receipt of the contribution shortage, make the appropriate adjustments and pay all back benefits.

(2) If employer contributions that should not have been covered were covered, wage adjustments shall be filed, and the appropriate contribution amounts shall be repaid to employers for distribution to the respective employee and employer contributors. If the reporting error caused an overpayment of retirement benefits, death benefits, or refunds, IPERS shall offset excess contributions received against overpayments and shall request a repayment of the remainder of the overpayment, if any, from the recipient.

Wage adjustments, overpayments, and underpayments shall be determined as of the onset of the error, but shall be limited to three years before the beginning of the current contract year for school employers, or current fiscal year for all other covered employers. The foregoing sentence shall apply to unintentional reporting errors. IPERS may go back to the onset of the error, even if the period exceeds three years, if the error is caused by intentional misconduct or gross neglect. Notwithstanding the foregoing principles, IPERS reserves the right to negotiate adjustments with individual employers in special situations, and no negotiated settlement with an employer shall be deemed to constitute a waiver of this subrule, or a binding precedent for other employers.

This subrule shall be in effect until March 1, 2003, except as amended before then.  
This rule is intended to implement Iowa Code section 97B.1A(26).

**581—21.5(97B) Identification of employees covered by the IPERS retirement law.**

**21.5(1) Definition of employee.**

*a.* A person is in employment as defined by Iowa Code chapter 97B if the person and the covered employer enter into a relationship which both recognize to be that of employer/employee. A person is not in employment if the person volunteers services to a covered employer for which the person receives no remuneration. An employee is an individual who is subject to control by the agency for whom the individual performs services for wages. The term control refers only to employment and includes control over the way the employee works, where the employee works and the hours the employee works. The control need not be actually exercised for an employer/employee relationship to exist; the right to exercise control is sufficient. A public official may be an "employee" as defined in the agreement between the state of Iowa and the Secretary of Health and Human Services, without the element of direction and control.

Effective July 1, 1994, a person who is employed in a position which allows IPERS coverage to be elected as specified in Iowa Code section 97B.1A(8) must file a one-time election form with IPERS for coverage. If the person was employed before July 1, 1994, the election must be postmarked on or before July 1, 1995. If the person was employed on or after July 1, 1994, the election must be postmarked within 60 days from the date the person was employed. Coverage will be prospective from the date the election is approved by IPERS. The election, once filed, is irrevocable and membership continues until the member terminates covered employment. The election window does not allow members who had been in coverage to elect out.

Effective July 1, 1994, members employed before that date as a gaming enforcement officer, a fire prevention inspector peace officer, or an employee of the division of capitol police (except clerical workers), may elect coverage under Iowa Code chapter 97A in lieu of IPERS. The election must be directed to the board of trustees established in Iowa Code section 97A.5 and postmarked on or before July 1, 1995. Coverage under IPERS will terminate when the board of trustees approves the election. The election, once received by the board of trustees, is irrevocable. If no election is filed by that date, the member will remain covered by IPERS until termination of covered employment. The election window does not allow a member who previously elected out of IPERS to reverse the decision and become covered under IPERS.

Effective January 1, 1999, new hires who may elect out of IPERS coverage shall be covered on the date of hire and shall have 60 days to elect out of coverage in writing using IPERS' forms. Notwithstanding the foregoing, employees who had the right to elect IPERS coverage prior to January 1, 1999, but did not do so, shall be covered as of January 1, 1999, and shall have until December 31, 1999, to elect out of coverage.

Employment as defined in Iowa Code chapter 97B is not synonymous with IPERS membership. Some classes of employees are excluded under Iowa Code section 97B.1A(8) "b" from membership by their nature. The following subparagraphs are designed to clarify the status of certain employee positions.

(1) Effective January 1, 1999, elected officials in positions for which the compensation is on a fee basis, elected officials of school districts, elected officials of townships, and elected officials of other political subdivisions who are in part-time positions are covered by IPERS unless they elect out of coverage. An elected official who becomes covered under this chapter may later terminate membership by informing IPERS in writing of the expiration of the member's term of office, or if a member of the general assembly, of the intention to terminate coverage. An elected official does not terminate covered employment with the end of each term of office if the official has been reelected for the same position. If elected for another position, the official shall be covered unless the official elects out of coverage.

- (2) County and municipal court bailiffs who receive compensation for duties are included.
- (3) City attorneys are included.
- (4) Judicial magistrates are included unless they elect out of IPERS coverage. Having made a choice to remain in IPERS coverage, a judicial magistrate may not revoke that election and discontinue such coverage.
- (5) Office and clerical staff of a county medical examiner's office are included, and, effective January 1, 1995, county medical examiners and deputy county medical examiners who are full-time county employees are included.
- (6) Effective July 1, 1994, police officers and firefighters of a city not participating in the retirement systems established under Iowa Code chapter 410 or 411 are included. Emergency personnel, such as ambulance drivers, who are deemed to be firefighters by the employer, are to be treated as firefighters. Effective January 1, 1995, part-time police officers are covered in the same manner as full-time police officers. In accordance with Iowa Code section 80D.14, reserve peace officers employed under Iowa Code chapter 80D are excluded from coverage. In accordance with Iowa Code sections 384.6(1) and 411.3, a police chief or fire chief who has submitted a written request to the board of trustees created by section 411.36 to be exempt from chapter 411 is also exempt from coverage under IPERS. The city shall make contributions on behalf of such persons to the international city management association/retirement corporation.
- (7) County social welfare employees are included.
- (8) Members of county soldiers relief commissions and their administrative or clerical employees are included.
- (9) Part-time elected mayors, mayors of townships, and mayors that are paid on a fee basis are covered under IPERS unless they elect out of coverage. All other mayors, including appointed mayors and full-time elected mayors, whether elected by popular vote or by some other means, are covered.
- (10) Field assessors are included.
- (11) Members of county boards of supervisors who receive an annual salary are included. Effective for terms of office beginning January 1, 1999, and later part-time members of county boards of supervisors who receive an annual salary or are paid on a per diem basis are included unless they elect out of coverage.
- (12) Temporary employees of the general assembly who are employed for less than six months in a calendar year or work less than 1,040 hours in a calendar year are included unless the employee elects out of coverage. If coverage is elected, the member may not terminate coverage until termination of covered employment.
- (13) Persons hired for temporary employment are excluded from IPERS' coverage providing that they have not established an ongoing relationship with an IPERS-covered employer. Effective January 1, 1993, an ongoing relationship with an IPERS-covered employer is established when the employee is paid covered wages of \$300 or more per quarter in two consecutive quarters, or if the employee is employed by a covered employer for 1,040 or more hours in a calendar year. Coverage will begin when the permanency of the relationship is established, and shall continue until the employee's relationship with the covered employer is severed. If there is no formal severance, coverage for a person hired for temporary employment who has established an ongoing relationship with a covered employer will continue until that person completes four consecutive calendar quarters in which no services are performed for that employer after the last covered calendar quarter. Notwithstanding the foregoing sentence, no service credit will be granted to a temporary employee who has become a covered employee under this rule for any calendar quarter in which no covered wages are reported unless the employee is on an approved leave of absence. Contributions shall be paid, and service credit accrued, when wages are paid in the quarter after the ongoing relationship has been established.
- (14) Drainage district employees who have vested rights to IPERS through earlier participation or employees of drainage districts are included unless they elect out of coverage.

(15) A county attorney is included as an employee whether or not employed on a full- or part-time basis.

(16) Tax study committee employees are included.

(17) Rescinded IAB 7/22/92, effective 7/2/92.

(18) School bus drivers who are considered to be public employees are included. School bus drivers who are independent contractors are excluded. A determination must be made by IPERS on the facts presented on a case-by-case basis.

(19) Persons who are enrolled as students and whose primary occupations are as students are not covered. Full-time and part-time students who are employed part-time by the educational institutions where they are enrolled as students are not covered. Full-time and part-time students who are employed full-time or part-time by a covered employer other than the educational institution where they are enrolled are covered. Full-time employees who are enrolled as part-time students in the educational institution where they are employed are covered. Full-time and part-time student status is as defined by the individual educational institutions. Full-time and part-time employment status is as defined by the individual employers.

The paragraph above shall not be construed to require or permit IPERS coverage for high school students and students in the lower grades who are concurrently employed (including employment during breaks between quarters, semesters, or annual academic terms) by a covered employer.

(20) Foreign exchange teachers and visitors including alien scholars, trainees, professors, teachers, research assistants and specialists in their field of specialized knowledge or skill are all excluded from coverage.

(21) Members of any other retirement system in Iowa maintained in whole or part by public funds are excluded. Effective July 1, 1996, an employee who is employed by a covered employer other than the employer that makes contributions on the member's behalf to such other retirement system in Iowa shall be a covered employee, unless the employee receives credit in such other retirement system for both jobs.

(22) Members who are contributing to the federal civil service retirement system or federal employees retirement system are excluded. Effective July 1, 1996, an employee who is employed by a covered employer other than the employer making contributions to such federal retirement systems shall be a covered employee, unless the employee receives credit in such federal retirement systems for both jobs.

(23) Employees of credit unions without capital stock organized and operated for mutual purposes without profit are excluded.

(24) Members of the ministry, rabbinate or other religious order who perform full- or part-time religious service for a covered employer are included; but members of the ministry, rabbinate or other religious order who have taken the vow of poverty are included, unless they elect out of coverage.

(25) Any physician, surgeon, dentist or member of other professional groups employed full-time by a covered employer is included; but any member of a professional group who performs part-time service for any public agency but whose private practice provides the major source of income is excluded, except for city attorneys and health officials.

(26) Interns and resident doctors in the employ of a state or local hospital, school or institution are excluded.

(27) Professional personnel who acquire the status of an officer of the state of Iowa or a political subdivision thereof, even though they engage in private practice and render government service only on a part-time basis, are included.

(28) Effective July 1, 1994, volunteer firefighters and special police officers are considered temporary employees and will be covered if they meet the requirements of 581 IAC 21.5(1) "a"(13).

(29) Residents or inmates of county homes are excluded.

(30) Members of the state transportation commission, the board of parole, and the state health facilities council are included unless they elect out of coverage.

(31) Employees of an interstate agency established under Iowa Code chapter 28E, and similar enabling legislation in an adjoining state if the city had made contributions to the system for employees performing functions which are transferred to the interstate agency shall be considered employees of the city for the sole purpose of membership in IPERS, although the employer contributions for those employees are made by the interstate agency.

(32) Persons employed as city managers, or as city administrators performing the duties of city managers, under a form of city government listed in Iowa Code chapter 372 or 420 are included unless they elect out of coverage.

(33) Employees appointed by the state board of regents are covered unless, at the discretion of the state board of regents, they elect coverage in a retirement system qualified by the state board of regents.

(34) School employees who work in additional positions along with normal duties with the same employer will be considered employees until all of their compensated duties to their employer cease. (Examples include teacher/coach; teacher/summer driver's education instructor; and Phase I, II, and III employment.)

(35) "Adjunct instructors" employed by a community college or university are excluded from coverage. Adjunct instructors are persons employed by a community college or university without a continuing contract and whose teaching load does not exceed one-half time for two full semesters or three full quarters for the calendar year. The determination of whether a teaching load exceeds one-half time shall be based on the number of credit hours or noncredit contact hours that the community college or university considers to be a full-time teaching load for a regular full semester or quarter, as the case may be. In determining whether an adjunct instructor is a covered employee, no credit shall be granted for teaching periods of shorter duration than a regular semester or regular quarter (such as summer semesters), regardless of the number of credit or contact hours assigned to that period. If there is no formal severance, an adjunct instructor who becomes a covered employee will remain a covered employee until that person completes four consecutive calendar quarters in which no services are performed for that covered employer after the last covered calendar quarter. Notwithstanding the foregoing sentence, no service credit will be granted to any adjunct instructor who has become a covered employee under this rule for any calendar quarter in which no covered wages are reported unless the adjunct instructor is on an approved leave of absence.

(36) Effective July 1, 1992, enrollees of a senior community service employment program authorized by Title V of the Older Americans Act and funded by the United States Department of Labor are not covered unless: (a) both the enrollee and the covered employer elect coverage; or (b) the enrollee is currently contributing to IPERS. A covered employer is defined as the host agency where the enrollee is placed for training.

(37) Effective July 1, 1994, employees of area agencies on aging are excluded from coverage if the area agency has provided for participation by all of its eligible employees in an alternative qualified plan pursuant to the requirements of the federal Internal Revenue Code. If an area agency on aging does not have or terminates participation in an alternative plan, coverage under IPERS shall begin immediately.

(38) Effective July 1, 1994, arson investigators are no longer covered under IPERS. They were transferred to public safety peace officers' retirement, accident and disability system.

(39) Persons who meet the requirements of independent contractor status as determined by IPERS using the criteria established by the federal Internal Revenue Service are not included.

(40) Effective July 1, 1994, a person employed on or after that date for certain public safety positions is excluded from IPERS coverage. These positions are gaming enforcement officers employed by the division of criminal investigation for excursion boat gambling enforcement activities, fire prevention inspector peace officers, and employees of the division of capitol police (except clerical workers).

(41) Employees of area community colleges are included unless they elect coverage under an alternative system pursuant to a one-time irrevocable election.

(42) Volunteer emergency personnel, such as ambulance drivers, are considered temporary employees and will be covered if they meet the requirements of 581 IAC 21.5(1)“a”(13). Persons who meet such requirements will be covered under the protection occupation requirements of Iowa Code section 97B.49(16) if they are considered firefighters by their employers; otherwise they are covered under Iowa Code section 97B.11.

(43) Employees of the Iowa department of public safety hired pursuant to Iowa Code chapter 80 as peace officer candidates are excluded from coverage.

(44) Persons employed through any program described in Iowa Code section 15.225, subsection 1, and provided by the Iowa conservation corps shall not be covered.

(45) Appointed and full-time elective members of boards and commissions who receive a set salary shall be covered. Effective January 1, 1999, part-time elective members of boards and commissions not otherwise described in these rules who receive a set salary are included unless they elect out of coverage. Members of boards, other than county boards of supervisors, and commissions, including appointed and elective full-time and part-time members, who receive only per diem and expenses shall not be covered.

(46) Persons receiving rehabilitation services in a community rehabilitation program, rehabilitation center, sheltered workshop, and similar organizations whose primary purpose is to provide vocational rehabilitation services to target populations shall not be covered.

(47) Persons who are members of a community service program authorized under and funded by grants made pursuant to the federal National and Community Service Act of 1990 shall not be covered.

(48) Persons who are employed by professional employment organizations, temporary staffing agencies, and similar noncovered employers and are leased to covered employers shall be excluded. Notwithstanding the foregoing, persons who are employed by a covered employer and leased to a non-covered employer shall be covered.

(49) Effective July 1, 1999, persons performing referee services for covered employers shall be excluded from coverage, unless the performance of such services is included in the persons' regular job duties for the employers for which such services are performed.

(50) Effective July 1, 2000, patient advocates appointed under Iowa Code section 229.19 shall be included.

(51) Persons employed by the Iowa student loan liquidity corporation are excluded.

*b.* Each employer shall ascertain the federal social security account number of each employee subject to IPERS.

*c.* Rescinded IAB 7/5/95, effective 8/9/95.

**21.5(2)** The employer shall report the employee's federal social security account number in making any report required by IPERS with respect to the employee.

**21.5(3) to 21.5(6)** Rescinded IAB 7/22/92, effective 7/2/92.

**21.5(7)** Effective July 1, 1996, an employee may actively participate in IPERS and another retirement system supported by public funds if the person does not receive credit under both IPERS and such other retirement system for any position held.

This rule is intended to implement Iowa Code sections 97B.1A(8), 97B.42, 97B.42A, 97B.42B, 97B.49C, 97B.52A and 97B.73B.

### **581—21.6(97B) Wage reporting and payment of contributions by employers.**

**21.6(1)** Any public employing unit whose combined employer/employee IPERS contribution tax equals or exceeds \$100 per month is required to pay the tax on a monthly basis. All other employing units are required to file wage reports and pay the contribution tax on a quarterly basis. When IPERS becomes aware of the correct payment and reporting status of an employing unit, IPERS will send to the reporting official a supply of the employer remittance advice forms.

**21.6(2)** Each periodic wage reporting form must include all employees who earned reportable wages or wage equivalents under IPERS. If an employee has no reportable wage in a quarter but is still employed by the employing unit, the employee should be listed with zero wages. Periodic wage reports must be received by IPERS on or before the last day of the month following the close of a calendar quarter in which the wages were paid.

**21.6(3)** All checks in payment of the total contribution tax shall be made payable to the Iowa Public Employees' Retirement System and mailed with the employer remittance advice to IPERS, P.O. Box 9117, Des Moines, Iowa 50306-9117.

**21.6(4)** For employers filing quarterly employer remittance advice forms, contributions must be received by IPERS on or before the fifteenth day of the month following the close of the calendar quarter in which the wages were paid and at least five days prior to the periodic wage reports filed for the same period.

For employers filing monthly employer remittance advice forms, contributions must be received by IPERS on or before the fifteenth day of the month following the close of the month in which wages were paid and, for the third month of a quarter, at least five days prior to periodic wage reports filed for that quarter.

Any employer filing monthly or quarterly employer remittance advice forms for two or more entities shall attach to each remittance form the checks covering the contributions due on that form. Improperly paid contributions are considered as unpaid.

**21.6(5)** A request for an extension of time to file a periodic wage report or pay a contribution may be granted by IPERS for good cause if presented before the due date, but no extension shall exceed 15 days beyond the due date. If an employer who has been granted an extension fails to pay the contribution on or before the end of the extension period, interest shall be charged and paid from the original due date as if no extension had been granted. IPERS may adopt reasonable additional rules imposing penalties on employers who fail to timely file periodic wage reports on a regular basis.

To establish good cause for an extension of time to file a periodic wage report or pay, the employer must show that the delinquency was not due to mere negligence, lack of ordinary care or attention, carelessness or inattention. The employer must affirmatively show that it did not file the report or pay timely because of some occurrence beyond the control of the employer.

**21.6(6)** When an employer has no reportable wages or no wages to report during the applicable reporting period, the periodic wage reporting document should be marked "no reportable wages" or "no wages" and returned to IPERS. When no employer's wage report is made, the employing unit's account is considered delinquent for the reporting period until the report is filed.

**21.6(7)** Substitute forms may be used if they meet all the IPERS reporting requirements.

**21.6(8)** Employers reporting wages for 50 or more members in a quarter must submit these wages via magnetic media (tape, floppy diskette or cartridge). Noncompliance will result in an administrative charge of \$50 issued as a debit to the employer's account for each quarter of noncompliance.

**21.6(9)** Contribution rates. The following contribution rate schedule, payable on the covered wage of the member, is determined by the position or classification and the occupation class code of the member.

*a.* All covered members, except those identified in 21.6(9) "b" and "c."

(1) Member's rate—3.7%.

(2) Employer's rate—5.75%.

*b.* Sheriffs, deputy sheriffs, and airport firefighters, effective July 1, 2002.

(1) Member's rate—5.37%.

(2) Employer's rate—8.05%.

*c.* Members employed in a protection occupation, effective July 1, 2002.

(1) Member's rate—6.04%.

(2) Employer's rate—9.07%.

*d.* Members employed in a “protection occupation” shall include:

(1) Conservation peace officers. Effective July 1, 2002, all conservation peace officers, state and county, as described in Iowa Code sections 350.5 and 456A.13 shall be considered members in a “protection occupation.”

(2) Effective July 1, 1994, a marshal in a city not covered under Iowa Code chapter 400, or a firefighter or police officer of a city not participating under Iowa Code chapter 410 or 411. (See definitions of employee in subrule 21.5(1).)

Effective January 1, 1995, part-time police officers will be included.

(3) Correctional officers as provided for in Iowa Code section 97B.49B.

Employees who, prior to December 22, 1989, were in a “correctional officer” position but whose position is found to no longer meet this definition on or after that date, shall retain coverage, but only for as long as the employee is in that position or another “correctional officer” position that meets this definition. Movement to a position that does not meet this definition shall cancel “protection occupation” coverage.

(4) Airport firefighters employed by the military division of the department of public defense. Effective July 1, 1994, airport firefighters employed by the military division of the department of public defense shall pay the same contribution rate, and receive benefits under the same formula, as sheriffs and deputy sheriffs. Service under this subrule includes all membership service in IPERS as an airport firefighter.

(5) Airport safety officers employed under Iowa Code chapter 400 by an airport commission in a city of 100,000 population or more, and employees covered by the Iowa Code chapter 19A merit system whose primary duties are providing airport security and who carry or are licensed to carry firearms while performing those duties.

(6) Except as otherwise indicated in the implementing legislation or these rules, for a member whose prior regular service position is reclassified by the legislature as a special service position, all prior service by the member in such regular service position shall be coded by IPERS staff as special service if certified by the employer as constituting special service under current law. No additional contributions shall be required for regular service reclassified as special service under this subrule.

(7) Effective July 1, 1990, an employee of the state department of transportation who is designated as a “peace officer” by resolution under Iowa Code section 321.477.

(8) Effective July 1, 1992, a fire prevention inspector peace officer employed by the department of public safety. Effective July 1, 1994, a fire prevention inspector peace officer employed before that date who does not elect coverage under Iowa Code chapter 97A in lieu of IPERS.

(9) Effective July 1, 1994, through June 30, 1998, a parole officer III with a judicial district of the department of correctional services.

(10) Effective July 1, 1994, through June 30, 1998, a probation officer III with a judicial district of the department of correctional services.

*e.* Prior special rates are as follows:

Effective July 1, 2001, through June 30, 2002:

(1) Sheriffs, deputy sheriffs, and airport firefighters—member’s rate—5.50%; employer’s rate—8.25%.

(2) Protection occupation—member’s rate—6.20%; employer’s rate—9.29%.

*f.* Pretax.

(1) Effective January 1, 1995, employers must pay member contributions on a pretax basis for federal income tax purposes only. Such contributions are considered employer contributions for federal income tax purposes and employee contributions for all other purposes. Employers must reduce the member’s salary reportable for federal income tax purposes by the amount of the member’s contribution.

(2) Salaries reportable for purposes other than federal income tax will not be reduced, including IPERS, FICA, and, through December 31, 1998, state income tax purposes.

(3) Effective January 1, 1999, employers must pay member contributions on a pretax basis as provided in subparagraph (1) above for both federal and state income tax purposes.

**21.6(10)** Effective July 1, 1992, credit memos that have been issued due to an employer's overpayment are void one year after issuance.

**21.6(11)** Effective September 1, 2002, covered employers shall be required to enroll new employees prior to reporting wages for the new employees. Enrollment information shall include, but is not limited to, the following: member's name, social security number, date of birth, gender, and mailing address, and employer identification number. Employers may submit enrollment information for new employees on paper, but are encouraged to switch to magnetic media or Internet enrollment when available. A wage report filed by an employer through the Internet when IPERS makes the option available shall be rejected if the report contains new employees who have not yet been enrolled in the IPERS system.

**21.6(12)** Additional employer contributions from employer-mandated reduction in hours. This subrule applies only to the restoration of covered wages caused by an employer-mandated reduction in hours (EMRH). It does not apply to reductions in base wages, or to permanent layoffs or other termination of employment situations.

*a.* A member may restore the member's three-year average covered wage to the amount that it would have been but for an EMRH by completing the IPERS application for additional employer contributions and payroll deduction authorization.

*b.* A member cannot pay the additional employer contributions described under this subrule in any manner except through payroll deductions.

*c.* The payroll deductions authorization described under this subrule shall be irrevocable, except upon death, retirement or termination of employment. If revoked by the member's death, retirement, or termination of employment, all amounts held by an employer in the member's name shall be forwarded to the member along with the member's final wages.

*d.* A member may obtain a refund of amounts contributed under this subrule as part of a refund of the member's entire account balance, but a member who chooses a retirement allowance shall not receive a refund of any amounts contributed, even if the covered wages being restored are not used in the member's three-year average covered wage.

*e.* A member may have the payroll deductions authorized in this subrule made in more than one installment, but if the amount to be contributed to IPERS is less than \$100, the full amount must be deducted from one payroll payment, if the member has at least \$100 of wages available after other deductions required by law.

*f.* A covered employer must cooperate with an eligible employee's request for payroll deductions using the applicable IPERS forms. Employers collecting the additional retirement contributions authorized in this subrule shall be required to complete a certificate showing the covered wages actually paid to the member in the affected quarters, and the covered wages that would have been reported but for the EMRH.

*g.* Employers shall collect and hold amounts to be contributed in this subrule until the full amount can be forwarded to IPERS in one installment.

*h.* In completing the federal wage reporting forms to be filed with the federal and state tax authorities, an employer shall treat amounts collected and forwarded the same as pre-tax IPERS employee contributions.

*i.* Upon receipt, IPERS shall credit the amounts collected and forwarded in this subrule to the member's account as pre-tax employee contributions. Adjustments to the employee's wage records shall be made as indicated in the employer's certification of covered wages that would have been reported but for the EMRH.

*j.* The collection of contributions under this program shall terminate as of midnight, December 31, 2003. Amounts collected must be forwarded by a covered employer no later than the March 31, 2004, contribution filing deadline.

This rule is intended to implement Iowa Code sections 97B.49A to 97B.49I.

**581—21.7(97B) Accrual of interest.** Interest or charges as provided under Iowa Code section 97B.9 shall accrue on any contributions not received by IPERS by the due date, except that interest or charges may be waived by IPERS upon request prior to the due date by the employing unit, if due to circumstances beyond the control of the employing unit.

This rule is intended to implement Iowa Code section 97B.9.

**581—21.8(97B) Refunds and returns of erroneously paid contributions.**

**21.8(1) Refund formula.** A member is eligible for a refund of the employee accumulated contributions as soon as practicable after the last date the member is considered an employee, provided that the employee has filed the required forms and has not returned to covered employment before the date the refund is paid. Effective July 1, 1999, a vested member's refund shall also include a portion of the employer accumulated contributions. Refund amounts are determined as follows:

*a. Employee accumulated contributions.* Upon receiving an eligible member's application for refund, IPERS shall pay to the terminated member the amount of the employee accumulated contributions currently reported to, and processed by, IPERS as of the date of the refund. Upon reconciliation of the final employee contributions for that member, a supplemental refund of the employee accumulated contributions will be paid.

*b. Employer accumulated contributions.* Effective July 1, 1999, IPERS shall also pay to vested members, in addition to the employee accumulated contributions, a refund of a portion of the employer accumulated contributions. The refundable portion shall be calculated by multiplying the employer accumulated contributions by the "service factor." The "service factor" is a fraction, the numerator of which is the member's quarters of service and the denominator of which is the "applicable quarters." The "applicable quarters" shall be 120 for regular members, the "applicable years of service" under Iowa Code section 97B.49B(1)"b," multiplied by four, for protection occupation members, and 88 for sheriffs, deputy sheriffs and airport firefighters. All quarters of service credit shall be included in the numerator of the service factor. In no event will a member ever receive an amount in excess of 100 percent of the employer accumulated contributions for that member.

In addition to the foregoing provisions, IPERS shall calculate the refundable portion of the employer accumulated contributions as follows:

(1) Upon reconciliation of the final employer contributions for that member, the member's portion of the employer accumulated contributions will be recalculated. IPERS will add the additional quarter(s) of service to the numerator of the service factor. The adjusted service factor will be multiplied by the sum of the original employer accumulated contributions plus the supplemental employer accumulated contributions. The employer accumulated contributions included in the original refund will then be subtracted from that recalculated figure to determine the amount of employer accumulated contributions to be included in the supplemental refund.

(2) The member's portion of employer accumulated contributions shall be determined under subrule 21.8(2) below if the member had a combination of regular service and special service, or a combination of different types of special service.

(3) In making calculations under this subrule and subrule 21.8(2) below, IPERS shall round to not less than six decimal places to the right of the decimal point.

(4) If the applicable quarters under paragraph 21.8(1)"b" for a member employed in a protection occupation change between the date a refund is calculated and the date of any supplemental refund to such a member, the supplemental refund shall be calculated using the applicable quarters in effect at the time the amount of the original refund was calculated.

**21.8(2) Refunds for members eligible for a hybrid refund.** Effective July 1, 1999, the calculation of the member's portion of employer accumulated contributions for a "hybrid refund" shall be as follows:

*a.* A "hybrid refund" is a refund that is calculated for a member who has a combination of regular service and special service quarters, or a combination of different types of special service quarters.

*b.* If a member is eligible for a hybrid refund, the member's portion of employer accumulated contributions shall be calculated by multiplying the total employer accumulated contributions by: (1) the member's regular service factor, if any; and (2) the protection occupation service factor, if any; and (3) the sheriff/deputy sheriff/airport firefighter service factor, if any (except as otherwise provided in this subrule). The amounts obtained will be added together to determine the amount of the employer accumulated contributions payable. In no event will a member ever receive an amount in excess of 100 percent of the employer accumulated contributions for that member.

*c.* Upon reconciliation of the final contributions from a member's employer, the member's portion of the employer accumulated contributions under this subrule will be recalculated. IPERS will add the additional quarter(s) of service to the numerator of the applicable service factor. The adjusted service factor will be multiplied by the sum of the original employer accumulated contributions plus the supplemental employer accumulated contributions. The employer accumulated contributions included in the original refund will then be subtracted from that recalculated figure to determine the amount of the employer accumulated contributions to be included in the supplemental refund.

*d.* If wages reported for a quarter are a combination of regular and special service wages, or different types of special service wages, IPERS will classify the service credit for each quarter based on the largest dollar amount reported for that quarter. A member shall not receive more than one quarter of service credit for any calendar quarter, even though more than one type of service credit is recorded for that quarter.