

495—7.1 (97B) Service credit.**7.1(1) General.**

a. A member shall receive membership service credit for service rendered after July 4, 1953. Service is counted to the complete quarter calendar year. A calendar year shall not include more than four quarters.

b. From July 4, 1953, through June 30, 1965, a member received one quarter of service credit for each quarter in which the member's covered wages totaled at least \$200. From July 1, 1965, through June 30, 1992, a member received one quarter of service credit for each quarter in which the member's covered wages totaled at least \$300. For quarters beginning July 1, 1992, and later, a member shall receive one quarter of service credit for each calendar quarter in which at least \$1 of covered wages is reported.

c. Notwithstanding paragraph "b" above, a member who is on an unpaid leave of absence and who during the period covered by the unpaid leave performs services for the covered employer granting the unpaid leave shall not receive service credit for such services until the employer has reported \$1,000 in two consecutive quarters included in the unpaid leave period, and such service credit shall be granted only with respect to quarters beginning after said two consecutive quarters.

d. A nonvested member who terminates covered employment prior to attaining the age of 55, but who has covered wages in the year in which the member attains the age of 55 shall be treated as a vested member.

e. Notwithstanding paragraph 7.1(1) "d" above, effective July 1, 2012, a nonvested member who is not vested by age as of June 30, 2012, can only become vested by age if the member terminates employment at age 65 or older while in covered employment.

7.1(2) Service credit for persons employed by institutions operating on a nine-month basis. An employee working in a position for a school district or other educational institution which operates on a nine-month basis shall receive credit for the third quarter when covered wages are reported in the second and fourth quarters. A member who was on an approved leave of absence in the second quarter, but who has service credit for that quarter, whether by operation of law or through a service purchase, and who returns to work in the fourth quarter immediately following shall also receive credit for the missing third quarter. In order for the member to receive this service credit, the quarters before and after the third quarter must be reported for the same occupation class code.

7.1(3) Approved leave periods.

a. Effective July 1, 1998, a member's service is not deemed interrupted while a member is on a leave of absence that qualifies for protection under the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA), or would qualify but for the fact that the type of employment precludes coverage under the FMLA, or during the time a member is engaged in military service for which the member is entitled to receive credit under the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act of 1994 (USERRA) (38 U.S.C. Sections 4301 to 4333).

b. Reentry into public employment by an employee on military leave can be achieved if the individual accepts employment with a covered employer. Reemployment may begin anytime within 12 months of the individual's discharge from military service or, if longer, within the period provided under USERRA. Upon reemployment the member shall receive credit for all service to which the member is entitled pursuant to USERRA.

Notwithstanding any provision of Iowa Code chapter 97B or these rules to the contrary, contributions, benefits and service credit with respect to qualified military service will be provided in accordance with Internal Revenue Code Section 414(u).

For reemployments initiated on or after December 12, 1994, a member shall be treated as receiving compensation for each quarter during the member's period of military service equal to the compensation that the member would have received but for the period of military service, as certified by the member's employer on forms supplied by IPERS. The member's deemed compensation during the period of military service shall be taken into consideration in determining a member's make-up contributions, if any, and the member's high three-year average covered wage.

For reemployments initiated on or after December 12, 1994, following a military leave described in this subrule, make-up contributions shall be permitted with respect to employee contributions that would have been made during the period of military service if the member had actually been in covered employment during the period earning the deemed compensation provided for under this subrule. Make-up contributions shall be permitted during the five-year period that begins on the date of reemployment or, if less, a period equal to three times the period of military service.

The member shall request the foregoing make-up contributions (except contributions for periods prior to January 1, 1995, which shall be made as posttax contributions) on forms to be filed with the employer, which shall forward a copy to the system. Make-up contributions shall be made as pretax contributions under Internal Revenue Code Section 414(h)(2). Employers must comply with a member's request to begin make-up contributions during a period not exceeding that described in the preceding paragraph and shall forward said amounts to the system in the same manner as provided for pick-up contributions under Iowa Code section 97B.11A. An election to make up employee contributions under this subrule shall be irrevocable.

c. Effective for leaves of absence beginning on or after July 1, 1998, an eligible member must make contributions to the system in order to receive service credit for the period of the leave (except for leaves under paragraphs "a" and "b" above).

d. Reentry into public employment by an employee on a leave of absence under paragraphs "a" and "b" can be achieved by the employee by accepting employment with any public employer, provided that any interruption between the end of the period of leave of absence and reentry into public employment meets the requirements of the FMLA, USERRA and this subrule.

e. Credit for a leave of absence shall not be granted and cannot be purchased for any time period which begins after or extends beyond an employee's termination of employment as certified by the employer. This includes a certification of termination of employment made by an employer on a refund application. Employers shall be required to certify all leaves of absence for which credit is being requested using an affidavit furnished by IPERS and accompanied by a copy of the official record(s) which authorized the leave of absence. The provisions of this subrule denying credit for leaves of absence in cases in which the member takes a refund shall not apply to employees who were on leaves of absence that began before November 27, 1996, and took a refund before such date. The provisions of the subrule requiring employers to certify all leaves of absence using an affidavit furnished by IPERS shall apply to all requests for leave of absence credit filed after November 27, 1996, regardless of when the leave of absence was granted.

f. Effective July 1, 2008, free service credit will be given in the calculation of death benefits for members who served military duty and met the following conditions:

- (1) Served in a combat zone or hazardous duty area,
- (2) Sustained a service-related injury or disease that prevented the member from returning to IPERS-covered employment, and
- (3) Died of the service-related injury or disease within two years after suffering the injury or disease.