

495—12.1(97B) General.

12.1(1) *Formula benefit versus money purchase benefit.* If a member has four or more complete years of service credit in IPERS, a monthly payment allowance will be paid in accordance with the formulas set forth in Iowa Code sections 97B.49A through 97B.49I, the applicable paragraphs of this chapter and the option the member elects pursuant to Iowa Code section 97B.51(1). IPERS shall determine on the applicable forms which designated fractions of a member's monthly retirement allowance payable to contingent annuitants shall be provided as options under Iowa Code section 97B.51(1). Any option elected by a member under Iowa Code section 97B.51(1) must comply with the requirements of the Internal Revenue Code that apply to governmental pension plans, including but not limited to Internal Revenue Code Section 401(a)(9). If a member has less than four complete years of service credit, the benefit receivable will be computed on a money purchase basis, with reference to annuity tables used by IPERS in accordance with the member's age and option choice.

12.1(2) *Reduction for early retirement.*

a. Effective July 1, 1988, through December 31, 2000, a member's benefit formula will be reduced by .25 percent for each month the member's retirement precedes the normal retirement date, as defined in Iowa Code section 97B.45 excluding section 97B.45(4). The following are situations in which a member is considered to be taking early retirement:

(1) If a member has not attained the age of 65 in the member's first month of entitlement and has less than 20 years of service; or

(2) If a member has not attained the age of 62 in the month of the member's retirement and has 20 years of service.

b. Effective July 1, 1997, a member shall be eligible to receive monthly retirement benefits with no age reduction effective the first of the month in which the member's age on the last birthday and the member's years of service equal or exceed 88, provided that the member is at least the age of 55.

c. Effective July 1, 1991, a member qualifying for early retirement due to disability under Iowa Code section 97B.50 shall not be subject to a reduction in benefits due to age.

d. If a member retires with at least 20 years of service but has not attained the age of 62, the age reduction shall be calculated by deducting .25 percent per month for each month that the first month of entitlement precedes the month in which the member attains the age of 62. If a member retires with less than 20 years of service, the age reduction shall be calculated by deducting .25 percent per month for each month that the first month of entitlement precedes the month in which the member attains the age of 65.

e. Effective January 1, 2001, the age reduction shall be calculated by deducting .25 percent per month for each month that the first month of entitlement precedes the earliest possible normal retirement date for that member based on the age and years of service at the member's actual retirement.

12.1(3) *Early retirement date.* A member's early retirement date shall be the first day of the month of the fifty-fifth birthday or any following month before the normal retirement date, provided that date is after the member's termination date.

12.1(4) *Members employed before January 1, 1976, and retiring after January 1, 1976.* Members employed before January 1, 1976, and retiring after January 1, 1976, with four or more complete years of membership service shall be eligible to receive the larger of a monthly formula benefit equal to the member's total covered wages multiplied by one-twelfth of one and fifty-seven hundredths percent, multiplied by the percentage calculated in subrule 12.1(2), if applicable, or a benefit as calculated in subrule 12.1(6).

12.1(5) *Members employed before January 1, 1976, who qualified for prior service credit.* Members employed before January 1, 1976, who qualified for prior service credit shall be eligible to receive a monthly formula benefit of eight-tenths of one percent multiplied by each year of prior service multiplied by the monthly rate of the member's total remuneration during the 12 consecutive months of prior service for which the total remuneration was the highest, disregarding any monthly rate amount in excess of \$250, plus three-tenths of one percent of the monthly rate amount not in excess of \$250 for each year in which accrued liability for benefit payments created by the abolished system is funded.

12.1(6) *Benefit formulas for members retiring on or after July 1, 1994.*

a. For each active member retiring on or after July 1, 1994, with four or more complete years of service, the monthly benefit will be equal to one-twelfth of an amount equal to 60 percent of the three-year average covered wage multiplied by a fraction of years of service.

b. For all active and inactive vested members, the monthly retirement allowance shall be determined on the basis of the formula in effect on the date of the member's retirement. If the member takes early retirement, the benefit shall be adjusted as provided in subrule 12.1(2).

c. Effective July 1, 1996, through June 30, 1998, in addition to the 60 percent multiplier identified above, members who retire with years of service in excess of their "applicable years" shall have the percentage multiplier increased by 1 percent for each year in excess of their "applicable years," not to exceed an increase of 5 percent. For regular members, "applicable years" means 30 years; for protection occupation members, "applicable years" means 25 years; for sheriffs, deputy sheriffs, and airport firefighters, "applicable years" means 22 years.

d. Effective July 1, 1998, sheriffs, deputy sheriffs, and airport firefighters who retire with years of service in excess of their applicable years shall have their percentage multiplier increased by 1.5 percent for each year in excess of their applicable years, not to exceed an increase of 12 percent.

e. Effective July 1, 2000, the "applicable years" and increases in the percentage multiplier for years in excess of the applicable years for protection occupation members shall be determined under Iowa Code section 97B.49B(1), as set forth in paragraph "f" below.

f. For special service members covered under Iowa Code section 97B.49B, the applicable percentage and applicable years for members retiring on or after July 1, 2000, shall be determined as follows:

(1) For each member retiring on or after July 1, 2000, and before July 1, 2001, 60 percent plus, if applicable, an additional .25 percent for each additional quarter of eligible service beyond 24 years of service (the "applicable years"), not to exceed 6 additional percentage points;

(2) For each member retiring on or after July 1, 2001, and before July 1, 2002, 60 percent plus, if applicable, .25 percent for each additional quarter of eligible service beyond 23 years of service (the "applicable years"), not to exceed a total of 7 additional percentage points;

(3) For each member retiring on or after July 1, 2002, and before July 1, 2003, 60 percent plus, if applicable, .25 percent for each additional quarter of eligible service beyond 22 years of service (the "applicable years"), not to exceed a total of 8 additional percentage points;

(4) For each member retiring on or after July 1, 2003, 60 percent plus, if applicable, an additional .375 percent for each additional quarter of eligible service beyond 22 years of service (the "applicable years"), not to exceed a total of 12 additional percentage points.

(5) Regular service does not count as "eligible service" in determining a special service member's applicable percentage.

12.1(7) *Average covered wages.*

a. "Three-year average covered wage" means a member's covered calendar year wages averaged for the highest three years of the member's service. However, if a member's final quarter of a year of employment does not occur at the end of a calendar year, IPERS may determine the wages for the third year by computing the final quarter or quarters of wages to complete the year. The computed year wages shall not exceed the maximum covered wage in effect for that calendar year. Furthermore, for members whose first month of entitlement is January of 1999 or later, the computed year shall not exceed the member's highest actual calendar year of covered wages by more than 3 percent. Effective July 1, 2007, a member's high three-year average wage shall be the greater of (1) the member's high three-year average covered wage based on covered wages reported through June 30, 2007; or (2) the member's high three-year average covered wage after application of the antispiking control as described in paragraph "c" below.

For members whose first month of entitlement is January 1995 or later, a full third year will be created when the final quarter or quarters reported are combined with a computed average quarter to complete the last year. The value of this average quarter will be computed by selecting the highest covered wage year not used in the computation of the three high years and dividing the covered salary by four quarters.

This value will be combined with the final quarter or quarters to complete a full calendar year. If the member's final quarter of wages will reduce the three-year average covered wage, it can be dropped from the computation. However, if the covered wages for that quarter are dropped, the service credit for that quarter will be forfeited as well. If the final quarter is the first quarter of a calendar year, those wages must be used in order to give the member a computed year. The three-year average covered wage cannot exceed the highest maximum covered wages in effect during the member's service.

If the three-year average covered wage of a member who retires on or after January 1, 1997, and before January 1, 2002, exceeds the limits set forth in paragraph "b" below, the longer period specified in paragraph "b" shall be substituted for the three-year averaging period described above. No quarters from the longer averaging period described in paragraph "b" shall be combined with the final quarter or quarters to complete the last year.

b. For the persons retiring during the period beginning January 1, 1997, and ending December 31, 2001, the three-year average covered wage shall be computed as follows:

(1) For a member who retires during the calendar year beginning January 1, 1997, and whose three-year average covered wage at the time of retirement exceeds \$48,000, the member's covered wages averaged for the highest four years of the member's service or \$48,000, whichever is greater.

(2) For a member who retires during the calendar year beginning January 1, 1998, and whose three-year average covered wage at the time of retirement exceeds \$52,000, the member's covered wages averaged for the highest five years of the member's service or \$52,000, whichever is greater.

(3) For a member who retires during the calendar year beginning January 1, 1999, and whose three-year average covered wage at the time of retirement exceeds \$55,000, the member's covered wages averaged for the highest six years of the member's service or \$55,000, whichever is greater.

(4) For a member who retires on or after January 1, 2000, but before January 1, 2001, and whose three-year average covered wage at the time of retirement exceeds \$65,000, the member's covered wages averaged for the highest six years of the member's service or \$65,000, whichever is greater. For the calendar year beginning January 1, 2001, the six-year wage averaging trigger shall be increased to \$75,000.

(5) Effective January 1, 2002, the computation of average covered wages shall be as provided in paragraph 12.1(7)"a."

For purposes of paragraph 12.1(7)"b," the highest years of the member's service shall be determined using calendar years and may be determined using one computed year. The computed year shall be calculated in the manner and subject to the restrictions provided in paragraph 12.1(7)"a."

c. Antispiking limit on the growth of a member's high three-year average.

(1) Selection of the control year shall give highest priority to calendar years of wages in which there are four quarters of service credit for wages on file not used in the high three-year average wage calculation. For example, if the member receives \$20,000 of wages for a calendar year with four quarters of service credit for wages, and the member also has received \$30,000 of wages for a calendar year with three quarters of service credit for wages, the control year selection process shall give preference to the calendar year with \$20,000 of reported wages.

(2) If there is a calendar year of covered wages outside the high three-year average wage calculation that has four quarters, but the covered wages for that year are less than the covered wages for the fourth highest calendar year of covered wages, and that fourth highest calendar year of covered wages does not have four quarters of service credit for wages, the control year will be the lowest of the high three calendar years of wages with service credits for wages in all four quarters being used in the high three-year average wage calculation.

(3) "Service credit for wages" means service credit recorded for:

1. Quarters in which the member receives covered wages from covered employment.
2. Quarters in which the member is credited with covered wages due to a military leave.
3. Quarters in which the member would have had covered wages but for the application of the IRS covered wage limitations.

4. Quarters in which an employee of a nine-month institution receives service credit for a qualifying leave of absence under 495—subrule 7.1(2).

5. Quarters in which a legislator, legislative employee, or elected official receives service credit for employment.

(4) If none of the calendar years of wages that fall outside of the high three-year average wage calculation have service credit for wages reported in all four quarters, the control year will then be the lowest of the high three calendar years of wages with service credit for wages in all four quarters being used in the high three-year average wage calculation.

(5) If none of the wage years used in the high three-year average wage calculation have service credits for wages reported in all four quarters, the control year will then revert to the highest calendar year of wages not included in the high three-year average wage calculation, regardless of whether there are fewer than four quarters with service credits for wages on file.

(6) For high three-year average wage calculations that utilize the computed year, the control year may be the calendar year from which the “average quarters” used in the computed year are drawn. However, the control year cannot be the computed year, as the computed year will never be a calendar year with service credit for wages in all four quarters.