

RETIREMENT

You may be eligible for a lifetime retirement benefit if you are:

- ▶ at least 50 years old and have been a full-time active or deferred member of *SamCERA* for a least 10 years, **OR**
- ▶ a General Member at any age with 30 years of service, or a Safety Member at any age with 20 years of service. You must apply for retirement using the Retirement Application Form.

If you believe you are disabled from the performance of your job with the County and would like to file for a disability benefit, you must do so within **120 days** of your termination date. You must be substantially unable to perform the essential, usual and customary duties of your job and your condition must be permanent and stationary. You must contact *SamCERA* and request an appointment for disability information.

You must inform SamCERA of any changes in your marital status that took place during your employment with the County. Changes to marital status may affect refunds, rollovers, and the distribution of your retirement benefits.

San Mateo County Employees' Retirement Association

100 Marine Pkwy, Ste 125
Redwood Shores, CA 94065

Phone: 650.599.1234

Toll Free: 1.800.339.0761

Fax: 650.591.1488

Website: www.samcera.org

Email: samcera@samcera.org



San Mateo County Employees' Retirement Association (*SamCERA*)

**YOUR OPTIONS AND RIGHTS
WITH RESPECT
TO YOUR RETIREMENT
CONTRIBUTIONS
AFTER YOU TERMINATE
COUNTY EMPLOYMENT**

Now that you have **terminated your employment with the County of San Mateo**, you have a number of financial decisions to make. Reviewing this information and promptly filing the attached Disposition of Retirement Contributions form are the first steps in making an informed decision.

If you have **less than five years** of service credit, are permanently separating from the County, and you are not going to work for a reciprocal agency, you have three options:

1) ROLLOVER. Tax law allows you to roll your *SamCERA* pre-tax contributions and interest into an IRA or other “qualified plan.” If you select a direct rollover, no taxes will be withheld or due. Taxes will be deferred until you actually withdraw the funds. You may directly roll the funds over a qualified plan of your choice. Roth IRAs are **NOT** eligible for rollovers.

2) REFUND. You may elect a direct refund of your contributions and interest. However, the IRS requires *SamCERA* to withhold and submit 20% of all previously untaxed contributions and interest. You might also be liable for a 10% federal premature distribution tax penalty for funds withdrawn from your tax deferred retirement account prior to age 59 1/2.

The State of California requires *SamCERA* to withhold an additional 10% of the Federal Withholding to be credited against your State Income Tax. You may want to discuss your tax liability with a tax advisor before choosing this option.

If you withdraw your contributions, you automatically terminate your membership with SamCERA and give up any and all rights you may have had to receive benefits.

3) LEAVE ON DEPOSIT. You may leave your funds with *SamCERA*. They will accrue interest until you take further action, at which time you may choose to rollover or take a refund of your contributions.

SamCERA provides coordinated retirement benefits with most public retirement programs in California. This is known as **RECIPROCITY**. If you move from one cooperating agency to another within 180 days, your contribution rate will be based on your age when you entered the first agency, and your final compensation for calculating your retirement benefit will be based on the highest average compensation you earned while working with any of the cooperating agencies. You may be eligible for reciprocity if you move to a reciprocal agency within 180 days after

leaving *SamCERA* and if you notify both your old and new retirement systems about your eligibility for reciprocity. If you establish reciprocity, you must leave your contributions on deposit with *SamCERA* while you are employed by the reciprocal agency. **Reciprocity** may be an important consideration in your career planning. For more information on reciprocity, please refer to *SamCERA's Understanding Reciprocity* booklet.

If you were a member of Plan 1, 2 or 4, your retirement benefit is vested if you have five years (10,400 hours) of service credit in SamCERA, or a combination of your SamCERA service along with reciprocal service equaling 10,400 hours.

If you are vested, but not eligible or not ready to apply for retirement, you may apply for a **DEFERRED RETIREMENT**. You will not be able to retire, however, until you meet the criteria in the retirement section of this pamphlet. You may withdraw your contributions and interest at any time by submitting a written request. If you return to *SamCERA* covered employment within 180 days of your termination date, you may be eligible to return at your original entry age for contribution rate and Plan status.