

San Mateo County Employees' Retirement Association | Spring 2021

SAMCERA

TIMES

RETIREE & BENEFICIARY NEWSLETTER



2021 COLA

Find out what your plan will receive this year & when you'll start to receive it

Estate Planning

Upcoming free, online classes explain wills, trusts, & estate planning

Tax Season

Learn how to view & print your 1099-R forms & update your withholdings

From the CEO



The past year has been difficult and provided many challenges for everyone around the globe. The pandemic, the wildfires in California, and so much more have weighed heavily on many of us.

Here at SamCERA, we've had to rethink how we do business. Since March of last year, we modified our operations with the safety and well-being of our members and staff in mind. For us, this meant taking a more virtual approach to our lines of service, meetings, and daily business. Despite the changes, our staff has remained committed to providing continued benefits and the ongoing services that our members rely on.

While the pandemic required us to modify the way we conduct business, we have continued to progress with our strategic initiatives such as providing improvements to our online web member portal. I look forward to sharing an exciting refresh of our mobile app in the near future.

The Board of Retirement is also continuing to strive in its priorities from its strategic plan, which includes:

- Balancing the complexity of the investment program with the expected returns and risks inherent from more traditional stocks and bonds;
- Preparing for future periods in which contributions into the plan are lower while outflows of the plan are higher (due to larger numbers of retirements and longer longevity of retiree life expectancies and lower employer contributions.); and
- Enhancing risk management of the investment program, data security and recovery capabilities and financial accounting.

The Board, together with staff, will continue to navigate these extraordinary times to fulfill the mission and goals set forth for our membership.

We appreciate your continued support and understanding throughout the pandemic. Although our office remains closed to visitors, on the next page you'll find alternative ways to get in touch with us. And as soon as it is appropriate, we plan to open our doors again.

Scott Hood



Cover Photo: Venice Beach, Half Moon Bay. Courtesy of County of San Mateo

SamCERA Times is published for members of the San Mateo County Employees' Retirement Association. SamCERA benefits are governed by the County Employees Retirement Law of 1937, and the California Public Employees' Pension Reform Act of 2013; therefore, any discrepancies between the law and the information in this newsletter will be resolved in accordance with the law.

The material contained in this newsletter is for informational purposes only and does not constitute legal advice.

Questions or comments? Email communications@samcera.org.

We're Available to Help

Our offices are currently closed to visitors, but there are several ways we can assist you when we can't meet in person:

- Call SamCERA at 650-599-1234 or 800-339-0761 during normal business hours (Monday - Thursday, 7am to 6pm)
- Schedule a phone or video appointment by emailing samcera@samcera.org
- Submit documents by mail, fax, email, or securely on the MySamCERA member portal. If you prefer, you can also place them in the locked drop box in the lobby outside of our office.
- Send a secure message on MySamCERA



Visit our website to view the latest information about our services.

Looking for information about retiree health benefits? Please contact Human Resources directly.

ARE YOU A MEMBER OF SCORPA?

The San Mateo County Retired Personnel Association (SCORPA) invites all SamCERA retirees to join. SCORPA was established in 1975 to provide a representative voice for all San Mateo County retirees. As a SCORPA member, you'll receive a bi-monthly newsletter and a supplemental benefits booklet. For more information about membership and annual dues, please email: scorpa09@yahoo.com.

Attend a Financial Planning Class

Join us for a free, online financial planning class! These upcoming classes provide information about wills and trusts in estate planning, as well as probate and estate taxation.

The Estate Planning Process

April 21, 2021

12:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.

Creating and Managing Wills and Trusts

June 9, 2021

2:00 p.m. - 4:00 pm.



SamCERA has partnered with Financial Knowledge for over 10 years to provide members with comprehensive, unbiased financial education. Each course provides you with a 40+ page workbook which includes content, exercises, and additional resources and websites to further your education on the topic. All of your Financial Knowledge instructors have their CFP designation, and at least 15 years of experience working in the financial service industry.

Why wait? Register today! More details and a full schedule of classes are available at:

www.samcera.org/classes. To register for a class, please email: communications@samcera.org.

MEMBER COMMUNICATION

Sometimes it can be difficult to determine if the information you receive is legitimate. SamCERA uses various methods to communicate with members. Below are common ways we send information:

- **Email** - Mass emails from SamCERA are always sent from the email address: samcera@samcera.org. Adding this email to your address book will help prevent it from being marked as spam.
- **Mail** - Occasionally, you may receive correspondence from SamCERA in the mail. Mailings will include the SamCERA logo or letterhead.
- **Website** - SamCERA has only one public website: www.samcera.org to provide general information to members and the public. The secure member portal can be found at: www.mysamcera.org.
- **Social Media** - SamCERA does not send direct messages or reply to comments on social media.

If you have questions or concerns about any communications that you've received from SamCERA, please email: samcera@samcera.org or call us at 650-599-1234 or 800-339-0761.

2021 Cost-of-Living Adjustment

Beginning with the April benefit payment, eligible retirees and beneficiaries who retire on or before April 1, 2021 will receive a cost-of-living adjustment (COLA). The chart below shows the percentage of COLA increase that eligible members will receive based on their retirement plan.

Retiree or Beneficiary's Plan Type	Date of Retirement	2021 COLA %
Plan 1 - General and Safety	On or before 4/1/2021	1.5%
	On or before 4/1/2019	3.0%*
Plan 1 - Probation	4/2/2019 - 4/1/2020	2.0%*
	4/2/2020 - 4/1/2021	1.5%
Plan 2 - All Members	On or before 4/1/2021	1.5%
Plan 3	n/a	n/a
Plan 4, 5, 6, 7 - All Members	On or before 4/1/2021	1.5%

The annual COLA is calculated by SamCERA's actuary, and the increase or decrease is set by the Board of Retirement and certain plan limits. The COLA is effective April 1, and any adjustments will appear on the April benefit paid at the end of the month. Learn more about how your COLA is calculated on our website at: www.samcera.org/cost-living-adjustment-cola.

* Due to COLA Bank.

Why Should You Use MySamCERA?

Access to your retirement account is easy and convenient with MySamCERA, the secure member portal for SamCERA members. When you need access to your account, MySamCERA makes it available on a computer or your phone. It just takes a few clicks to look up your benefit payment details, change your withholdings, contact us securely, and more.

Create an account today at www.mysamcera.org!

With MySamCERA, you'll be able to:

- [View your benefit statements](#)
- [View tax withholding and other deductions](#)
- [Submit forms](#)
- [Review Beneficiaries](#)
- [Send secure messages to SamCERA](#)

Your 2020 Tax Forms Are Available Online

If you need to view or print a copy of your 1099-R form, it is available online at www.mysamcera.org. After signing into your MySamCERA account, select **"My Documents"** on the navigation menu, and from there you have the option to view or print a copy. Current and past forms are also available on the **"My 1099's"** tab.

Keep your Address Up to Date!

It's important that we have your current address on file for you to receive important information from us, such as your 1099-R. You can update your contact information by logging into the MySamCERA member portal. Go to the **"My Information"** section on the home screen and click on the **"Change"** button. From there, you'll be able to update your email and mailing address. Address change forms are also available on our website at www.samcera.org/forms.

DID YOU KNOW?

You can change your tax withholding election anytime throughout the year by completing a new Tax Withholding form (available on our website) or online on the MySamCERA member portal. Requests to increase or decrease your withholding that are received by the 15th of the month are effective in that same month. Requests received after the 15th become effective the following month. Find more information online at www.samcera.org/tax-information.

If you need assistance determining which withholding election is best for you, consult with a professional tax advisor. SamCERA does not provide tax advice.

2020 Popular Annual Financial Report

The 2020 Popular Annual Financial Report (PAFR) is available on our website. This report provides financial and investment information about the retirement fund. The Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) provides more in-depth details about the fund, and is also available online.

To view these reports, visit:
www.samcera.org/financial-reports.

Easy, Online Access to Your Benefit Statement

Benefit statements are available to view and print online at your convenience. These statements provide the amount deposited in your account each month, along with any itemized deductions.

You will receive an email notification when a new statement is available on the MySamCERA member portal. Once logged in, click on the **"My Documents"** tab to view and print your statements.



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RETIREE PAYDAYS

March 31, 2021	August 31, 2021
April 30, 2021	September 30, 2021
May 28, 2021	October 29, 2021
June 30, 2021	November 30, 2021
July 30, 2021	December 31, 2021

HOLIDAY CLOSURES

Memorial Day	May 31, 2021
Independence Day	July 5, 2021
Labor Day	September 6, 2021
Columbus Day/ Indigenous Peoples' Day	October 11, 2021
Veteran's Day	November 11, 2021
Thanksgiving	November 25-26, 2021



CONTACT SAMCERA

Office Hours

Monday - Thursday,
7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Address

100 Marine Parkway, Suite 125
Redwood City, CA 94065

Phone

650-599-1234 or 800-339-0761

Email

samcera@samcera.org

Website & Member Portal

www.samcera.org
www.mysamcera.org