



**SFERS**

San Francisco Employees' Retirement System

# *milestones*

Volume 10 ~ Issue 1 July 2014

## *A Message From The Executive Director*



### **Moving Forward Together**

As I enter into my third year as SFERS' Executive Director, I am

pleased to assure you that with the strong support of the City, under the fiduciary guidance of the Retirement Board, and with the dedication of the SFERS staff, your retirement system is financially sound and well-positioned to pay the promised benefits to you and your beneficiaries.

Our mission is to secure, protect and prudently invest the SFERS Trust, to administer mandated benefit programs, and to provide promised benefits to retired members and their beneficiaries. Today we serve more than 54,000 members – over 28,000 active members and over 26,000 retired members and beneficiaries. We know that you count on the Retirement Board and staff to safeguard the SFERS Trust assets which include your contributions, as well as City contributions and investment earnings. We remain singularly dedicated to our mission.

As our 2013-14 Plan Year concludes, the SFERS Trust has grown over the past year from a market value of \$17 billion as of June 30, 2013, to \$19.4 billion as of May 31, 2014. SFERS' investment returns since the 2008-2009 financial market downturn have an annualized average of over 12%.

### **Basic COLA effective July 1, 2014**

At its February 12, 2014 regular meeting, the Retirement Board approved a 2% Basic cost-of-living adjustment for all qualified SFERS retirees who retired prior to July 2, 2014. This Charter-provided COLA is based on increases and decreases in the Bay area Consumer Price Index (CPI). For 2013, the Bay area CPI increased 2.58% which provided up to a 3% cost-of-living adjustment. However, the Charter limits the Basic COLA to 2%. The additional 1% of the CPI increase will be added to the COLA bank to fund future Basic COLAs.

The entire SFERS staff appreciates the opportunity to provide quality service to our members and look forward to our continued success in growing and securing our SFERS Trust.

Respectfully,

**Jay Huish**  
Executive Director

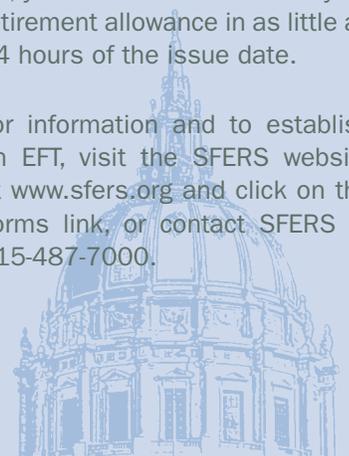


### **Direct Deposit is the Way to Go**

Would you like to have access to your retirement allowance on or around the first day of each month? SFERS strongly encourages those retirees and beneficiaries who have not yet set up an Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) for their SFERS retirement allowance visit the SFERS website to download and complete an EFT form for future monthly retirement allowances.

An EFT to your bank account assures that your monthly benefits will be available to you in a timely manner regardless of a disruption or delay in mail delivery. Electronic transfers generally post to your bank account on or before your bank's first business day following the release of funds to your bank. So, you could have access to your retirement allowance in as little as 24 hours of the issue date.

For information and to establish an EFT, visit the SFERS website at [www.sfers.org](http://www.sfers.org) and click on the Forms link, or contact SFERS at 415-487-7000.



## FAQ's (Frequently Asked Questions)

**Q: As a retired member, if my status changes from Domestic Partner to married with the same partner, is my spouse (former partner) eligible to receive a survivor benefit?**

A: The provisions for survivor benefits under the SFERS Plan do not make a difference between the domestic partner and spousal relationship. However, if you are a member under the provisions of SFERS New Plans, you must be a domestic partner/spouse at least one full year prior to retirement and the domestic partner/spouse on the date of the member's death to qualify for a monthly continuation benefit. If you are a member under the provisions of SFERS Old Plans, you must be the domestic partner/spouse at least one full year immediately prior to the member's date of death and the domestic partner/spouse on the member's date of death to qualify for a monthly continuation benefit. Please note that the spouse must also be named as primary beneficiary to qualify for a continuation benefit.

**Q: Will I get a COLA every year that I am retired?**

A: Generally yes. Retired members may receive a Basic COLA—an automatic adjustment to your monthly retirement allowance—effective July 1st of each year and payable to eligible members on the check dated July 31st. You may find additional information about COLA provisions on the SFERS website.

**Q: Can I return to work while I'm retired without affecting my SFERS benefit?**

A: Generally, yes. Once you have retired, if you return to work for the City, you are limited to working no more than 960 hours in any fiscal year without affecting your pension benefit. However, you can work for any employer other than the City with limited restrictions. Certain employment restrictions apply to disability retirees. For additional information about "work after retirement" provisions, contact the Retirement System.

## Board Approves 2% Basic COLA

At the February 12, 2014 meeting, the SFERS Retirement Board approved the Basic Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) for qualified miscellaneous retirees and New Plan Safety retirees or their entitled beneficiaries. Effective July 1, 2014, in accordance with Charter Section §A8.526, qualified SFERS members who retired on or before July 1, 2014, will receive a cost of living adjustment in the amount of 2% based on their June 30, 2014 gross SFERS retirement allowance, payable on the check dated July 31, 2014. If you are eligible to receive the Basic COLA increase, you will notice an increase in the gross amount of your July 31, 2014 allowance when compared to the gross amount of your June 30, 2014 allowance.

Also, at the February meeting, the Retirement Board determined that there will be no Supplemental COLA payable effective July 1, 2014. According to the July 1, 2013 annual actuarial valuation, the Fund did not meet the requirement mandated in the Charter necessary to pay for the Supplemental COLA, as the Fund remains less than fully funded with a funded status of 84.1% as measured by the market value of assets.

*"There's never enough time to do all the nothing you want."*

- Bill Watterson, Calvin and Hobbes

## New and Improved SFERS Website!

*Easier Navigation, More Tools, Safe & Secure...*

SFERS is excited to announce the launch of a new and improved website allowing 24/7 access to your SFERS individual account data! And for the first time, if your retirement allowance is directly deposited to your bank account, you can access your monthly advice notices through the new SFERS Member-Only Portal, mySFERS. You will also have access to your annual 1099R Tax Form.

Beginning September 15, 2014, you will have the ability to view, download

and print a copy of your monthly advice notice or, your 2013 1099R Tax Form on the SFERS website using mySFERS. Registration is secure and simple. To register, visit the SFERS website at [www.sfers.org](http://www.sfers.org), and click on the "Register" link in the blue box located in the top left corner of the Home page. For step-by-step registration instructions, click on the link "Why Register?" and follow the instructions for registration.

## Confirm Continuant Status

In July, we will be mailing a **Certification of Continued Eligibility to Receive SFERS Survivor Continuation Benefits Form** to all qualified surviving spouses or domestic partners of a deceased SFERS member. The certification requests that you certify your eligibility to receive benefits as a continuant under provisions of the San Francisco Charter. It is essential that you sign and return the form to the Retirement System by the deadline indicated in the letter.

Continuants who do not return a notarized certification by the deadline are subject to suspension of benefits, effective the

month following the deadline. If you are unable to have the certification notarized, you can sign the certification in our office witnessed by a SFERS staff member. You will need to bring the form along with a picture ID (Driver's License, passport, etc.) with you to our office located at 30 Van Ness Avenue, Ste. 3000, San Francisco, CA.

If you are a continuant and you do not receive a Certification of Continued Eligibility to Receive SFERS Survivor Continuation Benefits form by September 1, 2014, please contact the Retirement System at 415-487-7000.



## Important Dates

It's not always easy to remember when COLAs are paid, when to report a check lost or stolen, or when to expect your 1099R tax form. For your convenience, SFERS is providing a brief guide to help you keep track of important dates regarding your monthly retirement allowance.



<b>Pension Checks Mailed:</b>	Always on the last day of the month.
<b>EFT Funds Credited:</b>	First business day of the month for your financial institution. Monthly allowances deposited directly into your bank are transmitted electronically to your bank on the last day of the month (e.g. if the last day falls on a weekend, the funds are transmitted on Friday).
<b>Report a Check lost or Stolen:</b>	Tenth day of the month following the mailing (e.g. August 10th if July 31st check is lost).
<b>Basic COLA paid:</b>	July 31st allowance, effective July 1.
<b>Basic COLA Paid (Safety Old Plans):</b>	October 31st allowance. May be effective at any time during the year.
<b>Supplemental COLA paid:</b>	In years when a supplemental COLA is paid, it is paid in the February 28th allowance, retroactive to the previous July 1.
<b>1099R Released:</b>	Last week in January for tax year ending 12/31 of prior year.
<b>Last Check for Tax Year:</b>	November 30 (year-to-date earnings and tax deductions data that will appear on your 1099R).

## SFERS Board Members

### President

Victor Makras  
*Appointed Member*

### Vice President

Malia Cohen  
*Member appointed by the Board of Supervisors*

Leona Bridges  
*Appointed Member*

Joseph D. Driscoll, CFA  
*Elected Member*

Herb Meiberger, CFA  
*Elected Member*

Wendy Paskin-Jordan  
*Appointed Member*

Brian Stansbury  
*Appointed Member*

## Meeting Schedule:

Meetings are held on the second Wednesday of every month.

Meetings begin at 2:00 pm at the SFERS Office 30 Van Ness Avenue, Suite 3000 (3rd Floor).

Meetings are open to the public.

## Agendas/Minutes:

[www.sfers.org/Board Minutes and Agendas](http://www.sfers.org/BoardMinutesandAgendas)

## SFDCP

### Stable Value Rates:

**07/01/14 – 09/30/14 1.20%**

04/01/14 – 06/30/14 1.20%

01/01/14 – 03/31/14 1.20%

10/01/13 – 12/31/13 1.40%

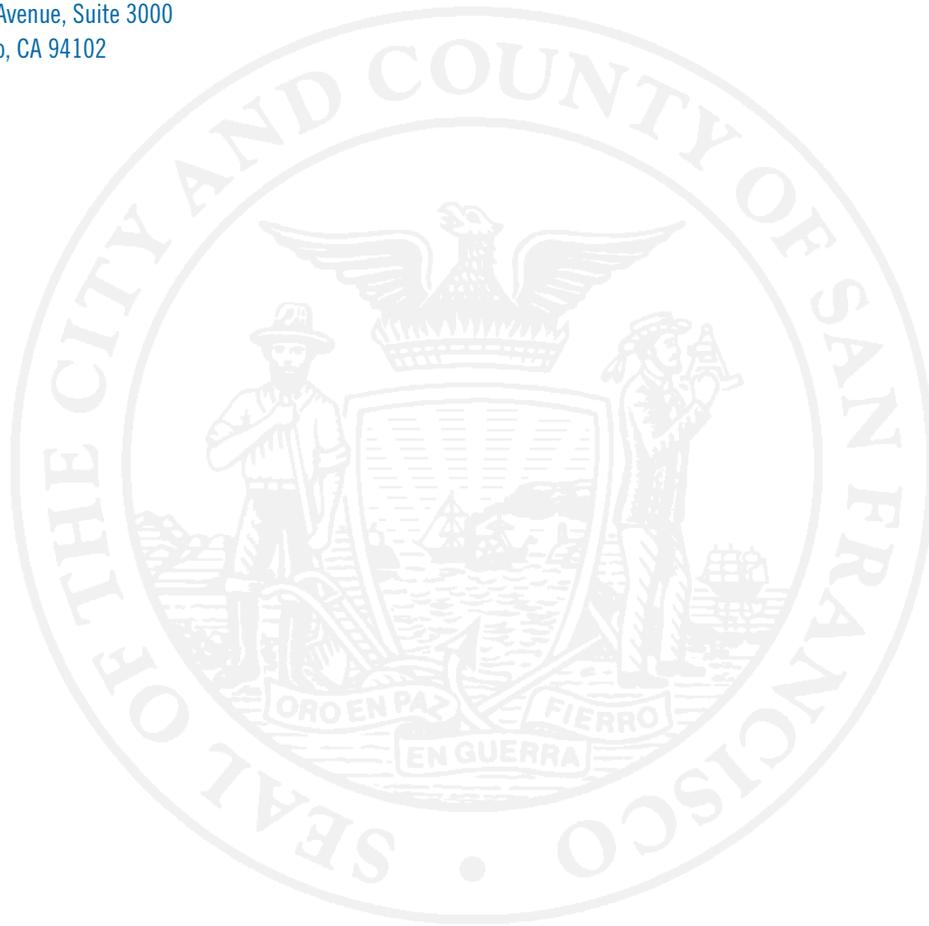


# SFERS

San Francisco Employees' Retirement System

## *Milestones*

30 Van Ness Avenue, Suite 3000  
San Francisco, CA 94102



### Contact Us:

30 Van Ness Avenue  
Suite 3000 (3rd Floor)  
San Francisco, CA 94102

Office Hours:  
8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Telephone: (415) 487-7000  
Out of Area: 1 (888) 849-0777

Website: [www.sfers.org](http://www.sfers.org)

### Organizations of Interest

Health Service System  
Social Security Administration  
The Retired Employees of the  
City and County of San Francisco  
CalPERS  
SFDCP (Prudential)

### Internet Link

[www.myhss.org](http://www.myhss.org)  
[www.ssa.gov](http://www.ssa.gov)  
[www.reccsf.org](http://www.reccsf.org)  
[www.calpers.ca.gov](http://www.calpers.ca.gov)  
[www.sfdcp.org](http://www.sfdcp.org)

### Phone

(415) 554-1750  
1 (800) 772-1213  
(415) 681-5949  
1 (888) 225-7377  
1 (888) SFDCP4U  
1 (888) 733-2748