



# Retirement Planning CHECKLIST

It's never too early to plan for retirement, but you may not know where to start. Use this checklist throughout your career to help you get the most out of your planning.

## 5+ Years Before Retirement

- Attend an Early Career workshop.
- Update your beneficiary information whenever necessary.
- Initiate service purchases so that you have time to pay them off.
- Review your Annual Benefit Statements.
- Consider starting a supplemental savings plan (e.g. a 457(b) or 401(k)).
- Submit divorce documentation (if applicable).

## 2 Years Before Retirement

- Calculate your own retirement benefit estimate online using the Retirement Benefit Estimator at MCERA.org.
- Attend a Late Career workshop.
- Initiate or try to complete any remaining service credit purchases.

## 1 Year Before Retirement

- Consider possible retirement dates.
- Calculate your own retirement benefit estimate online using the Retirement Benefit Estimator at MCERA.org.
- Price and compare medical coverage and/or employer options.
- Get information on Social Security benefits, if eligible.

## 6 Months Before Retirement

- Select your retirement date.
- Request a formal retirement benefit estimate and customized application from MCERA.
- Gather or order all of the documents you will need for retirement:
  - Birth certificate for each beneficiary (or copy of trust agreement)
  - Your marriage license or partnership registration
- Contact appropriate agencies or advisors to determine tax withholding.

## 1-2 Months Before Retirement

- Contact MCERA's Benefits Team to get your remaining questions answered, or schedule an appointment if necessary.
- Tell your beneficiary which payment option you're selecting and what it means for them.
- If you or your spouse are over 65 at retirement, enroll in Medicare with benefits effective as of your retirement date.
- Notify your employer of your retirement date.
- Submit your retirement application and all forms and documents to MCERA.

## INCLUDE A WORKSHOP IN YOUR RETIREMENT PLANS

Learning about your MCERA benefits is an important step in planning your financial future. Whether you recently started making retirement contributions, have been with your current employer for years, or plan to retire in the next few months, MCERA's workshops can help answer your retirement questions.

Early Career, Late Career and Social Security workshops are available. Please feel free to contact us if you're not sure which workshop is right for you.

To view the complete schedule visit [MCERA.org](http://MCERA.org) and click "Retirement Workshops" in the section of links at the top. To sign up, click "Request Seat" next to your preferred workshop.

Don't forget to contact your deferred compensation representative if you participate in an employer-sponsored deferred compensation (457b) plan.

### Marin County Employees' Retirement Association

**Active Member Benefits:**  
[MCERABenefits@marincounty.org](mailto:MCERABenefits@marincounty.org)  
(415) 473-4148

**General Information & Forms:**  
(415) 473-6147  
[MCERA.org](http://MCERA.org)