

Retirement Benefits for Nurses and 911 Operators*

Digest by the Ballot Simplification Committee

Status: Final Digest
On: Friday, August 2, 2024
Members: Packard, Anderson, Wong, Wang

The Way It Is Now: The City provides its employees with pension benefits through the San Francisco Employees' Retirement System (SFERS).

SFERS determines the pension payment a retiree receives under each plan through a calculation based on the employee's final compensation, years of service and age at retirement. That calculation varies between plans.

SFERS provides different plans for employees based on job type, including:

- Miscellaneous Plans for 911 dispatchers and their supervisors and coordinators, as well as most other City employees;
- Safety Plans for uniformed employees of the Police Department and Fire Department; and
- A Miscellaneous Safety Plan for certain probation officers, District Attorney investigators and juvenile court counselors.

In general, retirees receive greater pension benefits under the Safety Plans and the Miscellaneous Safety Plan than they do under the Miscellaneous Plans. Although 911 dispatchers are classified as First Responders in California, they do not receive Safety-level retirement pensions.

City employees contribute a percentage of their salary toward their retirement benefits. In some circumstances, employees may also purchase service credits to increase their pension benefits.

A "per diem nurse" is a Registered Nurse employed by the City on an occasional and temporary basis. Since 1988, per diem nurses have not been members of SFERS and do not receive any pension service credit for the hours they work on a per diem basis.

The Proposal: Proposition ___ would allow eligible Registered Nurses to purchase service credit for hours they worked on a per diem basis. Registered Nurses who are or become members of SFERS and have worked an average of 32 hours or more per week for at least one year could purchase up to three years of service credit for time they previously worked solely as per diem nurses for the City before they became members of SFERS.

Proposition ___ would also move 911 dispatchers, supervisors and coordinators from the Miscellaneous Plans to the Miscellaneous Safety Plan for compensation those employees earn on and after January 4, 2025. As members of the Miscellaneous Safety Plan, these employees would be required to pay an increased amount into the pension plan and would receive increased pension benefits at retirement.

A "YES" Vote Means: If you vote "yes," you want to allow Registered Nurses who are members of the San Francisco Employees' Retirement System and meet certain requirements to purchase credits toward their total pension years of service for time previously worked as per diem nurses, and to allow 911 dispatchers, supervisors and coordinators to increase their pension benefits by joining the SFERS Miscellaneous Safety Plan for time worked starting in January 2025.

A "NO" Vote Means: If you vote "no," you do not want to make these changes.

**Working title, for identification only. The Director of Elections determines the title of each local ballot measure; measure titles are not considered during Ballot Simplification Committee meetings.*