



MONTGOMERY COUNTY RETIREMENT FOCUS

July 2025

ERS Cost-of-Living-Adjustment (COLA)

The Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) is an annual adjustment to your monthly retirement benefit that reflects the impact of inflation for the prior year. The amount of the adjustment is based on the change in the Consumer Price Index-All Urban Consumers, Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-WVA (CPI-U) from May 2024 to May 2025 as defined in the County Code, Section 33-44(c)(3).

July 1, 2025, eligible retirees and others receiving annuity payments from the ERS will receive a Cost-of-Living-Adjustment (COLA). If you are a new retiree and retired on/or after August 1, 2024, you will receive your first COLA increase. Retirees who retired on/after July 1, 2025, will receive their first COLA on July 1, 2026.

The change in the CPI-U for this period is 1.867%; however, the increase you will receive will be based on the member's retirement group, birth date, hire date, retirement date, and/or disability date. These factors may result in the COLA you receive being lower than 1.867%.

You should have received your COLA letter explaining your adjustment amount and the percentage you received.

Protecting Yourself From Identity Theft and Fraud

Identity theft happens when someone uses your personal or financial information, such as: name, address, Social Security number, bank accounts, etc., without permission. Scammers can steal your identity in person, online, through social media, or by phone.

Here are some ways to protect yourself from identity theft: • Maintain a healthy sense of skepticism when receiving calls or messages from someone you do not know. • On social media, be mindful when posting information about yourself or loved ones. • Review your account statements with due diligence. Report immediately any unauthorized or suspicious transactions.

If you believe fraud may have occurred, notify your bank and MCERP right away. Please note that MCERP has limited authority or ability to return or reimburse lost or stolen benefits.

Have you reviewed your beneficiary information lately?

Do you remember who your beneficiaries are? Do you need to update your beneficiaries but just haven't had the time? Now it's easier than ever!

Fidelity houses the beneficiary information for the **County DCP** account. You can log into your online account, click *profile* and then select *beneficiaries* at www.NetBenefits.com/MCG to review or elect your beneficiaries.

As **ERS** participants, the beneficiary form is now online. No need to print and submit. Please visit OHR's website to update your elections: <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/HR/Benefits/Beneficiary.html>

Important ERS Retiree Reminder

Montgomery County Employees' Retirement System (MCERS)
Electronic Direct Deposit Authorization Form – Benefit Payments

I hereby make the following requests and authorizations relating to my benefit payments from the Montgomery County

Employees' Retirement System: (1) I request and authorize you to initiate credit entries to my Account indicated below; (2) I request and authorize you to initiate debit entries and adjustments for any credit entries made in error to the Account; and (3) I request and authorize the Financial Institution named below to credit and/or debit any such entries to the Account.

1. Participant Name _____
(Full Name)

2. Social Security Number _____

3. Participant Home Address _____

(City, State and Zip Code)

4. Daytime Phone Number _____ Email: _____

5. Financial Institution's Name _____

6. Account Type ☐ Checking ☐ Saving ☐ Other _____

7. Basic Information _____
(Bank Routing Number) (Account Number)

How to Submit Your Form:

1. Attach a copy of your old and new bank account statement with your name, address, and account number shown.
2. Include a copy of your driver's license or current passport.
3. We cannot accept handwritten information as proof of account.
4. Deposits will only be made to Domestic US Banks.

I understand that in the absence of a discrepancy or other unusual circumstance, will direct deposit my benefit payments within 30 days of your receipt of this form. In the event of a discrepancy, I understand that I will be required to provide corrected information by completing a new form. The authority granted by me on this form is to remain in full force and effect until you have received written notification of its termination in such time and in such manner as to afford you and my Financial Institution a reasonable opportunity to act on it. I hereby discharge from Montgomery County Employees' Retirement System (MCERS) all liability whatsoever for any actions taken by MCERS in accordance with the above request and authorization.

Participant Signature: _____ Date: _____

PLEASE RETURN THE COMPLETED FORM, ALONG WITH DOCUMENTATION AS DESCRIBED ABOVE, TO:

Montgomery County Employee Retirement Plans
101 Monroe Street, 6th Fl
Rockville, MD 20850
Phone: (240) 777-8230 | Fax: (240) 306-1389 | Email: retirement@montgomerycountymd.gov

Please keep a copy of this form for your records

MCERP implemented a new procedure in September 2024 to enhance the process with the intent of reducing the potential for scam submissions and expediting the update of your banking information.

You will need to submit a copy of your bank account statement from both your old and your new bank accounts. The statements must include your name, address, and full account numbers. We are also requesting a copy of your driver's license or current passport.

To change your banking information, complete the **Direct Deposit Authorization Form** and forward it to our office before the 15th of each month. For the change to take place, all required backup information must be submitted—no exceptions will be made.

Form: Visit our website www.montgomerycountymd.gov/mcerp and click on the **Retirees** tab, **Employees Retirement System** tab, and then **ERS Forms** tab, and Direct Deposit.

Submit your forms by email to retirement@montgomerycountymd.gov, mail or by fax to 240-306-1389.

ERS Retirees Frequently Asked Questions

We're here to support you! MCERP not only provides customer service for our employees, but for our retired members as well. You may not be aware of some available services, so we have highlighted a few below:



If I am a retiree, whom do I contact to make changes to my health insurance?

The Office of Human Resources (OHR) handles all insurance-related matters for employees and retirees. Please contact OHR at (240) 777-0311, option 1.

If I need an income verification letter, stating how much my monthly annuity is, how can I obtain this information?

Contact a retirement analyst at (240) 777-8230 or email us at retirement@montgomerycountymd.gov and we will provide a letter outlining your annuity benefits.

If I moved outside the state of Maryland, would you withhold taxes for my new state?

No, MCERP only withholds taxes for the state of Maryland. You will need to contact the Comptroller of your new state to see if there is a tax implication for your new state.

How can I find out if my monthly benefit will be reduced in the future?

MCERP will send you a letter 3 months before the reduction date, or you can call (240) 777-8230 or email to obtain this information.

If I picked a Joint & Survivor option when I retired, and I have remarried, can I change my Joint Annuitant?

No, the election made at your retirement is a one-time irrevocable election and cannot be changed. You can, however, add your new spouse to your health insurance, but NOT your pension.

If I am receiving ERS disability payment, how often am I medically reevaluated?

You are medically reevaluated every year for the first 5 years after receiving your benefit, and then once every 3 years until age 60 for Groups A & H or until age 55 for Groups E, F & G.

If you are receiving an LTD2 disability benefit, you will be medically re-evaluated at your 3-year anniversary and then annually until age 85.

If I need a copy of my pay advice, how can I obtain another copy?

If you have not created a retiree account in our extranet, please contact the Retirement department at 240-777-8230 or retirement@montgomerycountymd.gov, and we will send you your login credentials.

Are 1099R annual statements located in the retiree portal?

No, if you require another copy, please email or call to request another copy.

RETIREMENT FOCUS is a newsletter published by Montgomery County Employee Retirement Plans and the Board of Investment Trustees for active members, retirees and beneficiaries of the Employees' Retirement System, Guaranteed Retirement Income Plan, Retirement Savings Plan and the County Deferred Compensation Plan.

OBTAIN INFORMATION YOUR WAY



Answers to common questions:
www.montgomerycountymd.gov/retirement



Answers to your specific retirement questions:
retirement@montgomerycountymd.gov



Retirement Benefits (240) 777 - 8230
Fidelity on-site rep. (240) 777 - 8228
Disability Benefits (240) 777 - 0815

Montgomery County Employee Retirement Plan
Executive Office Building
101 Monroe Street, 6th Floor
Rockville, MD 20850

