

# LACERS NEWS

ACTIVE MEMBERS  
SUMMER 2023



# IN THIS ISSUE

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_



# LACERS NEWS



## **A MESSAGE FROM FORMER BOARD VICE PRESIDENT, ELIZABETH LEE**

Representing the City of Los Angeles' Active and Retired Members is a responsibility I do not take lightly. As the former LACERS Board of Administration Vice President, I am proud of the collaboration exhibited by the Board during the first half of the year despite experiencing board member changes. The Board has been fortunate to have been



led by an exemplary Board President. We appreciate the outgoing Board President, Nilza Serrano, for all her efforts in delivering dignified retirement benefits for all LACERS Members. We look forward with anticipation to the addition of a new board member, which will permit the Board to continue offering advice and vision for the advancement of the LACERS Plan.

Understanding the impact of inflation on LACERS Members, the Board has worked with LACERS staff in communicating with the Los Angeles City Council about the need for a 2.6% discretionary Cost-Of-Living Adjustment (COLA) for Retired Members. Over the past two years, we have all been impacted by historically high inflation, none more so than our retired Members. The Board believes this is the right thing to do as all our Members have contributed to building the great City of Los Angeles. The Board will continue to advocate and monitor the issues that may directly impact the Board's ability to fulfill its mission and departmental priorities.

It has been an exciting time for the LACERS Board. We look forward to the opportunities that the next half of the year brings, and we know that by working hand in hand with LACERS staff, we will achieve great things for our Members.

In partnership,

Elizabeth Lee

## A MESSAGE FROM GENERAL MANAGER, NEIL GUGLIELMO



It's been a season of change and excitement for LACERS during the last several months. We couldn't be more excited to have turned the key and moved into our new headquarters at 977 N. Broadway. Each floor was designed with flexible workstations and open floor plans to allow for

collaboration and co-creation. Our LACERS staff have been incredible during this transition, and meeting their practical needs and well-being is of utmost importance as we continue delivering on our mission of protecting and growing our trust fund and providing retirement services to our Members in an ethical, reliable, and efficient manner. To virtually explore our new Headquarters, you can view our tour video on [LACERS YouTube](#) and read the article published in the [June Alive! newsletter](#).

As I have shared at the LACERS Board Meetings, we are closely monitoring the new ordinance, [Council File 20-1537](#), granting Public Safety Officers enhanced disability and death benefits. Additionally, we are pleased to share that the Board approved the LACERS Budget for Fiscal Year (FY) 2023-2024 on

May 23, 2023. We will continue to share updates on these and other policy and business priority changes during the Board of Administration meetings and in our printed and online publications.

In other news, we are excited to have hosted our first in-person Emerging Manager Networking Forum on June 8th at our LACERS Headquarters and look forward to hosting more in the future. This forum demonstrates our commitment to engaging with the Emerging Manager community as we continue diversifying and adding value to the LACERS portfolio.

Undoubtedly, we continue to keep a watchful eye on the war in Ukraine not only because of its impact on the markets with broader consequences for the global economy but also because of its toll on human life.

At LACERS, we look forward to serving our City family by delivering timely and accurate benefits to all Active and Retired Members. We thank you for your contributions to making Los Angeles a great place to live, work, and play.

With appreciation,  
Neil Guglielmo

---

## LACERS is Open for Business!

Veiled in Navy Blue and boasting state-of-the-art equipment, our headquarters at 977 N. Broadway is open to serve you! Our team at LACERS is excited to welcome you back to in-person services and to deliver the highest quality of customer service.

The LACERS Front Desk operates Monday through Friday, 7:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.; no appointment is necessary. Whether attending a LACERS Board Meeting, an in-person Planning for Retirement Seminar, or seeking in-person counseling, we look forward to welcoming you to our new home.

*Please note that a current government-issued photo identification or City employee badge is required to enter our building except when attending public meetings of the LACERS Board of Administration.*

## Next Stop: The LACERS YouTube Channel



Where is one place LACERS Members can go to access information about their retirement benefits and the retirement process at any time? The Official LACERS YouTube channel! Members can find videos about LACERS' annual Health Open Enrollment, survivor benefits, the LACERS Well program, and more on the channel. Head to the [LACERS YouTube channel](#) at [youtube.com/laceryoutube](https://youtube.com/laceryoutube) to subscribe and join over 1,800 other Members who are notified when new content is posted!



## **DIVISION SPOTLIGHT:**

### ***Service Retirement Unit***

LACERS Members ready to begin their retirement from the City of Los Angeles will undoubtedly get to know the Service Retirement Unit (SRU). This is because SRU's primary duty is counseling Members through the retirement process. Utilizing specialized and specific knowledge, SRU staff assist Members in making informed retirement decisions and completing the necessary paperwork to receive their retirement benefits accurately and timely.

SRU's duties go beyond the act of retiring Members. SRU also provides in-person pre-retirement counseling and separation from City service counseling, complex pre-retirement estimates, notices to Deferred Vested Members when they are eligible for retirement, reviews Reciprocity benefits and requirements, and provides pre-death counseling to Members facing terminal illness, all while focusing on delivering the highest levels of customer service.

Whether you are ready to retire or wish to receive exemplary face-to-face pre-retirement counseling, know that the experts in SRU are eager to assist you.

### ***Grab Your Bags! Ideas for Local Getaways***

Southern California boasts ample sweet spots for spectacular weekend travel. Grab your bags and take off to these nearby destinations that allow you to enjoy fun-filled activities ranging from camping, fishing, golfing, and swimming to shopping, luxury hotels, and fine dining. The best part is that these locations are near the Los Angeles area. Take advantage of the ocean views and warm sandy beaches Santa Barbara offers, or revel in the mountainous adventures that await you at Lake Arrowhead. This list of popular local hot spot destinations is sure to inspire your next quick day trip or weekend getaway:

- Picnic at Silverlake Reservoir
- The Getty Villa
- Rosie's Dog Beach
- Santa Barbara (2 hours from L.A.)
- Lake Cachuma (2 hours from L.A.)
- Ojai (2 hours from L.A.)
- Balboa Island (1.5 hours from L.A.)
- Laguna Beach (1 hour from L.A.)
- Catalina Island (2 hours from L.A.)
- Lake Arrowhead (1.5 hours from L.A.)
- Temecula (1.5 hours from L.A.)
- La Jolla (2 hours from L.A.)



## 2023 Mid-Year Check-Up

Now's the perfect time to do a mid-year check-up on your LACERS benefits. Here are some things to check off your list:

### **My LACERS Account**

- ✓ Have you created your profile on the [LACERS Member Portal](#)? MyLACERS is your online gateway to real-time details about your retirement account. You can generate a member statement, register for upcoming webinars and events, or create a benefit estimate for a future retirement date. Request a PIN letter today! Don't know how...watch this [two-minute video](#):

### **Beneficiaries**

- ✓ Make it a habit to review your designated beneficiaries on file with LACERS annually so that your benefits are paid out as intended if you pass away before retirement.
- ✓ You can view your current designations via your MyLACERS account. To update them, submit a new [Designation of Beneficiary Form](#) found on our website. Designated beneficiaries remain in effect until you change them.

### **Attend a Planning for Retirement Seminar**

- ✓ New to the City, mid-career, or close to retirement? Attend a seminar to understand all the components of your retirement

benefits and eligibility. Seminars are held several days a month, including Saturdays. View the schedule at [lacers.org/calendar](#) and register on [MyLACERS](#).

### **Service Credit Purchases**

- ✓ Did you work part-time for the City of Los Angeles or full-time for another government agency? If so, you may be eligible to purchase Service Credit, which *may* count toward your retirement eligibility and increase your retirement allowance and health subsidy.
- ✓ For additional information on making a service purchase for a re-deposit, back contributions, public service buyback, or a government service buyback, please view the [Service Purchase](#) video or speak to a Buyback Representative at LACERS.

### **Supplementing Your Retirement**

- ✓ Your LACERS retirement allowance should be considered the foundation of your retirement financial planning. However, your LACERS benefit alone may or may not cover your expenses in retirement.
- ✓ To supplement your LACERS retirement allowance, you may want to consider the LACERS [Larger Annuity Program](#) and the Personnel Department's [Deferred Compensation Program](#). These are voluntary programs that could help bridge an income gap in retirement.

## A MESSAGE FROM CHIEF INVESTMENT OFFICER, ROD JUNE



Who hasn't felt the impact of recent price increases? Everything from shopping to eating, energy, and other goods and services are breaking our pocketbooks.

Since the Great Financial Crisis of 2008, the Federal Reserve (Fed) has maintained a relaxed monetary policy, which has kept the financial markets healthy through lower interest rates. With more borrowed dollars flooding the U.S. economy during the past decade came greater consumption and purchasing power. After many years of an economic boom, price inflation became apparent. To curb this economic woe, the Fed can and has raised interest rates, which

started in March 2022. Higher interest rates tend to slow economic activity, which helps to control price inflation.

We benefit from higher interest rates as we earn more interest on our savings accounts and certificate of deposits at the bank. But no good deed goes unpunished: Higher interest rates are harmful to business profitability. Companies have no choice but to pass those costs onto consumers. Higher prices generally mean reduced demand and, thus, an economic slowdown. An economic recovery, which is what market experts anticipate on the horizon, does take time to be realized, so keep an eye on the actions of the Fed as they try to smooth this rough patch of our economic cycle and get us back on our financial feet again.

Rod June



### ***Fun Facts: LACERS Members***

Ever wondered about fun facts relating to LACERS Retired Members? Here are a few current facts (as of May 2023) from our collection that someday (maybe soon!) you'll be a part of:

- **Retiree with the highest amount of service credit:** 56.1 years
- **Number of Retirees that have celebrated their 100th Birthday:** 22
- **Youngest Service Retiree:** 51 years old
- **Number of Tier 1 Retirees:** 18,221
- **Number of Tier 3 Retirees:** 7
- **Average age of a LACERS Retiree:** 72
- **Number of LACERS Retirees who reside outside of California:** 2,636

For more stats and data, visit [lacers.org/financial-reports-and-statistics](https://lacers.org/financial-reports-and-statistics)



## ***Managing Your Debt Before You Retire***



Deciding when to retire can be a difficult decision financially. For instance, how does a retiree maintain their accustomed lifestyle? Besides saving and investing, one of the most important factors is the reduction and/or elimination of debt.

According to the New York Federal Consumer Credit Panel and Equifax, Americans ages 50 to 59 had \$3.39 trillion in debt in 2021's first quarter, which is twice as much as 20 years ago after adjusting for inflation. More and more adults are retiring with more debt than previous generations. Credit card debt, student

loans, and mortgage debt are important factors that can delay or obstruct a comfortable retirement. For example, you can consider paying down your highest-interest credit cards so that you have low, manageable balances going into retirement. The focus should be on minimizing expenses and avoiding burdensome monthly payments so that as you get closer to retiring, you can leave the workforce with as little debt as possible. The money that would have been spent on fees and interest can instead be redirected to maximizing your enjoyment in the golden years.



## Reciprocity Has Its Benefits

To fully enjoy the benefits of establishing reciprocity, it's important to understand what it means. Reciprocity is an agreement among certain California Public Retirement Systems in which a member of one system can move from one qualified public retirement system to another without losing valuable retirement and related benefit rights. This move must occur within six months with no overlap in service, and you must retire from each system on the same day. The reciprocal benefits that result may allow employees to boost their total retirement benefits established in each system.

To establish reciprocity, you will need to apply for reciprocity with both retirement systems and confirm that reciprocity exists and is established between them. Also, all contributions and interest must remain on deposit with each retirement system until you retire. The reciprocal system you

transfer to or from may have different requirements for qualification and payment of benefits, so it is vital to know each system's requirements.

Now here come the benefits: Once reciprocity has been established, service under all reciprocal systems may count toward eligibility for retirement. At retirement, both retirement systems will calculate your benefits based on the highest salary you received, regardless of which agency it was paid by, and you will receive a monthly benefit from each retirement system.

For additional information on the benefits of reciprocity and a list of reciprocal retirement systems, please visit the LACERS website at [lacers.org/reciprocity](https://lacers.org/reciprocity). Members looking to establish reciprocity must complete the Certification of Service form found at [lacers.org/forms](https://lacers.org/forms).



## Securely Upload Your Documents: It's Safe and Easy



Many Members assume that providing documents to LACERS is done in one of two ways: Mailing the documents to our Post Office box or emailing the documents to LACERS. While these methods are generally considered acceptable, they may be subject to delays and interception by a criminal. Fortunately, a safer and easier option is available on LACERS' website via the Secure Document Upload link on the homepage.

Securely uploading your documents directly to LACERS helps you fight against fraudulent attempts by securing the transfer of sensitive data. Uploading documents is safer and easier than mailing or emailing documents. It's faster, too. Documents uploaded through our website go directly to LACERS staff for verification and processing.

When it's time to provide LACERS with your documents, do so directly on our website at [lacers.org/secure-document-upload](https://lacers.org/secure-document-upload).



## LACERS News Staff

Taneda K. Larios.....*Chief Benefits Analyst*  
 Heather Ramirez.....*Sr. Benefits Analyst II*  
 Tiffany Obembe.....*Sr. Benefits Analyst I*  
 Amelia Herrera-Robles.....*Public Information Director*  
 Nathan Herkelrath.....*Benefits Analyst*  
 Khia Moore.....*Benefits Analyst*  
 Carlos Jovel Jr.....*Benefits Analyst*  
 Maricel Martin.....*Sr. Benefits Analyst I*  
 Estella Priebe.....*Benefits Analyst*

L R M E A I N F L A T I O N D  
 D Q E D J B B X Y J Z N O S M  
 A G M C O N C P M C H L U I Y  
 O G S O I W N K N U I F G U B  
 L X H F E P N F V K L H R Y L  
 P Z Z S Y D R S O S L S B S P  
 U X P K F A T O I C R R K M K  
 E Y W H L Q W X C Z B N Y B O  
 R S L N I R J A N I E B D R T  
 U K K H B S A Y T A T S R O U  
 C G R Y Z B H O E E Z Y V A I  
 E V H U B D J I X Q G A A D I  
 S F B J U O B X N F B K C W F  
 K O P Q O Z G L D G A W H A I  
 J Y A C X Y I G H N A T F Y W

## Word Search

Try your skills finding key words from this issue's articles.

### Word Bank:

Broadway  
 Phishing  
 Inflation  
 SRU  
 Getaway  
 Reciprocity  
 Secure Upload  
 Downsize

Answer key available at [lacers.org/newsletter](http://lacers.org/newsletter).

## Stay Alert: Be Aware of Phishing Scams



Phishing is a fraudulent practice where cyber criminals send emails or other messages claiming to be from reputable companies to persuade individuals to reveal personal information, such as passwords and credit card numbers. Phishing is one of the oldest and most used scams by cyber criminals, and unfortunately, retirees are often the targets of such insidious acts.

*...recognizing a phishing email or message will help keep your personal information safe from cyber criminals...*

Recognizing a phishing email or message will help keep your personal information safe from cyber criminals. Here are a few things to consider when opening and replying to messages you receive that should help you avoid phishing scams:

- Do not share personal information.
- Avoid suspicious links.
- Verify who is sending the message by checking the email address.
- Never provide passwords.
- If you feel intimidated by an email, this is a red flag.
- Take your time when dealing with these inquiries.
- Contact the companies directly if in doubt.

At LACERS, our goal is always to safeguard your personal information. For more information on Cybersecurity best practices, visit [lacers.org/article/cybersecurity-best-practices](https://lacers.org/article/cybersecurity-best-practices). If you ever suspect your personally identifiable information (PII) has been compromised in any way, please contact us immediately by phone at (800) 779-8328.

## THERE'S MORE THAN ONE WAY TO REACH US!

WEBSITE:  
[LACERS.org](https://lacers.org)

EMAIL:  
[lacers.services@lacers.org](mailto:lacers.services@lacers.org)  
[lacers.health@lacers.org](mailto:lacers.health@lacers.org)

MAILING ADDRESS:  
PO Box 512218  
Los Angeles, CA 90051-0218

VISIT:  
977 N. Broadway,  
Los Angeles, CA 90012  
(No appointments needed)

CALL:  
(800) 779-8328  
RTT (888) 349-3996

FAX:  
(213) 473-7297

FACEBOOK:  
[facebook.com/lacerswell](https://facebook.com/lacerswell)

YOUTUBE:  
[youtube.com/laceryoutube](https://youtube.com/laceryoutube)

*As a covered entity under Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, the City of Los Angeles does not discriminate on the basis of disability and, upon request, will provide reasonable accommodation to ensure equal access to its programs, services, and activities. For additional information or to make a request for documents in an alternative format, please contact (800) 779-8328 or RTT (888) 349-3996.*

