

HOLOMUA

RETIRES & ACTIVE MEMBERS



Employees' Retirement System
of the State of Hawaii

Kahala Beach, Waialae Beach Park

Legislative Session Wrap-up

It's a wrap — or *sine die* as the State Legislature calls it — for the 2023 session, which ended May 4. While ERS-introduced legislation didn't receive final passage, a key bill the ERS supported was signed into law by Gov. Josh Green.

Senate Bill 211, introduced as part of the City and County of Honolulu's legislative package, was passed, including key ERS amendments testified to and accepted by the subject matter committees, on May 2 by the state House and state Senate. The bill ensures employment, work, and pay eligibility for the purpose of calculating retirement benefits includes retroactive reinstatement, retroactive rescission of suspension, and retroactive payments that are restored to an employee as part of a judicial, administrative, or arbitral proceeding, or

pursuant to a settlement of claims.

The amendments to Senate Bill 211 were requested to ensure the ERS would maintain its tax-qualified status and address any increases in ERS's Unfunded Actuarial Accrued Liability. The bill was signed by Gov. Green on June 1 and became Act 46, Session Laws of Hawaii 2023.

Two ERS-sponsored bills that advanced through final stages of the session but failed to pass were:

- Senate Bill 1311, which called for the repeal of Act 192, Session Laws of Hawaii 2007. Act 192 requires the ERS to divest itself of investments in companies that support genocide in Darfur, Sudan, and provide annual reports to the

Legislature on the status of divestment. The ERS believed actions taken by the U.S. government in recent years regarding Darfur met the criteria for repealing Act 192. While the ERS has no investments in the Darfur region, the Senate chose to defer the bill during the last week of the session after an armed conflict began in Sudan on April 15.

- House Bill 1014, which sought to clarify the Legislature's intent concerning the applicability of the ERS's service-connected disability retirement and accidental death benefits. Recently, the Hawaii Supreme Court rendered rulings awarding ERS service-connected disability retirement and/or accidental death benefits beyond a plain reading of the Legislature's original intent.

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ERS named finalist for pension plan award

The Employees' Retirement System was recognized as a finalist in the "Public Plan of the Year" category in Institutional Investor magazine's 2023 Hedge Fund Industry Awards.

ERS was cited for its 15.72% return in its diversifying strategies allocation, including hedge funds, for the year ending Sept. 30, 2022. This recognition comes on the heels of the ERS being named the nation's top performing public pension

fund for the year ending June 30, 2022.

Utah Retirement Systems was named "Public Plan of the Year" at an award ceremony held May 11 in New York City. Other nominees were the Retirement System Investment Commission of South Carolina, the Los Angeles County Employees Retirement Association, the Indiana Public Retirement System and the Employees Retirement System of Texas.

Hedge fund managers voted to deter-

mine top allocators in several categories, including the public plan award.

ERS structures its portfolio to offset most material market declines with increases in allocations to Diversifying Strategies and Real Assets, with most capital coming from the Public Growth portfolio.

ERS relies on investment returns from employee and employer contributions to fund retirement benefits and to cover administrative expenses.

Unused Sick Leave Benefit

A common question prospective retirees ask the ERS is, “How is my unused sick leave applied in the calculation of my retirement?”

An employee who leaves in good standing is entitled to additional retirement service credit for each audited unused sick leave balance of 60 or more days. Your employer tracks your sick leave and provides an audited accounting of any unused leave to the ERS after each separation.

After retirement, the ERS separately reviews all audited unused sick leave reports to increase the retiree’s service by a minimum of three months for each 60 day or greater balance. Every additional 20 days provides another month of service credit. Any balance of 10 days or more is rounded up to an additional month. Any balance of less than 10 days provides no further credit.

Examples:

Total hours of unused sick leave divided by 8 hours to determine days of unused sick leave*	Total days of unused sick leave divided by 20 days to determine additional months of service credit	Total months of additional service credit (.05 or more round up)
1,480/8 = 185 days	185/20 = 9.25 (balance of .25 = 5 days)	9 months
1,560/8 = 195 days	195/20 = 9.75 (balance of .75 = 15 days)	10 months

*Note that unused sick leave balances for teachers are reported to ERS in days and 24-hour shift firefighters follow a different calculation.

Unused sick leave credits cannot be used to fulfill eligibility requirements for retirement. For example, if a member needs 10 years of service to retire, unused sick leave credit cannot be used to reach the 10-year mark.

For Hybrid members with Noncontributory plan service, sick leave will be calculated as Hybrid credit first, up to the maximum potential months of sick leave

accruable while a Hybrid plan member, with the remainder calculated as Noncontributory credit.

Upon retirement, retirees should notify their employer that an audited unused sick and vacation leave form will be needed to finalize pension payments. Note: Vacation payouts will be handled by your employer.

Annual Post-Retirement Increase to be Issued in July

Qualified retirees, beneficiaries and alternate payees with retirement dates in 2022 and earlier will receive annual post-retirement increases in July.

Increases of 2.5 percent (for membership dates before July 1, 2012) and 1.5 percent (for membership dates on or after July 1, 2012) are calculated on the base pension amount and aren’t compounded.

Semi-monthly payees will receive increases on July 14, while monthly payees will receive increases on July 31.

Keep the ERS payment statement you receive, as they are only generated when changes are made to the pension amount paid. Statements will show gross payment amounts, deductions withheld and net payments. Confirm your net payment amount with the ERS deposit on your bank statement when you receive it from your financial institution.

For information, call (808) 586-1735.

NO: 0000000 STATE OF HAWAII EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM

PAYMENT DATE: 07/31/2023 STATEMENT OF RETIREMENT ALLOWANCES AND DEDUCTIONS

NAME: DOE, JANE ERS ID: 0000000000 NON-NEGOTIABLE
 Payee: DOE, JANE 0000000000 RETAIN FOR YOUR RECORDS
 Tax Recipient: DOE, JANE 0000000000

RETIREMENT NO.: 0000

RETIREMENT ALLOWANCES			DEDUCTIONS		
DESCRIPTION	CURRENT	YEAR TO DATE	DESCRIPTION	CURRENT	YEAR TO DATE
Pension Monthly	5,000.00	35,000.00	Federal Tax With (945/041)	700.00	4,900.00
TOTALS	5,000.00	35,000.00	EE Dues & Ins - FFA	6.00	42.00
			TOTALS	706.00	4,942.00

CHECK AMOUNT: 4,294.00

ANNUAL POST RETIREMENT INCREASE: For qualified retirees and beneficiaries receiving monthly pension payments, your post retirement increase has been added to your July 31 pension payment. The 2.5 percent increase (for membership dates before July 1, 2012) and 1.5 percent increase (for membership dates on or after July 1, 2012) are not compounded and are calculated on your base pension amount. If you retired in 2023, this statement is being provided for information only since you are not eligible for a post retirement increase in 2023. PLEASE KEEP THIS PAYMENT STATEMENT AS A RECORD OF YOUR CURRENT PENSION AMOUNT.

Kristin Varela, Chief Investment Officer

Silicon Valley Bank: Cost of Concentration



Kristin Varela

The first quarter of 2023 was dominated by news of stress within regional and community banking sectors, led by the historic collapse of Silicon Valley Bank (SVB). Before its collapse, SVB was positioned as the 16th largest bank in the United States. Headquartered in California, SVB served as favored banking partner to nearly half the venture capital-backed startups in the United States. While SVB was a trusted partner in fast-growing and highly innovative sectors of our markets, its long-term investment portfolio was much less exotic, investing predominantly in long-tenured U.S. government bonds.

Without getting too technical, government bonds are a loan between an investor and the government over a specified period. In exchange for the money, an investor receives regular interest payments. This structure has been historically viewed as a conservative income opportunity, given the stability of government and its credibility as a borrower, but SVB's collapse is a lesson in monetary policy and the value of diversification.

The Federal Reserve focused on more aggressive monetary policy over the past year by raising interest rates multiple times to cool the economy and combat inflationary pressures. However, these actions also impacted the value of previously issued bonds. Higher interest rates on newly issued bonds indicate a higher potential of income for investors. This prospect drives up pricing and reflects a more favorable opportunity. Conversely,

bonds issued prior to these adjustments continue to pay lower interest over a long period of time, making them less attractive to investors and causing prices to decline.

For SVB, and many other financial institutions, most long-term assets were invested in lower interest-earning bonds, and the value of these portfolios declined as interest rates rose.

As startup clients began withdrawing deposits to keep their companies afloat during a period of rising inflation, SVB found itself lacking the capital required to meet depository obligations, which resulted in the sale of their long-term bond portfolio at a \$1.8B loss.

Thanks to social media, word of this action traveled quickly and prompted clients to pull funds out of SVB due to concerns of a run on the bank.

SVB would not be the only institution to experience this stress. Other regional banks, such as Signature and First Republic, experienced a similar fate.

Fortunately, support for depositors has been strong, and government action to solidify the banking sector has been swift and accommodating. Further contagion risk seems to be managed and many depositors have mitigated their future risks through the engagement of services with larger, well-diversified banking organizations.

Overall, SVB's concentrated client base's sensitivity to inflationary pressure, paired

with a long duration, government bond-focused portfolio, created a recipe for instability. As you read these updates quarter over quarter, please observe the common theme that diversification is key to managing risk. As we seek to prudently allocate capital across opportunities, we continue to focus on minimizing concentrated market impacts and building a portfolio that can weather a variety of monetary cycles.

Q1 2023 Performance Update

As of March 31, the Fund closed at \$21.9B and generated a 1.3 percent positive return for the quarter. Due to continued headwinds within broad markets, the fiscal year to date return remains flat for the three quarters captured and is tracking its benchmark. Staff remains focused on long-term results of the Fund to support positive long-term solvency. When assessing effectiveness in implementation, we continue to observe outperformance across all time horizons of one year or longer. As we enter the last quarter of the fiscal year, we remain focused on diversified risk allocation and the preservation of capital in volatile market environments.

Our investment team appreciates the opportunity to connect and wishes you well in the last quarter of our fiscal year and beyond.

... Legislative Session Wrap-up, continued from page 1

This measure was requested to help curb unintended growth in the system's unfunded liability, while maintaining benefits for members who are injured or die in the performance of their duties. The bill died when it was not heard by the Judiciary and Ways and Means committees after crossing over from the House and passing the Senate's Labor and Technology committee.

Bills that didn't pass are rolled over to next year, as this was the first year of a biennium session at the Legislature.

Budget and Finance Director Luis Salaveria and Deputy Director Sabrina Nasir received final confirmation from the Senate on April 28. The ERS is an attached agency of the Department of Budget and Finance; the Director serves on the ERS board ex-officio.

More information on this year's legislature can be found at capitol.hawaii.gov.



Hawaii State Capitol

Direct Deposit Tips for ERS Payments

Those receiving ERS benefits who wish to make changes to monthly payments, such as to the direct deposit account of record or to individual federal tax withholding, should allow 4 to 6 weeks for these to take effect.

The ERS pays or schedules deposits of monthly pension funds on the last business day of each month. However, pension payroll processing is completed mid-month. If direct deposit or tax withholding change forms are received after the ERS deadline, changes are reflected in the following month's payment. Other factors that could delay changes include the submission of incorrect or missing information, such as Social Security numbers, signatures, or bank routing and direct deposit numbers.

Here is an example illustrating the pension change schedule for August 2023:

Deadline for changes*	Effective date of Change
Forms received by Aug. 14	Aug. 31, 2023
Forms received after Aug. 14	Sept. 29, 2023

*Actual change deadline dates vary each month.

Here are some helpful tips when making changes to direct deposit accounts:

- Don't close your previous account until your pension payment is reflected in your new account. Pension payments will be returned for closed accounts, and the ERS will reissue your payment the following month.
- For closed accounts, notify your financial institution immediately to route your pension payments to your new account. All pension payments returned on closed accounts or incorrect account numbers will be reissued the following month.
- For Form ERS-210 (Direct Deposit Agreement), the ERS payee's name should appear first as the account holder, followed by the joint account holder(s). The ERS must make payments to the ERS payee, so they must be the primary account holder of a joint account. Both the primary and joint account holder(s) must sign the ERS-210.
- Trust accounts are not allowed for account holders, as the ERS must make pension payments to the ERS payee.

For information and access to pension forms, go to the ERS website (ers.ehawaii.gov). Under the "Retirees" pull-down menu, choose "Pension Forms."

Call (808) 586-1735 with any questions.

Trustee Election Coming in September

Like voting for government officials, the election of an ERS trustee gives members a voice in how the retirement system is governed and operates.

Members and retirees are eligible to vote in a general employee seat election for the ERS Board of Trustees starting in September. The term "general employee" includes police officers and firefighters but does not include teachers, educational officers, or faculty and instructors of the University of Hawaii, who have their own board seat.

General administration and the responsibility for the proper operation of the retirement system are vested in the Board, with powers and duties that are functionally equivalent to those of a board of directors of a private corporation. The ERS is administratively attached to the state Department of Budget and Finance.

The full Board meets at least six times

a year to review how the ERS is doing financially and operationally. It makes operational and investment decisions based on information from the ERS administration, investment officers and branches, consultants, actuaries and legal advisers. It also hears appeals on decisions made by the retirement system. Board meetings are listed on the ERS website (ers.ehawaii.gov) and open to the public.

The Board of Trustees includes eight members, with four elected by the membership: two general employees, a teacher and a retiree. The Governor appoints the remaining four positions: three citizens of Hawaii, and the State Director of Finance, an ex-officio member by statute. See Section 88-24, Hawaii Revised Statutes, for more information on the board composition.

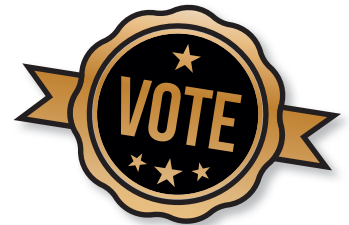
Nomination papers for the general employee seat election closed on June 14. The general employee seat up for election is currently held by Board Chair Dr. Genevieve Gines Ley, whose six-year term ends Jan. 1.

Because the election is conducted by mail-in balloting, please ensure the ERS has your most current address.

- Active members may update mailing addresses through the personnel offices of your respective departments.
- Retirees and terminated members may have mailing addresses updated directly with the ERS. Go to the ERS website (ers.ehawaii.gov) and use the ERS-211 Mailing Address Change form found under: Retirees > Pension Forms.

The expected ballot mail out will be in early September. If you do not receive a ballot by mid-September, contact the ERS.

Candidates will be profiled in an article on the ERS website and in the Fall 2023 issue of *Holomua* prior to the ballot deadline. Election results will be posted on the ERS website in December and in the Spring 2024 edition of *Holomua*.



Phishing or Fo' Real?

At one point or another, many of us have received an unsolicited email or phone call offering information on retirement benefits and how to maximize retirement earnings. The services will initially be offered for free, or for a low-fee — or even with refreshments! But you're always told to "act quickly" because such a great opportunity won't be around for long.

We've all heard the warnings about phishing and scams that sound too good to be true, and with good reason. No one wants their identity or hard-earned income stolen. But how can you tell when an offer is "fo' real," a scam, or even just a flat-out bad deal?

While this can be a difficult task, it's easy for the ERS. We may not serve refreshments, but the ERS does serve our more than 127,000 members, retirees and beneficiaries with information on their accounts and benefits free of charge.

While we answer questions about ERS benefits, professionals such as tax advisors, health insurance experts, Social Security counselors, accountants and financial planners can also provide valuable advice. However, the ERS doesn't contract any financial consultants or other third-party vendors to contact our members or provide any services on our behalf.

Here are ways that ERS helps:

- ERS offices are open for appointments and walk-ins weekdays from 7:45 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. except state holidays. Our Oahu office offers validated parking; please contact our Hawaii, Maui, and Kauai offices directly for information on visits. We also have a call center staffed with retirement counselors to answer questions over the phone. Reach us at (808) 586-1735.
- Members have 24/7 access to their information online at ers.ehawaii.gov. The website offers resources available with the click of a mouse or swipe of a screen. There are brochures explaining each of our retirement classes (Contributory, Noncontributory and Hybrid), videos, fillable service retirement application and forms, Hawaii Domestic Relations Orders (HiDRO) forms and instructions, investment information, financial documents and copies of past "Holomua" newsletters.
- The website also offers a self-service Active Membership Information portal. Information is updated semi-annually and provides a convenient way to verify your class/plan, ERS membership date, credited service and accumulated contributions for Contributory and



ISTOCK.COM/PATCHARIN INNARA

Hybrid class members (as of the last refresh date). While information is pulled from our records and is generally accurate, it's important to note that it's not audited. Your self-service information can be used in conjunction with our online Benefits Calculator, which allows users to calculate pension amounts for multiple scenarios.

- The ERS will provide an audited estimate to any member who files a retirement application. This application comes with one-on-one counseling (either in person, on the phone, or online) on your personalized estimate, a review of the forms, discussion of factors used in your benefit calculation, retirement option review and discussion, and any follow-up or next steps.

Being aware of what services the ERS provides will help you evaluate sales calls seeking your business. Independently verify if an ERS call is "fo' real" by contacting us at (808) 586-1735, or by email at dbf.ers.sss@hawaii.gov.

Thinking about retirement in 2023?

With only six months remaining in the year, members (or former members) who are eligible and considering retirement by the end of 2023 should prepare by familiarizing themselves with the deadlines for filing an application. Your retirement date can be the first of the month, or on Dec. 31. Applications can be filed as early as 150 days prior to — but not fewer than 30 days before — your retirement date.

For more information, go to ers.ehawaii.gov/members/planning-for-retirement. On the Retirement Planning page there are links to an application packet and information specific to ERS plans. Even if you are not ready to retire but want to be prepared, the ERS website

also includes a self-service benefits calculator and membership information portal. Contact the ERS online at ers.ehawaii.gov/resources/contact-us.

Here's a list of application deadlines

for the remaining 2023 retirement dates. The ERS must receive applications by the deadlines listed (not postmarked, if mailed). Applications must be notarized or signed in front of an ERS representative.

	FILING WINDOW	
I would like to retire on:	The first day you can file:	The last day you can file:
August 1, 2023	March 6, 2023	June 30, 2023
September 1, 2023	April 4, 2023	August 2, 2023
October 1, 2023	May 4, 2023	September 1, 2023
November 1, 2023	June 5, 2023	October 2, 2023
December 1, 2023	July 5, 2023	November 1, 2023
December 31, 2023	August 3, 2023	December 1, 2023

"First Day to File" and "Last Day to File" in red are adjusted due to weekends and/or holidays.



IMPORTANT

The EUTF is a separate organization from the ERS. If you have any questions about information in these articles, please contact the EUTF directly. Contact information: (808) 586-7390, 1 (800) 295-0089 toll free; email: eutf@hawaii.gov

FOR ACTIVE EMPLOYEES & RETIREES

Contacting the EUTF

General Questions

Visit the EUTF website at eutf.hawaii.gov for answers to general EUTF questions.

1. Find descriptions, forms and deadlines related to qualifying events that allow changes to your EUTF benefits during the year (e.g. new hire, marriage, birth, loss of coverage and acquisition of coverage) at eutf.hawaii.gov/active/eutf-hsta-active/qualifying-events.
2. EUTF health plan descriptions and general information on what your EUTF health plans cover and your coinsurance or copayments at eutf.hawaii.gov/health-life-insurance-providers.
3. Preparation for retirement: Overviews, pre-retirement including Medicare checklists, forms, deadlines, eligibility and descriptions of retiree health benefits can be found at eutf.hawaii.gov/future-retirees/eutf-future-retirees/enrollment-overview. Pre-retirement workshops dates and times can be found below.

Insurance Carrier (HMSA, Kaiser Permanente, CVS, HDS, VSP, HMA and Securian) Questions

Please contact insurance carriers directly for membership cards, claims and questions about coverage for specific procedures. **VSP Vision does not mail membership cards**; please mention to your provider that you have VSP coverage through EUTF. For a list of providers, visit eutf.hawaii.gov/health-life-insurance-providers.

Qualifying Events and Supporting Documents

Active employees should ensure EC-1 Enrollment Forms are submitted to your personnel office (or online for certain employers) within required deadlines with all supporting documents (45 days from the date of the event; births are 180 days). Retirees should mail EC-2 Enrollment Forms directly to the EUTF. Here are some common events and supporting document requirements:

1. Adding dependents through a qualifying event (e.g. new hire, marriage, birth and loss of coverage, new full-time student (ages 19-23). Include with your EC-1 a marriage certificate for spouses, birth certificates for children, student certification and domestic partner documents as described at eutf.hawaii.gov/active/eutf-hsta-active/qualifying-events.
2. Birth: Include a birth certificate (or hospital notice) and the newborn's Social Security Number. The Social Security Number is required to process enrollment.
3. Loss of coverage: You can add yourself and/or dependents to EUTF plans if you lose non-EUTF coverage. In addition to the dependent supporting document requirements listed above, include a notice from your former employer or insurance carrier that states the coverage lost (i.e. medical, dental and/or vision), the date coverage was lost and all individuals who lost coverage.

4. Acquisition of coverage: You can drop EUTF coverage for yourself and/or dependents if you acquire non-EUTF coverage. Include a notice from your employer or insurance carrier that states the coverage acquired (i.e. medical, dental and/or vision), the date coverage was acquired and all individuals who acquired coverage.
5. If your enrollment request impacts another EUTF member (e.g. you're adding a spouse that is terminating their EUTF plans or you're currently covered under your EUTF parent's plans), add a short note that describes the situation. This will help ensure effective dates are accurate.

Visit eutf.hawaii.gov/active/eutf-hsta-active/qualifying-events for more information on these and other qualifying events. Enrollment requests, including RUSH enrollments, will not be processed until all supporting documents and information are provided to the EUTF.

Please allow three weeks from the time you submit your EC-1 and all supporting documents to your personnel office until the time you receive a mailed confirmation notice from EUTF before contacting the EUTF to follow up on enrollment.

If your specific question cannot be answered through one of the aforementioned options, please contact the EUTF by one of the following methods:

1. Send a secure email by visiting eutf.hawaii.gov. Go to the bottom of the EUTF home page and select "Send Us a Message."
2. Call us at (808) 586-7390 or (800) 295-0089.

How to Contain Rising Premiums

In health insurance, there is member cost and plan cost. Member cost is what you pay when you receive healthcare services such as your copayment, coinsurance or deductible. Plan cost is the remaining amount of the eligible charge owed the provider or doctor. Plan cost impacts premiums, so to contain rising premiums, we must contain plan cost. There are many ways to do this.

1. CVS prescription drug plan change. One way to contain plan cost is to ensure the proper use of prescription drugs as approved by the U.S. Food & Drug Administration (FDA). There has been a lot of news recently around the use of Ozempic, a drug that is FDA-approved to treat diabetes, for weight loss. And, Ozempic currently adds the greatest amount to prescription drug plan cost. To ensure the proper use of Ozempic and other diabetes treatment drugs such as Rybelsus, Trulicity, Victoza and Mounjaro, the plan added a prior authorization (PA) requirement where a PA will be required if a claim does not include a diabetes diagnosis or if the patient has not had a prescription for another diabetic drug or supply in the past two years. This plan change will be effective July 1, 2023 for EUTF actives and non-Medicare retirees.

FDA-approved drugs for weight loss such as Wegovy and Saxenda (which have a higher dose of the active ingredient in Ozempic and Victoza, respectively) are also covered under the CVS prescription drug plan but have their own PA requirements to ensure they are prescribed appropriately.

2. Check your drug costs. Using generic drugs and in-network pharmacies not only saves you money but the plan as well. CVS Caremark has a Check Drug Cost tool where you can search for

lower drug cost options. It is a real-time pricing tool and can be accessed through your computer or mobile device. Visit caremark.com and register today.

3. **After-hours care.** Emergency room visits are also costly for both you and the plan. If you have an illness or injury that is not life-threatening, there are other options.

- **HMSA members:** Schedule an appointment with your doctor or connect with a doctor through HMSA's Online Care. If you have a health concern that needs more immediate attention, go to an urgent care clinic. To sign up for HMSA's Online Care or find a participating urgent care clinic, visit hmsa.com/eutf.
- **Kaiser Permanente members:** Log into your kp.org account to schedule an appointment or email your doctor. Other options include calling a Kaiser Permanente (KP) doctor for 24/7 medical advice at (833) 833-3333 (TTY: 711) or going to a KP urgent care center at the West Oahu, Honolulu, or Maui Lani Medical Office. Visit kp.org/getcare to learn more.

HMSA MyAccount

Interested in seeing how much of your medical insurance you have used? Or, when you last visited your doctor? Check your HMSA My Account today. Visit hmsa.com/eutf and click the Member Login button in the upper right corner. Use My Account to:

- View recent claims.
- See where you are with reaching your annual deductible and maximum out-of-pocket.
- Download your medical plan's Guide to Benefits.
- Print or request another HMSA membership card.
- Find health and fitness discounts with HMSA365, the Active&Fit Direct™ program, and the ChooseHealthy® program.



Scan to learn more about HMSA's Behavioral Health Program.

HMSA MEMBERS

Prioritize Your Mental Health

Everyone faces challenges that impact their mental and emotional health. Getting help can sometimes feel difficult or embarrassing, but it's important to know mental health challenges are common.

In 2022, nearly one in four American adults experienced a mental health illness, according to data from Mental Health of America. This demonstrates that mental health challenges are widespread and affect people of all ages and backgrounds.

It's also important to recognize seeking mental health services is a sign of strength, not weakness. Remember, taking care of your mental health is just as important as taking care of your physical health.

And with telehealth, it's even more convenient to get the help you need. With HMSA's Online Care you can connect with a therapist or counselor for free. Help is available 24/7, 365 days a year without leaving home. Visit hmsa.com/onlinecare or download the free app in the Apple App Store or Google Play Store.

Not sure where to start? HMSA's Behavioral Health Program can connect you or your loved ones to condition-specific behavioral health resources, education and other support services. We can also make referrals to behavioral health providers and provide case management services.

To learn more about the program, visit hmsa.com/eutf, click

Member Resources and Behavioral Health Program under Well-Being resources. Or, call (808) 695-7700 or (855) 856-0578.

Amwell is an independent company that provides hosting and software services for HMSA's Online Care platform on behalf of HMSA.

KAISER PERMANENTE MEMBERS

Care For The Whole You

You deserve care that supports your total health — mind, body, and spirit. While we often focus on our physical bodies, there's another side of your well-being to consider — the way you think, feel and act. If you need help with depression, anxiety, addiction and recovery, or other mental or emotional issues that interfere with your daily life, we're here to help.

At Kaiser Permanente, we're committed to provide our members with access to mental health services in a variety of ways. No matter where you start, you'll be supported by care teams who can connect you to the appropriate mental health and wellness resource. To schedule an appointment, call us from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays at (808) 432-7600 on Oahu; call (888) 945-7600 on the neighbor islands.

You can also explore online and telephone resources to learn more about care options, or to find tips and tools.

- kp.org/mentalhealth: Learn about mental health and wellness, or substance use services at Kaiser Permanente, including what to expect and how to get care.
- kp.org/selfcareapps/hi: Kaiser Permanente members can explore interactive activities, in-the-moment coping tools, community support, and more at no cost.

EUTF Pre-Retirement Health Benefits Workshops

Attend a Pre-Retirement Health Benefits Webinar and learn about the EUTF retiree health insurance benefits. It's never too early to start planning for your future. Whether you plan to retire in a few months or a few years, join us for a 60-minute presentation to learn about your EUTF retiree health insurance benefits. We'll cover:

- Dependent eligibility
- Health plan options
- Medicare
- Differences between active employee and retiree plan
- Premiums and contributions
- Making changes to your plans
- Completing the EC-2 enrollment form

Date	Time
7/10/2023	From 11 a.m. to noon, From 3 to 4 p.m.
7/24/2023	
8/07/2023	
8/21/2023	
9/11/2023	
9/25/2023	

To access the webinar, go to eutf.hawaii.gov on the day of the event and select "Learning Center" in the menu bar. Click the "Webinar" button and select the desired webinar. Registration is not required.



Employees' Retirement System
of the State of Hawaii

201 Merchant St, Suite 1400
Honolulu, HI 96813-2980

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Deputy Executive Director

Kristin Varela
Chief Investment Officer

Contact ERS-Pension
Monday-Friday 7:45am-4:30pm
(Except State Holidays)

For pension related questions,
please contact ERS at:

O'ahu: (808) 586-1735

Kaua'i: (808) 274-3010

Hawai'i: (808) 974-4077

Maui: (808) 984-8181

Moloka'i & Lāna'i

toll-free to Maui:

1 (800) 468-4644, ext. 48181

Continental U.S.

toll-free to O'ahu:

1 (888) 659-0708

ers.hawaii.gov

Contact EUTF

**Medical coverage/Medicare
reimbursements**

Monday-Friday: 7:45am-4:30pm

(Except State Holidays)

(808) 586-7390;

Toll-free: 1 (800) 295-0089

email at eutf@hawaii.gov,

or mail: 201 Merchant Street,

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SUMMER 2023

HOLOMUA
RETIREES & ACTIVE MEMBERS

Lanikai Beach

Ask ERS

Answers to some frequently asked questions

I asked my friend who stopped working if they retired, and they said they're "deferred." What does that mean?

You defer your retirement when you separate from an ERS-eligible position but apply for retirement at a later date. This can be to fulfill early or full retirement eligibility age requirements. Don't wait too long after reaching full eligibility, as pension benefits are effective from your date of retirement and aren't paid retroactively. Contact the ERS approximately six months prior to fulfilling your age requirement in order to ensure you receive timely benefits.

Can I take out a portion of my contributions if I'm still employed?

No. Only members who are no longer employed in an ERS-eligible position and not already receiving a retirement benefit are eligible to apply for a refund of their participant account balance, which consists of contributions and accrued interest. The entire balance, along with an additional hypothetical amount for vested Hybrid members, will be distributed; this will also result in forfeiture of any credited service.

UA 'IKE ANEI 'OUKOU? DID YOU KNOW?

The ERS website received more than 17,000 hits in April 2023. The top three pages visited: ERS Benefits Calculator, Retirement Planning and Member Forms.