

Active Employees Keep Beneficiary Info Updated

It is important to keep your beneficiary information up-to-date. In the case of retirement assets, having an outdated beneficiary designation or none at all will be a disadvantage for your loved ones. You must make separate elections for your pension, 457 account and Prudential life insurance. Contact information for making these elections is given below. Please note, a beneficiary designation may only be made by submitting the information through WRS' online methods or form. A divorce decree, property settlement, trust document or other type of legal document is not sufficient to make or change a beneficiary designation with WRS.

If you have questions or need assistance contact the Wyoming Retirement System at 307-777-7691 or email at pension@wyo.gov. Outdated beneficiary designations could be a disadvantage to your family and loved ones.

Contact Information

Pension: pension.wyo.gov

457 Plan: wrsdcp.com

Prudential life insurance:
mybensite.com/wy/
or call Health Smart at
1(800)525-8056

Wyoming Leaders Promote Retirement Security



The Wyoming Retirement System, bolstered by the support of many of Wyoming's elected leaders, used National

Retirement Security Week (NRSW) as a platform to inspire individuals to build their retirement security. Senator Mike Enzi again co-sponsored the U.S. Senate Resolution establishing NRSW and Governor Matt Mead signed a proclamation declaring October 22-28 Wyoming's "Retirement Security Week."

Purpose

The purpose of NRSW is to promote the personal responsibility each one of us has for saving and planning for retirement, as well as to take advantage of employer-sponsored plans.

Learn More

The Wyoming Retirement System continued using the *Your Whole Story*

campaign for 2017. Spend some time reviewing Your Whole Story's age-targeted messages and retirement tips, which remain available on the WRS website at <https://goo.gl/XWNviC>

WRS thanks the following state legislators who signed on as supporters of the event:

- Representative Don Burkhart, HD 15
- Representative Debbie Bovee, HD 36
- Representative Dan Laursen, HD 25
- Representative John Freeman, HD 60
- Representative Mark Kinner, HD 29
- Senator Fred Baldwin, SD 14
- Representative Landon Brown, HD 09
- Senator Eli Bebout, SD 26
- Senator Michael Von Flatern, SD 24
- Senator Affie Ellis, SD 08
- Senator Liisa Anselmi-Dalton, SD 12
- Representative Mike Gierau, HD 16
- Representative Bob Nicholas, HD 08
- Representative Dan Kirkbride, HD 04
- Senator Fred Emerich, SD 05
- Senator Ogden Driskill, SD01
- Representative Sue Wilson, HD 07



WRS Board Elects Officers

WRS is pleased to announce the Board re-elected Laura Ladd to continue her leadership as Board Chair, and elected Eric Nelson as Vice-Chair during the recent August meeting. Both will serve in their positions for one year. Ladd has served on the Board since 2009 with the last three as Chair. Nelson has served on the Board since 2015.



Laura Ladd,
WRS Board Chair



Eric Nelson,
WRS Vice-Chair

WRS Board Works to Manage Our Evolving Future

Assumptions about the future

In order to assure that plan contributions are sufficient to fund everyone's promised benefit, the Board must make assumptions about the future. The benefit security of a pension plan depends on using assumptions which reflect the underlying experience of the membership and the investments. These assumptions are then used to generate the contribution amounts. The assumptions with the largest impact on contribution levels are the future investment returns, inflation, salary increase rates and life expectancy.

Testing assumption correctness

To model the future, the Board authorized a comprehensive study of the experience of the members (death, disability, retirement, termination). This study, termed "experience study" also included a study of the underlying investments and expectation for future investment returns. The experience study then proposed recommended assumption changes for the valuation of the promised benefits. Increases in liability will usually translate into in-

creases in the contribution rates, and vice versa.

Results of experience study

The experience study showed that the expected return from the investments ought to be decreased from its current rate of 7.75%. The study also showed that WRS members are living longer than expected. At its August meeting the Board reduced the assumed investment return to 7% and increased the assumed life expectancy. Assuming lower investment earnings means more contributions will be required. Like other public pension plans, WRS needs to recognize a downward trend for long-term investment return expectations and an increase in life expectancy. The assumption on individual salary increases and total payroll growth was decreased, to better reflect the practices of WRS' participating employers.

Partnering for a solution

The assumption changes indicate a need to bring benefits and contributions back into alignment. The Board

will be studying alternatives and will bring information to the Joint Appropriations Committee, which is the legislative committee to which WRS reports, as well as members and stakeholders. The goal is to develop an acceptable solution for maintaining the positive funding path of the WRS pension plans. The process of measuring experience, reviewing contribution rates and funding is part of the Board's standard practice. The Board will report more information as the contribution and benefit review process evolves.

Board Meetings

The WRS Board meets in February, May, August, and November with additional meetings as needed. These are open to the public with details posted on our website at retirement.wyo.gov

Upcoming Meetings:

February 14-15 2018

*Cheyenne Botanic Gardens,
710 S Lions Park Dr,
Cheyenne, WY 82001*

Cost of Living Increases Not Possible

The WRS Board and Executive Director are aware that rising prices and inflation are a major difficulty for long-time retirees on a fixed income. Although cost of living adjustments (COLAs) were awarded for many years, the Board stopped awarding increases in 2008 when it became clear COLAs were not affordable from retirement trust funds.

In 2012, the Legislature passed a law returning the authority to grant COLAs to the Legislature and also requiring 100 percent funding of the plan before a COLA could be awarded from retirement trust funds. As such, it will be many years before the Public Employee Pension Plan, as well as the

smaller pension plans for public safety and judges, meet the requirements to pay for a COLA from retirement trust funds. Retirees, particularly those retired the longest, experience erosion of their purchasing power. The COLAs previously awarded by WRS, and still being paid, partially offset this reduction in purchasing power.

The WRS Board has advocated for legislatively funded COLAs and has provided the Legislature with a tool for estimating the cost of COLAs. WRS has had an increase in contacts from retired members advocating for COLA awards. However, WRS is not aware of any pending legislation to address this issue.

For those not yet retired, WRS emphasizes the need for personal savings in order to replace income and offset future inflation. Cost-of-living and other benefit increases are not incorporated into your benefit, emphasizing the importance for you to build additional resources for retirement income, such as personal savings. WRS developed an optional self-funded COLA for the Public Employee Plan, which members may select at the time of retirement. This payout option may be a suitable way to help prepare for future inflation. Read more on our website at: <https://goo.gl/n68sA4>

Protecting your assets – and your future By Empower Retirement Services

WRS uses an outside record keeper, Empower Retirement Services, for the 457 Plan. Empower Retirement Services contributed this article to give insight into their security enhancement measures.

Today, financial institutions everywhere are facing the constant threat of fraud, with identity theft at the forefront. In fact, according to the FBI, identity theft is the fastest growing white-collar crime in the U.S. (see their website at <https://goo.gl/3CALH3>) Therefore, it's important to stay proactive.

At Empower Retirement, we are constantly investing in improving security to help protect your retirement account with the Wyoming Retirement System (WRS) 457 Deferred Compensation Plan. We believe you deserve the best opportunity possible to save, invest and prepare for your future.

If you have tried to access (or transact on) your WRS 457 account online recently, you may have noticed the new steps, procedures and enhancements currently in place to confirm your identity. There's a good reason for this – we're committed, every day, to preventing any fraudulent activity on your account and prioritizing the savings you've worked so hard to build.

While we're fully aware that some measures may require extra verification, information and time, please understand that for certain transactions, such as requesting a distribution, we are taking precautions to prevent any fraudulent activity on your WRS account.

That's our duty to you.
You can protect yourself, too!

The U.S. Department of Treasury's Financial Crimes Enforcement Network is also doing everything it can to help

investors protect themselves from fraud leveled against them through financial institutions. Visit their website to see what steps you can take today to stay aware by going to: <https://goo.gl/jKTuS8>



Protect Yourself Against Identity Theft

According to consumer expert and host of the nationally-syndicated radio show, Clark Howard, credit freezes are one of the most effective ways for consumers to protect themselves against identity theft.

Freezing your credit allows you to seal your credit reports and use a personal identification number (PIN) that only you know and can use to temporarily “thaw” your credit when legitimate applications for credit and services need to be processed. The added layer of security means that thieves can't establish new credit in your name even if they are able to obtain your personal information.

For this to be effective, you must freeze your credit with all three main credit reporting agencies -- Equifax, Experian, and TransUnion and you can do it online, by phone, or by mail. Depending on the state you live in there may be a \$3 to \$10 fee to freeze and thaw your credit information. Wyoming residents pay a \$10 fee, but it is waived for victims of identity theft.

Visit the complete article online to view credit freeze contact information for TransUnion, Equifax, and Experian.*

**This is a summary of an article by Clark Howard and you can read the full article at <https://goo.gl/zSPhr9>*

Please Verify Address for Tax Season

Each year around tax time, the Wyoming Retirement System (WRS) issues 1099-R forms to retirees for tax reporting purposes. WRS encourages all retirees to verify addresses to ensure that your 1099-R is sent to the correct address. Please note if you have a seasonal address on file with WRS, your 1099-R will be sent to your mailing address and then be forwarded per any forwarding orders you have on file with the post office. Last year, over a thousand 1099-Rs were returned to WRS due to incorrect addresses. Therefore, it is imperative that we work together to make sure your 1099-R reaches the desired destination.

Log into your online pension account at pension.wyo.gov to verify or update your address. Visit our website at <https://goo.gl/XyQPkG> for more explanation about your 1099-R. If you do not have online access you can complete the form on the reverse and return to WRS. If you are making an address change by form, it must be postmarked no later than December 31, 2017 for your 2017 1099-R to go to that address.

Clip-and-Mail

If applicable, clip-and-mail the address change request form on the reverse of this page



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**“We can afford to retire in 20 years, but only
if our credit cards retire in 10 years.”**

In-Person or Online

Looking for an in-person presentation to better understand your retirement benefits? Or do you prefer online resources to watch at your convenience? Our team of Wyoming Retirement System Educators regularly provide in-person and online presentations, seminars, and other events.

Visit our website or ask your Human Resources Specialist for upcoming dates. WRS posts upcoming dates, times, and locations on our website at <https://goo.gl/hEuf6L>.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Email: _____

We only need 2 of the following for verification purposes:

RAIN ID: _____ Date of Birth: ____/____/____

Last 4 of SSN: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Address Change Request

Remit to:
Wyoming Retirement System
6101 Yellowstone Rd, Suite 500
Cheyenne, WY 82002

or submit electronically
Email: retireequestions@wyo.gov
Fax: 307-777-5995