

# PATHWAYS

*Your Journey to Retirement*

WRS MEMBER NEWSLETTER SUMMER 2025

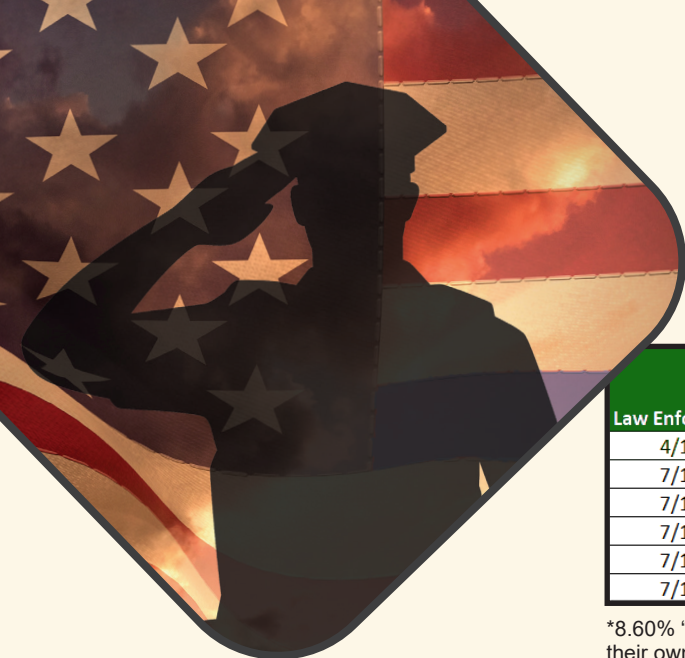


## WYOMING'S EDUCATION WORKFORCE: A LOOK AT EXPERIENCE AND DEDICATION

Here's a glimpse into the journeys, dedication, and expertise that define WRS's education workforce - particularly highlighting the contributions of our seasoned professionals.

- \* **Retirement Ready:** Nearly 1 in 10 educators (9.6% of the education workforce) are currently eligible for an unreduced retirement. That's a significant portion of experienced teachers who could transition into a new chapter.
- \* **Seasoned Professionals:** The average age within the education workforce is 44.9 years. This indicates a wealth of experience and knowledge within our schools.
- \* **Years Until Retirement:** On average, an education member is 14.4 years away from reaching their unreduced retirement. This highlights the long-term commitment of many in the field.
- \* **Dedicated & Experienced:** There are 12 members in their 80s still actively contributing to education and working for educational employers, with the oldest being an inspiring 84 years young, proving that passion for teaching knows no age limit.





LAW ENFORCEMENT PENSION PLAN CHANGES

Mark your calendar: **Beginning July 1, 2025**, the Law Enforcement plan will be updated with new contribution rates. This change allows employers to fund some or all required employee contributions. Law enforcement employees will find the specific rate adjustments outlined in the chart below.

Law Enforcement		Employee Paid by Employee	Employee Paid by Employer	Total Employee	Employer	Total Contribution
4/1/1989 to	6/30/1997	3.20%	5.57%	8.77%	5.68%	14.45%
7/1/1997 to	6/30/2002	3.73%	5.57%	9.30%	5.68%	14.98%
7/1/2002 to	6/30/2024		8.60%	8.60%	8.60%	17.20%
7/1/2024 to	6/30/2025	0.90%	8.60%	9.50%	9.50%	19.00%
7/1/2025 to	06/30/26	1.80%	8.60%	10.40%	10.40%	20.80%
7/1/2026 to		2.70%	8.60%	11.30%	11.30%	22.60%

\*8.60% "pickup" of employee contribution is for the State of Wyoming only. Local employers make their own decision.

**Employers:** If your July payroll has June earnings you want to contribute at the previous, lower rate, listen up! In your upload file, use the "Payroll End Date" (Column C) to tell RAIN which month to apply the contributions reported in that row. Contributions ending in June will use the old rate. Otherwise, the July rate will apply. This is important for employers who pay employees two weeks behind and their payroll covers parts of two months. Questions? Contact Employer Reporting at 307-777-2077 or [WRS-EmployerReporting@wyo.gov](mailto:WRS-EmployerReporting@wyo.gov).

Join our Transitional Payroll Training: We're holding a training on June 18, 2025, at 9:00 a.m. Details coming soon.

EARLY HEADS-UP  
WRS PUBLIC EMPLOYEE PLAN MEMBERS!

**Effective July 1, 2026**, WRS Public Employee Plan members and their employers will see modified contribution rates, a change mandated by House Enrolled Act 41 (2024 HB0083). This legislatively enacted adjustment is designed to align WRS funding with actuarial best practices. Consider this a proactive financial health check-up, ensuring the WRS funds remain robust, guided by expert analysis. This modification will remain in effect until June 30, 2028, and exclusively impacts the Public Employee Plan, with further adjustments scheduled biennially.

Effective Date: July 1, 2026, through June 30, 2028.

Contribution Rate Increases:

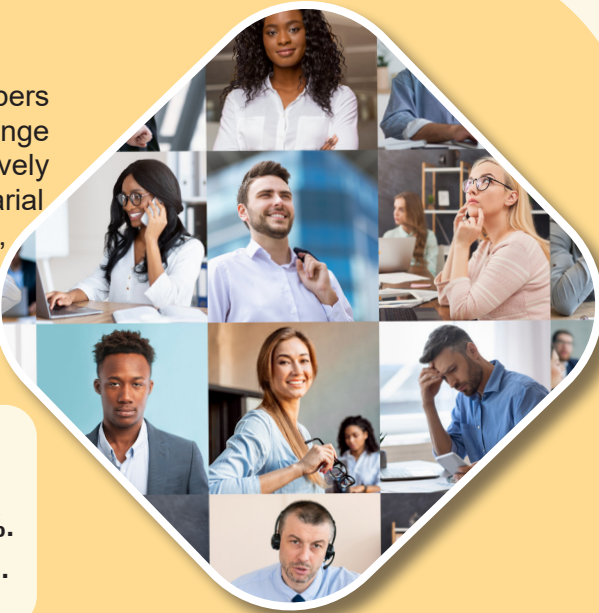
Employee Contribution Rate: Increase from 9.25% to 9.499%.

Employer Contribution Rate: Increase from 9.37% to 9.621%.

These rates reflect the results of the actuarial valuation performed as of January 1, 2025.

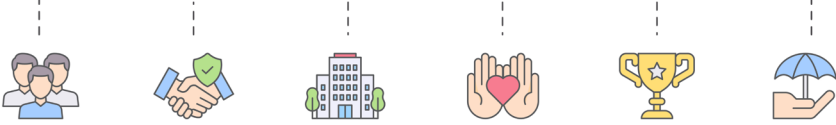
Rate Split:

- Contributions will be shared evenly between employers and employees.
- Employers may choose to pay all or part of the employee's portion of the contribution.



Want to learn more about these upcoming rate adjustments? You can find additional information here: [www.retirement.wyo.gov/2025/04/08/contributionnotice/](http://www.retirement.wyo.gov/2025/04/08/contributionnotice/)

ESTATE PLANNING



**Don't wait!** Estate planning is a vital process for everyone, no matter your current age or financial situation. Whether you're just starting out or are well-established, planning your estate while you're healthy allows you to define your legacy and spare your family unnecessary stress during a difficult time.

Think of estate planning as your roadmap for the future, outlining how your financial, medical, and personal care matters will be handled if the unexpected happens. Because it often involves intricate legal and financial details, consulting an estate planning attorney is a smart move. Involving your financial and tax advisors can also be helpful. Once established, your plan should be revisited regularly and adjusted to reflect life's milestones.

What main documents make up an estate plan?

- 1) Financial Power of Attorney (POA)** – this person handles your property and financial obligations if you're unable.
- 2) Healthcare Power of Attorney** – this person is designated to make healthcare decisions on your behalf should you lack the capacity to do so.
- 3) Will** - A will specifies who gets your belongings, money and can name guardians for your children. It makes settling your affairs easier than if the court has to decide without your instructions.
- 4) Advance Directive, or Living Will** - An advance directive explains your choices for end-of-life medical care if you become unable to communicate.
- 5) Trusts** - With a trust, you have more control over how your property and money are distributed to your beneficiaries.

Want to create an Estate Plan but don't know where to begin? Check out AARP's free Estate Planning Tool Kit! These downloadable booklets provide easy-to-understand information and the tools you need to make your plan. Visit [giftplanning.aarp.org/personal-estate-planning-kit-download](http://giftplanning.aarp.org/personal-estate-planning-kit-download) to get started!

Don't forget your digital life in estate planning! A digital estate plan legally outlines how your online accounts and digital assets will be managed if you die or become unable to. It names digital executors to handle your accounts and digital assets, like social media, online banking accounts, email, and photos. For more information: [eldercarematters.com/creating-digital-estate-plan-seniors/](http://eldercarematters.com/creating-digital-estate-plan-seniors/)

\* For informational purposes only. Not financial advice.  
Sources: [www.usbank.com/financialiq/plan-your-future/trusts-and-estates/why-estate-planning-is-important.html](http://www.usbank.com/financialiq/plan-your-future/trusts-and-estates/why-estate-planning-is-important.html), [aarp.org](http://aarp.org)



Important Update:  
SECURE Act 2.0 Affecting  
Catch-Up Contributions

We want to inform you about a recent update within the SECURE Act 2.0 regulations. Beginning January 1, 2026, participants who earned FICA wages of \$145,000 or more in the prior year must make age 50 and over catch-up contributions as Roth deferrals only.

This new rule means that payroll departments must change impacted participants' deferrals from pre-tax to Roth when the regular IRS annual contribution limit is reached. Payroll departments should monitor employees over the age of 50 who opt for catch up options if the employee makes \$145,000 or over.

It's important to understand that this update specifically concerns only age-related catch-up contributions and does not apply to special catch-up provisions.

Additional information will be provided later this year. You may also visit the IRS website for more information. [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov)







Wyoming Retirement System  
2515 Warren Ave. Suite 450  
Cheyenne, WY 82001



The Deferred Compensation unit is pleased to announce a **reduction** in participant annual administrative costs. At the Wyoming Retirement Board meeting on November 6, 2024, the Board approved lowering the administrative fee for the 457(b) Deferred Compensation Plan from the current 17 basis points to 15 basis points, effective July 1, 2025. This change will result in a participant's cost **decreasing from 17 cents to 15 cents for every \$100** invested in the Plan for balances up to \$100,000 or capped at \$150.

# WRS RetireFest

Get ready for the  
*'Longest Vacation of Your Life'*

**July 30th, 2025**  
**10:00am - 1:00pm**  
107 E. 25th St. Cheyenne, WY.

*WRS members learn about  
your benefits from WRS,  
EGI and Medicare!*

\* Food Trucks \* Dessert \* Giveaways



**Eric Nelson**

WRS Board Vice-Chair

## Get to know your WRS Board

Eric Nelson is an attorney with over 17 years of legal experience, spanning private practice in Indiana and various roles in Wyoming since 2001. He began his Wyoming legal career as a Deputy City Attorney with the City of Casper. He has also worked for the Wyoming Attorney General's Office and served two years as the Natrona County Attorney. For the past seven years, he has been in private practice handling a wide range of civil law, such as oil & gas, bankruptcy, and business matters.

Nelson also serves as:

- Member, Casper-Natrona County International Airport Board (since 2010)
- Board Member & Immediate Past President, Casper Area Chamber of Commerce.
- Vice-Chair, Casper chapter of the National Alliance on Mental Illness
- Currently serves as WRS Vice-Chair

Nelson resides in Casper with his wife and four children. He has degrees in German and Political Science and law (Indiana University, Bloomington). He is currently pursuing a master's in public administration at the University of Wyoming.