

MEMORANDUM

TO: Agency Heads
HR Directors

FROM: Pamela L. Pharris, Executive Director

SUBJECT: Retirement Benefits

DATE: February 8, 2010

According to the January 19, 2010, State Personnel Administration Memorandum, the Governor has included additional furlough days in the amended 2010 budget. Guidance was also provided for employers dealing with reductions in force. In past communications, we have discussed the effects of furloughs on reporting earnable compensation and service and although as a state we are enduring a fiscal emergency, the Employees' Retirement System (ERS) has championed the ideal that no state employee should lose retirement service or benefits as a result of furloughs.

In preparation for the possibility of layoffs or reductions in force, we want you to be aware that we are available to assist in any way we can. For example:

- Employees can access their retirement accounts online to obtain retirement estimate calculations by visiting <https://secure.ers.ga.gov/Member/MemLogin.aspx>
- We can meet with groups of your employees that have questions about their retirement benefits.
- Our Member Services group is available to answer questions about the service or disability retirement processes as well as how to apply for a refund.
- Individual counseling sessions are also available.

We encourage you to utilize our services and to partner with us as you make long-term decisions affecting your agency and your employees. Let us know your plans and we'll work with you to communicate with and prepare your employees. ERS maintains an online database of plan handbooks, employer and member newsletters, informational brochures and frequently asked questions. Please be sure to visit our new website at www.ers.ga.gov.

Employees who desire individual counseling can contact ERS to schedule an appointment or telephone consultation at 404-350-6300 or 800-805-4609. To discuss group meetings with affected employees about their retirement benefits, contact Megan Schaum at Megan.Schaum@ers.ga.gov. For questions on reporting earnable compensation and service contact Carlton Lenoir at Carlton.Lenoir@ers.ga.gov.