

# SENATE, No. 758

## STATE OF NEW JERSEY 219th LEGISLATURE

PRE-FILED FOR INTRODUCTION IN THE 2020 SESSION

**Sponsored by:**

**Senator VIN GOPAL**

**District 11 (Monmouth)**

### **SYNOPSIS**

Requires workers' compensation judges to be enrolled in PERS; requires JRS rights and benefits be applied to such judges enrolled in PERS.

### **CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT**

Introduced Pending Technical Review by Legislative Counsel.



1 AN ACT concerning enrollment of workers' compensation judges in  
 2 the Public Employees' Retirement System and amending  
 3 P.L.2007, c.92 and amending and supplementing P.L.1954, c.84  
 4 (C.43:15A-1 et seq.).

5  
 6 **BE IT ENACTED** by the Senate and General Assembly of the State  
 7 of New Jersey:

8  
 9 1. Section 2 of P.L.2007, c.92 (C.43:15C-2) is amended to read  
 10 as follows:

11 2. a. The following persons shall be eligible and shall  
 12 participate in the Defined Contribution Retirement Program:

13 (1) A person who commences service on or after the effective  
 14 date of this section of P.L.2007, c.92 (C.43:15C-1 et al.) in an  
 15 elective public office of this State or of a political subdivision  
 16 thereof, except that it shall not include a person who holds elective  
 17 public office on the effective date of this section and is enrolled in  
 18 the Public Employees' Retirement System while that person  
 19 continues to hold that elective public office or, for an elected  
 20 official specified in section 5 of P.L.2017, c.344 (C.43:15A-7.5),  
 21 another elective public office, without a break in service. Service in  
 22 the Legislature shall be considered a single elective public office.

23 (2) A person who commences service on or after the effective  
 24 date of this section in an employment, office or position of the State  
 25 or of a political subdivision thereof, or an agency, board,  
 26 commission, authority or instrumentality of the State or of a  
 27 subdivision, pursuant to an appointment by the Governor that  
 28 requires the advice and consent of the Senate, or pursuant to an  
 29 appointment by the Governor to serve at the pleasure of the  
 30 Governor only during his or her term of office. This paragraph  
 31 shall not be deemed to include a person otherwise eligible for  
 32 membership in the State Police Retirement System or the Judicial  
 33 Retirement System. This paragraph shall not include Workers'  
 34 Compensation Judges of the Division of Workers' Compensation in  
 35 the Department of Labor and Workforce Development, except such  
 36 judges who waive transfer to the Public Employees' Retirement  
 37 System, pursuant to section 3 of P.L. , c. (pending before the  
 38 Legislature as this bill).

39 (3) A person who commences service on or after the effective  
 40 date of this section in an employment, office or position in a  
 41 political subdivision of the State, or an agency, board, commission,  
 42 authority or instrumentality of a subdivision, pursuant to an  
 43 appointment by an elected public official or elected governing  
 44 body, that requires the specific consent or approval of the elected  
 45 governing body of the political subdivision that is substantially

**EXPLANATION** – Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets **[thus]** in the above bill is  
 not enacted and is intended to be omitted in the law.

Matter underlined thus is new matter.

1 similar in nature to the advice and consent of the Senate for  
2 appointments by the Governor of the State as that similarity is  
3 determined by the elected governing body and set forth in an  
4 adopted ordinance or resolution, pursuant to guidelines or policy  
5 that shall be established by the Local Finance Board in the  
6 Department of Community Affairs or the Department of Education,  
7 as appropriate to the elected governing body. This paragraph shall  
8 not be deemed to include a person otherwise eligible for  
9 membership in the Teachers' Pension and Annuity Fund or the  
10 Police and Firemen's Retirement System, or a person who is  
11 employed or appointed in the regular or normal course of  
12 employment or appointment procedures and consented to or  
13 approved in a general or routine manner appropriate for and  
14 followed by the political subdivision, or the agency, board,  
15 commission, authority or instrumentality of a subdivision, or a  
16 person who holds a professional license or certificate to perform  
17 and is performing as a certified health officer, tax assessor, tax  
18 collector, municipal planner, chief financial officer, registered  
19 municipal clerk, construction code official, licensed uniform  
20 subcode inspector, qualified purchasing agent, or certified public  
21 works manager.

22 (4) A person who is granted a pension or retirement allowance  
23 under any pension fund or retirement system established under the  
24 laws of this State and elects to participate pursuant to section 1 of  
25 P.L.1977, c.171 (C.43:3C-3) upon being elected to public office.

26 (5) A member of the Teachers' Pension and Annuity Fund,  
27 Police and Firemen's Retirement System, State Police Retirement  
28 System, or the Public Employees' Retirement System for whom  
29 compensation is defined as the amount of base or contractual salary  
30 equivalent to the annual maximum wage contribution base for  
31 Social Security, pursuant to the Federal Insurance Contributions  
32 Act, for contribution and benefit purposes of those retirement  
33 systems, for whom participation in this retirement program shall be  
34 with regard to any excess over the maximum compensation only.

35 (6) A person in employment, office or position for which the  
36 annual salary or remuneration is less, or the hours of work per week  
37 are fewer, than that which is required to become a member of the  
38 Teachers' Pension and Annuity Fund or the Public Employees'  
39 Retirement System, or to make contributions to those systems as a  
40 member on the basis of any such employment, office or position,  
41 after November 1, 2008.

42 b. No person shall be eligible to participate in the retirement  
43 program with respect to any public employment, office, or position  
44 if:

45 (1) the base salary for that employment, office, or position is  
46 less than \$5,000 per year;

47 (2) the person is, on the basis of service in that employment,  
48 office, or position, eligible for membership or enrolled as a member

1 of another State or locally-administered pension fund or retirement  
2 system established under the laws of this State including the  
3 Alternate Benefit Program, except as otherwise specifically  
4 provided in subsection a. of this section;

5 (3) the person is receiving a benefit as a retiree from any other  
6 State or locally-administered pension fund or retirement system  
7 established under the laws of this State, except as provided in  
8 section 1 of P.L.1977, c.171 (C.43:3C-3); or

9 (4) the person is an officer or employee of a political  
10 subdivision of this State or of a board of education, or of any  
11 agency, authority or instrumentality thereof, who is ineligible for  
12 membership in the Public Employees' Retirement System pursuant  
13 to section 20 of P.L.2007, c.92 (C.43:15A-7.2).

14 c. A person eligible and required to participate in the  
15 retirement program pursuant to paragraph (5) of subsection a. of  
16 this section may elect to waive participation with regard to that  
17 employment, office, or position by filing, when first eligible, on a  
18 form required by the division, a written waiver with the Division of  
19 Pensions and Benefits that waives all rights and benefits that would  
20 otherwise be provided by the retirement program. Such a person  
21 may thereafter elect to participate in the retirement program by  
22 filing, on a form required by the division, a written election to  
23 participate in the retirement program and participation in the  
24 retirement program pursuant to such election shall commence on  
25 the January 1 next following the filing of the election to participate.

26 d. Service credited to a participant in the Defined Contribution  
27 Retirement Program shall not be recognized as service credit to  
28 determine eligibility for employer-paid health care benefits in  
29 retirement pursuant to P.L.1961, c.49 (C.52:14-17.25 et seq.),  
30 N.J.S.40A:10-16 et seq., P.L.1979, c.391 (C.18A:16-12 et al.) or  
31 any other law, rule or regulation.  
32 (cf: P.L.2017, c.344, s.3)

33

34 2. Section 7 of P.L.1954, c.84 (C.43:15A-7) is amended to read  
35 as follows:

36 7. There is hereby established the Public Employees'  
37 Retirement System of New Jersey in the Division of Pensions and  
38 Benefits of the Department of the Treasury. The membership of the  
39 retirement system shall include:

40 a. The members of the former "State Employees' Retirement  
41 System of New Jersey" enrolled as such as of December 30, 1954,  
42 who shall not have claimed for refund their accumulated deductions  
43 in said system as provided in this section;

44 b. Any person becoming an employee of the State or other  
45 employer after January 2, 1955 and every veteran, other than a  
46 retired member who returns to service pursuant to subsection b. of  
47 section 27 of P.L.1966, c.217 (C.43:15A-57.2) and other than those  
48 whose appointments are seasonal, becoming an employee of the

1 State or other employer after such date, including a temporary  
2 employee with at least one year's continuous service. The  
3 membership of the retirement system shall not include those  
4 persons appointed to serve as described in paragraphs (2) and (3) of  
5 subsection a. of section 2 of P.L.2007, c.92 (C.43:15C-2), except a  
6 person who was a member of the retirement system prior to the  
7 effective date of sections 1 through 19 of P.L.2007, c.92 (C.43:15C-  
8 1 through C.43:15C-15, C.43:3C-9, C.43:15A-7, C.43:15A-75 and  
9 C.43:15A-135) and continuously thereafter. The membership of the  
10 retirement system shall include Workers' Compensation Judges of  
11 the Division of Workers' Compensation in the Department of Labor  
12 and Workforce Development; and

13 c. Every employee veteran in the employ of the State or other  
14 employer on January 2, 1955, who is not a member of any  
15 retirement system supported wholly or partly by the State.

16 d. Membership in the retirement system shall be optional for  
17 elected officials other than veterans, and for school crossing guards,  
18 who having become eligible for benefits under other pension  
19 systems are so employed on a part-time basis. Elected officials  
20 commencing service on or after the effective date of sections 1  
21 through 19 of P.L.2007, c.92 (C.43:15C-1 through C.43:15C-15,  
22 C.43:3C-9, C.43:15A-7, C.43:15A-75 and C.43:15A-135) shall not  
23 be eligible for membership in the retirement system based on  
24 service in the elective public office, except that an elected official  
25 enrolled in the retirement system as of that effective date who  
26 continues to hold that elective public office or, for an elected  
27 official specified in section 5 of P.L.2017, c.344 (C.43:15A-7.5),  
28 another elective public office, without a break in service shall be  
29 eligible to continue membership in the retirement system under the  
30 terms and conditions of enrollment. Service in the Legislature shall  
31 be considered a single elective public office. Any part-time school  
32 crossing guard who is eligible for benefits under any other pension  
33 system and who was hired as a part-time school crossing guard  
34 prior to March 4, 1976, may at any time terminate his membership  
35 in the retirement system by making an application in writing to the  
36 board of trustees of the retirement system. Upon receiving such  
37 application, the board of trustees shall terminate his enrollment in  
38 the system and direct the employer to cease accepting contributions  
39 from the member or deducting from the compensation paid to the  
40 member. State employees who become members of any other  
41 retirement system supported wholly or partly by the State as a  
42 condition of employment shall not be eligible for membership in  
43 this retirement system. Notwithstanding any other law to the  
44 contrary, all other persons accepting employment in the service of  
45 the State shall be required to enroll in the retirement system as a  
46 condition of their employment, regardless of age.

47 (1) Before or on November 1, 2008, no person in employment,  
48 office or position, for which the annual salary or remuneration is

1 fixed at less than \$1,500.00, shall be eligible to become a member  
2 of the retirement system.

3 (2) After November 1, 2008, a person who was a member of the  
4 retirement system on that date and continuously thereafter shall be  
5 eligible to be a member of the retirement system in employment,  
6 office or position, for which the annual salary or remuneration is  
7 fixed at \$1,500 or more.

8 (3) After November 1, 2008 and before or on the effective date  
9 of P.L.2010, c.1, a person who was not a member of the retirement  
10 system on November 1, 2008, or who was a member of the  
11 retirement system on that date but not continuously thereafter, and  
12 who is in employment, office or position, for which the annual  
13 salary or remuneration is certified by the applicable public entity at  
14 \$7,500 or more, shall be eligible to become a member of the  
15 retirement system. The \$7,500 minimum annual salary or  
16 remuneration amount shall be adjusted annually by the Director of  
17 the Division of Pensions and Benefits, by regulation, in accordance  
18 with changes in the Consumer Price Index but by no more than 4  
19 percent. "Consumer Price Index" means the average of the annual  
20 increase, expressed as a percentage, in the consumer price index for  
21 all urban consumers in the New York City and Philadelphia  
22 metropolitan statistical areas during the preceding calendar year as  
23 reported by the United States Department of Labor.

24 (4) After the effective date of P.L.2010, c.1, no person in an  
25 employment, office or position of the State, or an agency, board,  
26 commission, authority or instrumentality of the State, for which the  
27 hours of work are fixed at fewer than 35 per week shall be eligible  
28 to become a member of the retirement system; and no person in  
29 employment, office or position with a political subdivision of the  
30 State, or an agency, board, commission, authority or instrumentality  
31 of a political subdivision of the State, for which the hours of work  
32 are fixed by an ordinance or resolution of the political subdivision,  
33 or agency, board, commission, authority or instrumentality thereof,  
34 at fewer than 32 per week shall be eligible to become a member of  
35 the retirement system. Any hour or part thereof, during which the  
36 person does not work due to the person's participation in a  
37 voluntary or mandatory furlough program shall not be deducted in  
38 determining if a person's hours of work are fixed at fewer than 35 or  
39 32 per week, as appropriate, for the purpose of eligibility.

40 e. Membership of any person in the retirement system shall  
41 cease if he shall discontinue his service for more than two  
42 consecutive years.

43 f. The accumulated deductions of the members of the former  
44 "State Employees' Retirement System" which have been set aside in  
45 a trust fund designated as Fund A as provided in section 5 of this  
46 act and which have not been claimed for refund prior to February 1,  
47 1955 shall be transferred from said Fund A to the Annuity Savings  
48 Fund of the Retirement System, provided for in section 25 of this

1 act. Each member whose accumulated deductions are so transferred  
2 shall receive the same prior service credit, pension credit, and  
3 membership credit in the retirement system as he previously had in  
4 the former "State Employees' Retirement System" and shall have  
5 such accumulated deductions credited to his individual account in  
6 the Annuity Savings Fund. Any outstanding obligations of such  
7 member shall be continued.

8 g. Any school crossing guard electing to terminate his  
9 membership in the retirement system pursuant to subsection d. of  
10 this section shall, upon his request, receive a refund of his  
11 accumulated deductions as of the date of his appointment to the  
12 position of school crossing guard. Such refund of contributions  
13 shall serve as a waiver of all benefits payable to the employee, to  
14 his dependent or dependents, or to any of his beneficiaries under the  
15 retirement system.

16 h. A temporary employee who is employed under the federal  
17 Workforce Investment Act shall not be eligible for membership in  
18 the system. Membership for temporary employees employed under  
19 the federal Job Training Partnership Act, Pub.L.97-300 (29  
20 U.S.C.s.1501) who are in the system on September 19, 1986 shall  
21 be terminated, and affected employees shall receive a refund of  
22 their accumulated deductions as of the date of commencement of  
23 employment in a federal Job Training Partnership Act program.  
24 Such refund of contributions shall serve as a waiver of all benefits  
25 payable to the employee, to his dependent or dependents, or to any  
26 of his beneficiaries under the retirement system.

27 i. Membership in the retirement system shall be optional for a  
28 special service employee who is employed under the federal Older  
29 American Community Service Employment Act, Pub.L.94-135 (42  
30 U.S.C.s.3056). Any special service employee employed under the  
31 federal Older American Community Service Employment Act,  
32 Pub.L.94-135 (42 U.S.C.s.3056), who is in the retirement system on  
33 the effective date of P.L.1996, c.139 may terminate membership in  
34 the retirement system by making an application in writing to the  
35 board of trustees of the retirement system. Upon receiving the  
36 application, the board shall terminate enrollment in the system and  
37 the member shall receive a refund of accumulated deductions as of  
38 the date of commencement of employment in a federal Older  
39 American Community Service Employment Act program. This  
40 refund of contributions shall serve as a waiver of all benefits  
41 payable to the employee, to any dependent or dependents, or to any  
42 beneficiary under the retirement system.

43 j. An employee of the South Jersey Port Corporation who was  
44 employed by the South Jersey Port Corporation as of the effective  
45 date of P.L.1997, c.150 (C.34:1B-144 et al.) and who shall be re-  
46 employed within 365 days of such effective date by a subsidiary  
47 corporation or other corporation, which has been established by the  
48 Delaware River Port Authority pursuant to subdivision (m) of

1 Article I of the compact creating the Delaware River Port Authority  
2 (R.S.32:3-2), as defined in section 3 of P.L.1997, c.150 (C.34:1B-  
3 146), shall be eligible to continue membership while an employee  
4 of such subsidiary or other corporation.

5 k. An employee of a renaissance school project established  
6 pursuant to P.L.2011, c.176 (C.18A:36C-1 et seq.) upon  
7 commencement of employment.  
8 (cf: P.L.2018, c.129, s.2)  
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10 3. (New section) a. Notwithstanding the provisions of any  
11 other law to the contrary, Workers' Compensation Judges of the  
12 Division of Workers' Compensation in the Department of Labor and  
13 Workforce Development appointed on or after the effective date of  
14 P.L. , c. (pending before the Legislature as this bill) shall be  
15 enrolled in the Public Employees' Retirement System. Membership  
16 in the Public Employees' Retirement System shall be a condition of  
17 employment for service as a judge of compensation for each judge  
18 enrolled after that effective date.

19 Notwithstanding enrollment in the system, the laws and  
20 regulations governing the system shall not apply to workers'  
21 compensation judges covered by this section. Those judges shall be  
22 subject to and governed by the laws and regulation of the Judicial  
23 Retirement System, established pursuant to P.L.1973, c.140  
24 (C.43:6A1 et seq.), in the same manner as a judge enrolled in the  
25 Judicial Retirement System. For all purposes, those workers'  
26 compensation judges covered by this section shall be deemed  
27 members of the Judicial Retirement System but for enrollment in  
28 the Public Employees' Retirement System.

29 b. A workers' compensation judge who is a participant in the  
30 Defined Contribution Retirement Program, established pursuant to  
31 P.L.2007, c.92 (C.43:15C-1 et seq.), on the effective date of P.L. ,  
32 c. (pending before the Legislature as this bill) or a participant in  
33 the Workers' Compensation Judges Part of the Public Employees'  
34 Retirement System on the effective date of P.L. , c. (pending  
35 before the Legislature as this bill), shall be transferred out of the  
36 program or the part within 90 days following that effective date and  
37 covered by the provisions of section a. of this section. A judge may  
38 elect not to be transferred and covered by the provisions of  
39 subsection a. of this section by filing a statement within 30 days  
40 following that effective date with the Division of Pensions and  
41 Benefits in the Department of the Treasury waiving all rights and  
42 benefits which would otherwise be provided in accordance with  
43 subsection a. of this section.

44 The account in the program or the part for each judge transferred  
45 and covered by the provisions of subsection a. of this section shall  
46 be adjusted to reflect the transfer and each judge shall be given  
47 service credit for the provisions of subsection a. of this section for  
48 service starting on the judge's date of appointment.



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the Defined Contribution Retirement Program or the Workers' Compensation Judges Part of the Public Employees' Retirement System will be transferred out of the program or the part within 90 days following the bill's effective date. A judge may elect not to be transferred by filing a statement within 30 days following the bill's effective date with the Division of Pensions and Benefits in the

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1 Department of the Treasury waiving all rights and benefits which  
2 would otherwise be provided after the transfer.

3 The account in the program or the part for each judge transferred  
4 will be adjusted to reflect the transfer and each judge will be given  
5 service credit for service during participation in the program or the  
6 part. The unfunded liability for the benefits provided by the  
7 transfer will be paid from the Second Injury Fund.