



— Division of Pensions and Benefits —

RECENT LEGISLATION 2011

View Legislation from

[2011](#) | [2010](#) | [2009](#) | [2008](#) | [2007](#) | [2006](#) | [2005](#) | [2004](#)
[2003](#) | [2002](#) | [2001](#) | [2000](#) | [1999](#) | [1998](#) | [1997](#)

Chapter 79, P.L. 2011	This law repeals section 76 of P.L. 2011, c.78 (the pension and health benefit reform law), which requires health care plans for public employees to limit coverage for certain medically necessary tertiary health care services performed by certain out-of-State health care providers.
Chapter 78, P.L. 2011	This law makes various changes to pension and health care benefits for public employees.
Chapter 52, P.L. 2011	This law provides that the boards of trustees of the Teachers' Pension and Annuity Fund, the Public Employees' Retirement System, the Police and Firemen's Retirement System, and the State Police Retirement System, and the State House Commission in the case of the Judicial Retirement System, will require a certifying officer to complete training on eligibility for enrollment in the pension fund or retirement system in accordance with the provisions of the rules or regulations and laws governing those funds or systems.

Links to the [New Jersey Legislature](#) and other legislature information.**Chapter 79, P.L. 2011****Date Approved:** June 28, 2011**Effective Date:** June 28, 2011**Description:**

This law repeals section 76 of P.L. 2011, c.78 (the pension and health benefit reform law), which requires health care plans for public employees to limit coverage for certain medically necessary tertiary health care services performed by certain out-of-State health care providers.

To view the new law, click here: [Chapter 79, P.L. 2011](#) Adobe PDF (34K)

[Back to Top](#)

Chapter 78, P.L. 2011

Date Approved: June 28, 2011

Effective Date: June 28, 2011. Sections 39 through 44 regarding employee health benefit contributions will expire four years after this law's effective date.

Description:

This law makes various changes to pension and health care benefits for public employees.

I. Pension Plan Changes

This law makes various changes to the manner in which the Teachers' Pension and Annuity Fund (TPAF), the Judicial Retirement System (JRS), the Public Employees' Retirement System (PERS), the Police and Firemen's Retirement System (PFRS), and the State Police Retirement System (SPRS) operate and to the benefit provisions of those systems.

Sections 1 to 7: New Pension Committees Formed

Establishes new pension committees as follows:

- One 8-member committee for the TPAF and one for the SPRS;
- Two 8-member committees in the PERS, one for the State part of the PERS and one for the local part of the PERS; and
- Two 10-member committees in the PFRS, one for the State part of the PFRS and one for the local part of the PFRS.

Half of the members of each committee will be appointed by the Governor to represent public employers and half appointed by certain unions whose members are in the retirement system. When a target funded ratio for the system or part of the system is achieved, each committee will have the discretionary authority to modify the: member contribution rate; formula for calculation of final compensation or final salary; fraction used to calculate a retirement allowance; age at which a member may be eligible and the benefits for service or early retirement; and benefits provided for disability retirement. A committee will not have authority to change the number of years required for vesting.

The committees of these systems will have the authority to reactivate the cost of living adjustment on pensions and modify the basis for the calculation of the cost of living adjustment and set the duration and extent of the activation. A committee must give priority consideration to the reactivation of the cost of living adjustment. No decision of the committee shall be implemented if the direct or indirect result of the decision will be that the system's funded ratio falls below the target funded ratio in any valuation period during the 30 years following the implementation of the decision.

The State House Commission will have the same authority with regard to JRS.

Each committee may also hire actuaries and consultants.

Sections 8 to 16: New Employee Pension Contribution Rates

This law provides for increases in the employee contribution rates: from 5.5% to 6.5% plus an additional 1% phased-in over 7 years beginning in the first year, meaning after 12 months, after the law's effective date for TPAF and PERS (including legislators, Law Enforcement Officer (LEO)

members, and workers compensation judges); from 3% to 12% for JRS phased-in over seven years; from 8.5% to 10% for PFRS members and members of PERS Prosecutors Part; and from 7.5% to 9% for SPRS members.

Section 17 to 19 and Sections 37 and 38: Pension Plan Design Changes

New members of TPAF and PERS will need 30 years of creditable service and age 65 for receipt of the early retirement benefit without a reduction of 1/4 of 1% for each month that the member is under age 65. New members will be eligible for a service retirement benefit at age 65. A new PFRS member's special retirement benefit will be 60% of final compensation, plus 1% of final compensation multiplied by the number of years of creditable service over 25 but not over 30, instead of the current benefit of 65% of final compensation plus 1% for each year of service over 25 but not over 30.

Sections 15 and 20 to 23: Funding Changes

Changes the methodology for calculating the unfunded accrued liability payment portion of the employer's annual pension contribution to the PERS, TPAF, PFRS, SPRS and JRS. The unfunded actuarial accrued liability (UAAL) will be amortized for each plan over an open-ended 30 year period and paid in level dollars. Beginning with the July 1, 2019 actuarial valuation (July 1, 2018 for PFRS), the UAAL will be amortized over a closed 30 year period until the remaining period reaches 20, when the amortization period will revert to an open-ended 20 year period.

Section 24: Retirement Systems Actuary Selection Committee

Amends the statute pertaining to the Retirement Systems Actuary Selection Committee.

Section 25: COLA Suspension

Suspends the payment of automatic cost-of-living adjustment to current and future retirees and beneficiaries until reactivated as permitted by this law.

Section 26: Contractual Rights to Employer Pension Contributions

Provides that each member of the TPAF, JRS, Prison Officers' Pension Fund, PERS, Consolidated Police and Firemen's Pension Fund, PFRS, and SPRS will have a contractual right to the annual required contribution made by the employer or by any other public entity. The contractual right to the annual required contribution means that the employer or other public entity must make the annual required contribution on a timely basis to help ensure that the retirement system is securely funded and that the retirement benefits to which the members are entitled by statute and in consideration for their public service and in compensation for their work will be paid upon retirement. The failure of the State or any other public employer to make the annually required contribution will be deemed to be an impairment of the contractual right of each employee. The Superior Court, Law Division will have jurisdiction over any action brought by a member of any system or fund or any board of trustees to enforce the contractual right set forth in this law. The State and other public employers will submit to the jurisdiction of the Superior Court, Law Division and will not assert sovereign immunity in such an action. If a member or board prevails in litigation to enforce the contractual right set forth in this law, the court may award that party their reasonable attorney's fees.

This section also provides that the rights reserved to the State in current law to alter, modify, or amend such retirement systems and funds, or to create in any member a right in the corpus or management of a retirement system or pension fund, cannot diminish the contractual right of employees established by this law.

Section 27: Target Funded Ratio Defined

Defines the term "target funded ratio" to mean a ratio of the actuarial value of assets against the actuarially determined accrued liabilities expressed as a percentage that will be 75 percent in State fiscal year 2012, and increased annually by equal increments in each of the subsequent seven fiscal years, until the ratio reaches 80 percent at which it is to remain for all subsequent fiscal years.

Section 28 to 32: Investment Council

Increases the membership of the State Investment Council from 13 to 16 members. It eliminates one representative from the SPRS, but adds one member from the State Troopers Fraternal Association. Two additional members are appointed by the Governor with the advice and consent of the Senate, and one additional appointment is added to the current one by the Governor from persons nominated by Public Employee Committee of the New Jersey State AFL-CIO, specifying that one of the two will be a representative of a police officers' or firefighters' union. The law also provides that an elected member, as opposed to any member, of the boards of trustees for TPAF, PERS and PFRS will be eligible for designation to serve on the State Investment Council.

Section 33: Super Conciliator

Establishes a process using a super conciliator to resolve an impasse on a decision or matter regarding benefits before any of the newly established committees in the TPAF, PERS, PFRS, and SPRS.

Sections 34, 35 and 82: Retiring While Serving in Elected Office

The law repeals N.J.S.A.43:15A-47.2 and 43:16A-5.1 which provide that a member of PERS or PFRS may retire while holding an elective public office covered by PERS or PFRS and continue to receive the full salary for that office, if the member's PERS or PFRS retirement allowance is not based solely on service in the elected public office. PFRS or PERS retirees who were granted a retirement allowance under those sections prior to the law's effective date and are currently in an elective office covered by either of those systems may continue to receive their pension benefit and salary for the elective office.

Sections 56 to 75: Pension Plan Compliance Provisions

Codifies in law various provisions necessary to maintain the qualified plan status of the retirement systems under the federal Internal Revenue Code; for compliance with Statements Nos. 43 and 45 of the Governmental Accounting Standards Board, Accounting and Financial Reporting by Employers for Postemployment Benefits Other Than Pensions (GASB 43/45); and to bring the defined contribution plans into compliance with U.S. Department of Treasury regulations affecting administration of plans administered under section 403(b) of the Internal Revenue Code. Modifications pertaining to the Supplemental Annuity Collective Trust are also being made by the law.

II. Health Care Benefit Changes**Sections 39 to 44: Required Active and Retired Employee Contributions towards Health Benefit Coverage**

This law requires all public employees and certain public retirees to contribute toward the cost of health care benefits coverage based upon a percentage of the cost of coverage.

All active public employees will pay a percentage of the cost of health care benefits coverage for themselves and any dependents. Lower compensated employees will pay a smaller percentage and more highly compensated employees will pay a higher percentage. In addition, the applicable percentage will vary based upon whether the employee has family, individual, or member with child or spouse coverage. The rates gradually increase based on an employee's compensation, at intervals of \$5,000. These rates will be phased in over several years for employees employed on the contribution's effective date who will pay $\frac{1}{4}$, $\frac{1}{2}$, and $\frac{3}{4}$ of the amount of the contribution rate during the first, second and third years, respectively, meaning during the three 12-month periods after the contribution rates become effective. The law establishes a "floor" for employee contributions so that no employee will pay an amount that is less than 1.5% of the employee's compensation. Employees who pay for health care benefits coverage based upon a percentage of the cost of coverage will not also be required to pay the minimum contribution of 1.5% of compensation, as provided by other laws. The contribution will commence on the law's effective date for certain public employees and upon the expiration of a collective negotiation agreement for others.

Similar provisions in this law apply to retirees of the State, employers other than the State, and units of local government who accrue 25 years of service after the law's effective date, or on or after the expiration of an applicable collective bargaining agreement in effect on that date, and retire after that, who will be required to contribute a percentage of the cost of health care benefits coverage in retirement, but as based on their retirement benefit. These provisions will not apply to public employees who, on the effective date of the law, have 20 or more year of service in one or more State or locally-administered retirement systems. A 1.5% "floor", for those retirees to whom the 1.5% contribution in current law applies, will also be applicable to these retirees.

The law allows boards of education and units of local government, that do not participate in the SHBP or SEHBP, to enter into contracts for health care benefits coverage, as may be required to implement a collective negotiations agreement, and agree to different employee contribution rates if certain cost savings in the aggregate over the period of the agreement can be demonstrated. The savings must be certified to the Department of Education or the Department of Community Affairs, as appropriate. The departments are to approve or reject the certification, within 30 days of receipt. The certification is deemed approved if not rejected within that time. The agreement cannot be executed until that approval is received or the 30 day period has lapsed, whichever occurs first.

The provisions concerning contributions for health care benefits will expire four years after the effective date.

A public employee whose amount of contribution in retirement was determined in accordance with the expired sections of law will be required to contribute the amount so determined in retirement, notwithstanding that the law has expired, with the retirement allowance, and any future cost of living adjustment thereto, used to identify the percentage of the cost of coverage.

Sections 36 and 45 to 55: New SHBP and SEHBP Committees

Creates two new committees, one for the State Health Benefits Program and one for the School Employees' Health Benefits Program and confers on the committees the responsibility for plan design. Half of the committee members will be appointed by the Governor to represent public employers and half by certain unions who represent public employees in the State. The law establishes a process using a super conciliator to resolve an impasse on a matter before a committee.

Requires the committees for both programs to set the amounts for maximums, co-pays, deductibles, and other such participant costs; provide employees with the option to select one level of at least three levels of coverage each for family, individual, individual and spouse, and individual and dependent, or equivalent categories, for each plan offered by the program differentiated by out of pocket costs to employees including with regard to co-payments and deductibles; and provide for a high deductible health plan that conforms to the Internal Revenue Code Section 223.

Requires the Division to complete a study regarding local employer participation in the SHBP/SEHBP within one year of this law's effective date.

Requires local employers to establish an IRC Section 125 cafeteria plan for medical and dental plan participant costs.

Section 76: Coverage for Out-of-State Health Care Providers

Beginning January 1, 2012, limits coverage for certain medically necessary tertiary health care services performed by certain out of State health care providers. (**NOTE:** Section 76 of this law has been amended by S-2959, which will require health benefit plans provided to public employees to offer an option that covers out-of-state health care providers.)

Sections 77 to 79: Impact of Collectively Negotiated Agreements on Required Employee Health Benefit Contributions

A public employer and employees who are in negotiations for the next collective negotiations agreement to be executed after the employees in that unit have reached full implementation of the premium share set forth in this law must conduct negotiations concerning contributions for health

care benefits as if the full premium share was included in the prior contract. The public employers and public employees will remain bound by the health care contribution provisions of the law, notwithstanding the expiration of those sections, until the full amount of the contribution has been implemented in accordance with the schedule set forth in this law.

Employees subject to any collective negotiations agreement in effect on the effective date of the law, that has an expiration date on or after the expiration of the health care contribution provisions of the law, will be subject to those provisions, upon expiration of that collective negotiations agreement, until the health care contribution schedule set forth in the law is fully implemented.

After full implementation, those contribution levels will become part of the parties' collective negotiations and will then be subject to collective negotiations in a manner similar to other negotiable items between the parties.

Section 80: Increased Employee Pension and Health Benefit Contribution Begin Date

The increased employee contributions under this law for pension benefits and the contributions for health care benefits will begin upon the implementation of necessary administrative actions for collection and will not be applied retroactively to this law's effective date.

III. Other Provisions

Section 81: Disclaimer

Provides that if any provision of this law or its application to any particular person or circumstance is held invalid, that provision or its application shall be severable and shall not affect the validity of other provisions or applications of this act.

Section 82: Repealed Statutes

This law repeals the following statutes:

- **N.J.S.A. 52:14-17.28a:** Provides that the State Health Benefits Commission must not enter into a contract for the benefits provided pursuant to the contract in effect on October 1, 1988, including, but not limited to, basic benefits, extended basic benefits, and major medical benefits unless the level of benefits provided under the contract entered into is equal to or exceeds the level of benefits provided for in the contract in effect on October 1, 1988, or unless the benefits in effect on October 1, 1988 are modified by an authorized collective bargaining agreement made on behalf of the State.
- **N.J.S.A. 43:15A-47.2:** Provides that a member of PERS may retire while holding an elective public office covered by PERS and continue to receive the full salary for that office, if the member's PERS retirement allowance is not based solely on service in the elected public office.
- **N.J.S.A. 43:16A-5.1:** Provides that a member of PFRS may retire while holding an elective public office covered by PFRS and continue to receive the full salary for that office, if the member's PFRS retirement allowance is not based solely on service in the elected public office.

Section 83: Effective Date

This law is effective immediately. Sections 39 through 44 regarding employee health benefit contributions will expire four years after this law's effective date.

To view the new law, click here: [Chapter 78, P.L. 2011](#) Adobe PDF (445K)

[Back to Top](#)

Date Approved: April 20, 2011

Effective Date: June 19, 2011

Description:

This law provides that the boards of trustees of the Teachers' Pension and Annuity Fund, the Public Employees' Retirement System, the Police and Firemen's Retirement System, and the State Police Retirement System, and the State House Commission in the case of the Judicial Retirement System, will require a certifying officer to complete training on eligibility for enrollment in the pension fund or retirement system in accordance with the provisions of the rules or regulations and laws governing those funds or systems. "Certifying officer" is defined in the law to mean an officer or employee of the State or an employer other than State who is responsible for submitting to a pension fund or retirement system information, and for performing the duties relating to matters concerning the pension fund or retirement system with respect to each of the employees of the employer, as required of the employer by law, the board of trustees or commission, and the Division of Pensions and Benefits.

The law requires the division to develop, and the respective board or commission to approve, the form and content of the training. Each board or commission may require the training to include such additional pension fund or retirement system matters as it deems necessary to ensure compliance. The training will be provided through the Internet and accessible from the official Internet site of the State. A certifying officer required to complete the training will submit to the division an acknowledgement of such completion.

In addition, the law requires that each board of trustees or commission require a certifying officer and the officer's immediate supervisor to certify in writing or electronically, at the time of an enrollment of a member and annually for each member of the retirement system, that the person enrolled is eligible for enrollment in the pension fund or retirement system in accordance with the relevant rules or regulations and law. The certification will require the certifying officer and the officer's immediate supervisor to acknowledge that any person who knowingly makes a false statement, or falsifies or permits to be falsified any record, application, form, or report of a pension fund or retirement system, in an attempt to defraud the fund or system as a result of such act will be guilty of a crime of the fourth degree.

This law is based on the recommendations of the Office of the Inspector General as set forth in the report "Professional Services Provider Enrollment in the PERS," issued December 15, 2009.

This act takes effect on the 60th day following enactment (June 19, 2011), but the boards of trustees of the Public Employees' Retirement System, the Teachers' Pension and Annuity Fund, the Police and Firemen's Retirement System, and the State Police Retirement System, and the State House Commission, and the Division of Pensions and Benefits may take such anticipatory administrative action as may be necessary to implement the provisions of this act.

To view the new law, click here: [Chapter 52, P.L. 2011](#) Adobe PDF (35K)

[Back to Top](#)

Links to the [New Jersey Legislature](#) and other legislature information.

Last update: June 29, 2011



[Contact Us](#) | [Privacy Notice](#) | [Legal Statement](#) | [Accessibility Statement](#) 

Treasury: [Home](#) | [Services](#) | [People](#) | [Businesses](#) | [Departments/Agencies](#) | [Forms](#) | [Contact Us](#)

Statewide: [NJ Home](#) | [Services A to Z](#) | [Departments/Agencies](#) | [FAQs](#)

Copyright © State of New Jersey, 1996-2007

This site is maintained by the [Division of Pensions and Benefits](#).