

Chapter 20: Correctional Retirement Plans

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Overview

This chapter pertains to Correctional Officers, Security Personnel, and Probation and Parole Officers employed by the Louisiana Department of Public Safety and Corrections who were hired prior to January 1, 2011. This chapter will cover retirement eligibility, disability retirement, and survivor benefits for the two correctional plans: Corrections Primary and Corrections Secondary.

Employees hired on or before December 31, 2001 were enrolled in the Corrections Primary retirement plan. On January 1, 2002, the Corrections Secondary retirement plan was created and all employees hired on or after this date were enrolled in this plan. Members enrolled in Corrections Primary were given the choice to remain in their current plan or make the irrevocable decision to transfer into the Corrections Secondary retirement plan. Members who currently remain in the Corrections Primary retirement plan may elect to transfer to the Corrections Secondary plan at any time. If a member of Corrections Primary elects to join Corrections Secondary, then [Form 16-01: Department of Public Safety & Corrections Election Agreement Employed Prior to 01/01/02](#) must be submitted to LASERS by the Human Resources Personnel Officer.

Membership into the Corrections Primary and Corrections Secondary retirement plans is closed to new employees. Employees hired on or after January 1, 2011, must be enrolled in the Hazardous Duty Services Plan (HAZ Plan). Corrections Primary and Corrections Secondary members hired prior to January 1, 2011 may elect to irrevocably join the HAZ Plan. For more information on the HAZ Plan, refer to [Chapter 17: Hazardous Duty Services Plan \(HAZ Plan\)](#).

Contribution Rates for Correctional Plans

Corrections Primary and Secondary retirement plans have an employee contribution rate of 9.0%. Employer contribution rates change every fiscal year. These rates are determined each year based on an actuarial formula and are approved by the Public Retirement Systems' Actuarial Committee (PRSAC). Once approved, these rates must be used to calculate employer contributions submitted to LASERS beginning in the July reporting period. This includes payrolls with a check date of July, regardless of when earned. LASERS issues a Liaison Memorandum each year when the rates are approved. This memorandum includes a chart that lists the updated employer contribution rates by retirement plan.

Members of the Corrections Primary plan paid a contribution rate of 8.5% until June 30, 1989. On July 1, 1989, the contribution rate increased to 9.0%. In addition to this increase, changes were made to retirement eligibility, survivor benefits, and disability benefits for Corrections Primary plan members. For more information on remitting contributions and historical contribution rates, refer to [Chapter 3: Contribution Reporting](#).

Retirement Benefits for Correctional Plan Members

The correctional retirement plans are considered specialty plans, but unlike most specialty plans, Corrections Primary and Secondary have the same retirement options as Regular Members. At retirement, members of this plan may choose from any of the seven regular retirement options (for a full description

of these options, refer to [Chapter 9: Retirement Options & Cost-of-Living Adjustments](#)).

Retirement eligibility and benefit accrual rates are determined by the Correctional retirement plan in which a member is enrolled at the time of his or her retirement. For more information on benefit calculation and retirement eligibility for the Correctional retirement plans, refer to [Chapter 8: Retirement Benefit Calculation & Eligibility](#).

Corrections Primary Plan Characteristics

<p>Retirement Eligibility*</p> <p><i>*In addition to the retirement eligibility requirements listed, members of Corrections Primary also have the option to retire as a regular member under Regular Employee eligibilities, which include Regular Retirement with an Actuarially Reduced Benefit (20 years at any age). For more information on Regular Employees, refer to Chapter 8: Retirement Benefit Calculation & Eligibility</i></p>	<p>→ Members who were hired prior to August 15, 1986 have the following eligibility requirements:</p> <p>Eligibilities for Regular Retirement, DROP and IBO:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ 20 years of service credit at any age - the last 10 years of service credit must have been earned as a Corrections Officer immediately prior to application for retirement <p>→ Members who were hired on or after August 15, 1986 have the following eligibility requirements:</p> <p>Eligibilities for Regular Retirement, DROP and IBO:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ 20 years of service at age 50 - the last 10 years of service credit must have been earned as a Corrections Officer immediately prior to application for retirement. If the member has service credit in a position other than as a Corrections Officer, then only two-thirds of this service shall be counted towards meeting the retirement eligibility requirement. ❖ 25 years of service credit at any age - the last 10 years of service credit must have been earned as a Corrections Officer immediately prior to applicaiton for retirement.
<p>Benefit Accrual</p>	<p>2.5%</p>
<p>FAC Period</p>	<p>36 months</p>
<p>Leave Conversion</p>	<p>2.5% for all years earned at Corrections Primary <i>Pro-rated if any years are earned at a different accrual rate</i></p>

CORRECTIONS PRIMARY

Members of Corrections Primary are eligible to join the Corrections Secondary retirement plan or the HAZ Plan at any time prior to retiring or participating in DROP. Members who exit DROP on or after January 1, 2002 must be enrolled in the Corrections Secondary retirement plan while working after DROP.

Corrections Secondary Plan Characteristics	
Retirement Eligibility	<i>Eligibilities for Regular Retirement, DROP and IBO:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ 10 years of service at age 60 ❖ 25 years of service credit at any age
Benefit Accrual	3⅓%
FAC Period	36 months
Leave Conversion	3⅓% for all years earned at Corrections Secondary <i>Pro-rated if any years are earned at a different accrual rate</i>

CORRECTIONS SECONDARY

Members of Corrections Secondary do not have the option to retire with 20 years of service credit at any age with an actuarial reduction. Members of this plan are eligible to join the HAZ Plan at any time prior to retiring or participating in DROP.

NOTE: *LASERS highly recommends that members of the Correctional retirement plans request estimates and schedule individual counseling sessions 18 months prior to retiring or entering DROP, in order to fully understand all of the retirement options and eligibilities that are applicable to these plans.*

Upgrading Service in the Correctional Plans

Employees of the Department of Public Safety and Corrections listed below are eligible to upgrade all service credit earned as a member of the Corrections Primary retirement plan upon their election to join the Corrections Secondary retirement plan:

- ❖ Warden
- ❖ Correctional Officer
- ❖ Probation and Parole Officer
- ❖ Security Personnel

The upgrade will increase the benefit accrual rate to three and one-third percent (3⅓%) for each year of upgraded service. An upgrade of service credit requires the member to pay the system an amount which, on an actuarial basis, totally offsets the increased liability to the system resulting from the service credit being purchased.

The service credit may be upgraded at any time prior to the member's retirement, during participation in DROP, or during employment after DROP. If a member upgrades service credit while participating in DROP or while working after DROP, then the difference in the original accrual rate and the upgraded accrual rate shall only count toward the after-DROP time, or the supplemental benefit.

[Form 16-03: Department of Public Safety & Corrections Upgrade Invoice Request](#) must be completed by the member and submitted to LASERS along with the appropriate actuarial calculation fee. The system actuary will determine the cost to upgrade the service credit (for more information on actuarial purchases, refer to [Chapter 5: Purchases, Transfers and Reciprocals](#)). The member should allow six weeks to receive an invoice. **It is highly recommended that an invoice be requested six months prior to the date needed.**

PAYMENTS FOR UPGRADED SERVICE

All payments for upgraded service credit must be made in full prior to the expiration of the invoice. The cost cannot be paid in monthly installments. If the invoice expires, then the member must reapply and pay an additional actuarial calculation fee, if appropriate, in order to obtain a new invoice. All payments must be paid in a lump sum by any combination of personal checks, cashier's checks, certified checks, money orders, and rollovers from qualified accounts. Funds may also be wired to LASERS. A copy of the invoice must accompany all payments.

If the member rolls over funds to LASERS from a qualified account, then [Form 02-13: LASERS Acceptance Letter of Rollover of Assets](#) must be completed by an authorized agent of the financial institution that is remitting the payment and submitted to LASERS. LASERS **will not** accept a financial institution's direct rollover form in lieu of Form 02-13.

Adult Probation and Parole Officers in Correctional Plans

Correctional retirement plan members who are Adult Probation and Parole Officers employed prior to January 1, 2002, and who retire or enter DROP as an Adult Probation and Parole Officer on or after July 1, 2014, may be eligible for a higher accrual rate than other members of the Correctional retirement plans.

This section **does not** apply to officers who meet any of the following criteria:

- ❖ Those who retired prior to July 1, 2014
- ❖ Those who were first employed as an Adult Probation and Parole Officer on or after January 1, 2002
- ❖ Those who participated in DROP prior to July 1, 2014, and who joined the Secondary Plan post-DROP
- ❖ Those who joined the Secondary Plan and paid to upgrade their prior service

CERTIFYING EMPLOYMENT

When a request is submitted to LASERS on behalf of a member employed as an Adult Probation and Parole Officer, the agency must certify the member's status as such. Examples would include (but would not be limited to) requests for estimates, service purchases, transfers of service credit, entering DROP or retirement, and appointments for individual counseling. [Form 16-04: Certification of Adult Probation and Parole Officer Employment](#) should be submitted to LASERS each time a new request is made.

For members to receive the higher accrual rate, the agency must certify that:

1. The member was employed as an Adult Probation and Parole Officer prior to January 1, 2002

AND

2. The member is currently employed and/or retiring or entering DROP after July 1, 2014, as an Adult Probation and Parole Officer.

CORRECTIONS PRIMARY

Adult Probation and Parole Officers who are in the Corrections Primary retirement plan and meet the following criteria will receive a three percent (3%) accrual rate for all service earned *prior to July 1, 2014* and three and one-third percent (3⅓%) accrual rate for all service earned *on or after July 1, 2014*, regardless of whether the service was earned as an Adult Probation and Parole Officer (this includes Regular Plan service).

- ❖ Employed as an Adult Probation and Parole Officer prior to January 1, 2002; **and**
- ❖ Never joined the Secondary Plan; **and**
- ❖ Retires or enters DROP on or after July 1, 2014, as an Adult Probation and Parole Officer.

These provisions also apply to Adult Probation and Parole Officers who meet the above requirements and who joined the HAZ plan, without ever joining the Secondary Plan, and without upgrading their prior service. **Any member who falls into this category will receive a 3% accrual rate for service earned prior to July 1, 2014, or prior to joining the HAZ Plan, whichever occurred first.**

NOTE: *Members who have remained in the Corrections Primary Plan may be adversely affected by the decision to move to the Secondary Plan after July 1, 2014. It is strongly suggested that members obtain estimates prior to making this decision.*

CORRECTIONS SECONDARY

Adult Probation and Parole Officers who are in the Corrections Secondary retirement plan and meet the following criteria will receive a three percent (3%) accrual rate for all service earned *prior to joining the Secondary Plan*, regardless of whether the service

credit was earned as an Adult Probation and Parole Officer (this includes Regular Plan service).

- ❖ Employed as adult probation and parole officers prior to January 1, 2002; **and**
- ❖ Joined the secondary component; **and**
- ❖ Did not upgrade their service credit; **and**
- ❖ Retires or enters DROP on or after July 1, 2014, as an adult probation and parole officer.

Disability Benefits for Correctional Plan Members

This section includes information on members of the Correctional retirement plans who become disabled *while actively employed in state service*. Members who are eligible for Regular retirement, whether active or inactive, are not eligible to apply for Disability retirement.

NOTE: *The HAZ Plan offers a line of duty disability benefit of 75% of FAC. Eligible Correctional plan members should consider joining the HAZ Plan before applying for disability retirement.*

CORRECTIONS PRIMARY

A member enrolled in the Correctional Primary retirement plan who sustains a disability in the performance of official duties of a hazardous nature will receive a disability benefit of 60% of the member's final average compensation (FAC), regardless of his or her years of service. If the disability was not sustained in the performance of official duties of a hazardous nature, refer to [Chapter 13: Disability Retirement](#).

CORRECTIONS SECONDARY

A member enrolled in the Corrections Secondary retirement plan who sustains a disability in the performance of official duties of a hazardous nature will receive a disability benefit of 40% of the member's final average compensation (FAC), regardless of his or her years of service. If the member has met eligibility for Regular Disability retirement, then the disability benefit will be the greater of 40% of the FAC or the benefit calculated under the Regular retirement formula. If the disability was not sustained in the performance of official duties of a hazardous nature, refer to [Chapter 13: Disability Retirement](#).

INTENTIONAL ACT OF VIOLENCE

If a member of a Correctional retirement plan becomes totally and permanently disabled resulting from injuries received while in the line of duty as a result of an intentional act of violence, then the member will receive a disability benefit equal to 100% of his or her final average compensation regardless of the member's years of service. This must be certified by the agency and is subject to approval by the LASERS Board of Trustees.

Certifying Line of Duty

If a member's injury is sustained in the line of duty, the agency must answer the following three questions on the [Form 04-01A: Disability Report](#) within the Disability Application:

1. Was the disability a result of an injury or accident on the job?
2. If yes, was the injury sustained in the official performance of official duties?
3. If yes, is the member in the Hazardous Duty, Corrections Primary, Corrections Secondary, Wildlife, or Harbor Police Plan and was the injury due to an intentional act of violence? (If yes, [Form 04-01C: Certification of Disability Sustained from an Intentional Act of Violence](#) must be submitted to LASERS).

[Form 04-01A: Disability Report](#) must be certified by the Human Resources Personnel Officer and submitted along with [Form 04-01: Disability Retirement Application](#).

If the injury was due to an intentional act of violence, [Form 04-01C: Certification of Disability Sustained from an Intentional Act of Violence](#) must be certified by the agency's Appointing Authority and Human Resources Personnel Officer, then submitted to LASERS. Documentation to support the assertion that the injury was sustained as a result of an intentional act of violence should be attached to this certification form. Documentation may include internal investigation reports, reports from outside agencies, and news reports.

THE APPLICATION PROCESS

To apply for Disability retirement, Correctional retirement plan members must submit the three-part Disability application. For information on the Disability application process and a complete listing of forms and required documents, refer to the sections *The Disability Process* and *Required Documents* in [Chapter 13: Disability Retirement](#).

NOTE: *If a member of a Correctional retirement plan is approved for Disability retirement and is enrolled in the Office of Group Benefits (OGB), his or her agency may be required to pay a 75% participation rate for the member's OGB health insurance premiums.*

Survivor Benefits for Correctional Plan Members

This section outlines the steps to be taken when a member of a Correctional retirement plan dies. Depending upon eligibility, survivor benefits may be payable to the deceased member's surviving spouse, minor child(ren), and physically handicapped or mentally disabled child(ren), **whether the member was active or inactive**. If it is determined that no survivor benefits are due, then a refund of employee contributions will be paid to the last named beneficiary(ies) or the estate of the deceased member. For information on survivor terminology and reporting the death of a member, refer to [Chapter 6: Survivor Benefits](#).

NOTE: *The surviving spouse must submit a copy of his or her marriage license along with all other necessary documents in order to be eligible for survivor benefits.*

NON-LINE OF DUTY

If an active or inactive member of a Correctional retirement plan dies prior to retiring but not in the line of duty, then the surviving spouse or minor child(ren) will receive the same benefit as members of the Regular Employees retirement plan. For detailed eligibility requirements, reference the chart titled *Survivors of Members Enrolled in Regular or Regular 2 Retirement Plans* at the end of [Chapter 6: Survivor Benefits](#).

LINE OF DUTY

If an active member dies in the line of duty or as a direct result of an injury sustained while in the line of duty, then survivor benefits are payable to the surviving spouse, minor children and/or physically handicapped or mentally disabled children. For information on who qualifies as a minor children and/or physically handicapped or mentally disabled children, refer to [Chapter 6: Survivor Benefits](#).

Corrections Primary Surviving Spouse*	
25 or more years of service	Surviving spouse will receive a benefit of 75% of the member's FAC.
Less than 25 years of service	Surviving spouse will receive a benefit of 60% of the member's FAC.
*Surviving spouse must be married to the member on the date of death.	

Corrections Secondary Surviving Spouse*	
25 or more years of service	Surviving spouse will receive a benefit of 75% of the member's FAC.
Less than 25 years of service	Surviving spouse will receive a benefit of 60% of the member's FAC.
*Surviving spouse must be married to the member on the date of death.	

Corrections Primary Minor Child(ren)

5 or more years of service	Minor child(ren) and/or physically handicapped or mentally disabled child(ren) will receive a benefit of 75% of the member's FAC.
Less than 5 years of service	Minor child(ren) and/or physically handicapped or mentally disabled child(ren) will receive a benefit of 60% of the member's FAC.

Corrections Secondary Minor Child(ren)

25 or more years of service	Minor child(ren) and/or physically handicapped or mentally disabled child(ren) will receive a benefit of 75% of the member's FAC.
Less than 25 years of service	Minor child(ren) and/or physically handicapped or mentally disabled child(ren) will receive a benefit of 60% of the member's FAC.

Corrections Primary Surviving Spouse* with Minor Child(ren)

5 or more years of service	Surviving spouse, minor child(ren) and/or physically handicapped or mentally disabled child(ren) will receive a benefit of 75% of the member's FAC.**
Less than 5 years of service	Surviving spouse, minor child(ren) and/or physically handicapped or mentally disabled child(ren) will receive a benefit of 60% of the member's FAC.**

****Surviving spouse must be married to the member on the date of death.***

*****One-third of the benefit will be paid to the spouse & two-thirds will be split equally between the children.***

Corrections Secondary Surviving Spouse* with Minor Child(ren)

25 or more years of service	Surviving spouse, minor child(ren) and/or physically handicapped or mentally disabled child(ren) will receive a benefit of 75% of the member's FAC.**
Less than 25 years of service	Surviving spouse, minor child(ren) and/or physically handicapped or mentally disabled child(ren) will receive a benefit of 60% of the member's FAC.**

****Surviving spouse must be married to the member on the date of death.***

*****One-third of the benefit will be paid to the spouse & two-thirds will be split equally between the children.***

Intentional Act of Violence

If a member's death resulted from an intentional act of violence, the surviving spouse, minor child(ren) and/or physically handicapped or mentally disabled child(ren) will receive a survivor benefit calculated at 100% of the member's final average compensation (FAC) **regardless of the amount of service credit the member had at the time of death.** This benefit will be split equally among the surviving spouse and eligible children. A surviving spouse is eligible for a benefit regardless of the length of the marriage and the benefit will not cease upon remarriage.

Certifying Line of Duty

If the member's death is sustained in the line of duty, then the agency must answer the following questions on [Form 03-01: Application for Survivor Benefits](#):

1. Was the member killed as a result of an injury or accident on the job in the official performance of official duties?
2. If yes, was the member in or eligible to enroll in the Hazardous Duty, Corrections Primary, Corrections Secondary, Wildlife, or Harbor Police Plan and was the death due to an intentional act of violence? (If yes, [Form 03-01A: Certification of Death of Intentional Act of Violence](#) must be submitted to LASERS)

THE APPLICATION PROCESS

The application process for non-line of duty members and active line of duty members is the same as the process for Regular plan members. For information and checklists pertaining to the survivor application process, refer to [Chapter 6: Survivor Benefits](#).



**Form 03-01:
Application for
Survivor Benefits**

must be submitted to LASERS in its entirety (including page 2), or it will not be accepted.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Can a member who is currently in the Corrections Primary plan still elect to join the Corrections Secondary plan?

Yes, a member in Corrections Primary plan can still elect to join the Corrections Secondary plan as well as the Hazardous Duty (HAZ) Plan.

2. A member is hired into a hazardous duty position and has 10 years of service credit in the Corrections Secondary plan. In which retirement plan should this member be enrolled?

The member may elect to join the HAZ Plan or elect to remain in his or her current retirement plan, Corrections Secondary. If the member elects to remain in Corrections Secondary plan, then he or she may still elect to join the HAZ Plan at a later date.

3. If a member participates in DROP while enrolled in Corrections Primary retirement plan, in what plan will the member be enrolled if he or she continues to work after DROP?

If a member of the Corrections Primary plan completes DROP on or after January 1, 2002, then he or she should automatically be enrolled in the Corrections Secondary retirement plan. If the member completed DROP prior to January 1, 2002, then he or she will remain in the Corrections Primary plan, with the ability to elect to join Corrections Secondary.

4. Are all Adult Probation and Parole Officers eligible for the higher accrual rate?

No, only members of the Correctional retirement plans who are Adult Probation and Parole Officers employed prior to January 1, 2002, and who retire or enter DROP as an Adult Probation and Parole Officer on or after July 1, 2014 will be eligible for the higher accrual rate.

Reference Material

APPLICABLE FORMS

- [02-13: LASERS Acceptance Letter of Rollover Assets](#)
- [04-01: Disability Retirement Application](#)
- [04-01C: Certification of Disability Sustained from an Intentional Act of Violence](#)
- [03-01: Application for Survivor Benefits](#)
- [03-01A: Certification of Death from an Intentional Act of Violence](#)
- [16-01: Department of Public Safety & Corrections Election Agreement Employed Prior to 01/01/02](#)
- [16-03: Department of Public Safety & Corrections Upgrade invoice Request](#)
- [16-04: Certification of Adult Probation and Parole Officer Employment](#)

APPLICABLE LAWS & RULES

(Note: this list is not exhaustive)

- [La R.S. 11:601](#) [Application: Definitions](#)
- [La R.S. 11:602](#) [Eligibility for Membership](#)
- [La R.S. 11:603](#) [In Line of Service Disability](#)
- [La R.S. 11:604](#) [Survivor's Benefit for Members Killed in the Line of Duty](#)
- [La R.S. 11:605](#) [Transfer of Other Service Credit](#)
- [La R.S. 11:606](#) [Deferred Retirement Option Plan Participation](#)
- [La R.S. 11:608](#) [Retirement Purchase of Firearm](#)
- [La R.S. 11:609](#) [Purchase of Firearm; Retired Peace Officer](#)

APPLICABLE CHAPTERS IN MEMBER'S GUIDE TO RETIREMENT

- [Chapter 26: Correctional Officers Hired Prior to January 1, 2011](#)

APPLICABLE LASERS VIDEOS

- [What is your Retirement Plan and Retirement Eligibility?](#)