

RETIREE NEWSLETTER

JULY 2021

MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR



At the Florida Division of Retirement, we strive to provide our members with excellent customer service. We are always looking for ways to improve how we interact with our customers at every touchpoint. To do this well, we rely on the feedback we receive from our members to help us direct our improvement efforts. Last year, we focused on increasing customer convenience and created new options for resolving common requests, available 24/7 from the convenience of phone or computer. This year, we redesigned FRS Online to make the site more secure and easier to navigate to give our members better access to important information. We also integrated a new survey feature directly into FRS Online to give us the opportunity to hear from you more often. Thank you for your continued input. We look forward to all of the ways we will continue to serve you better. Please see additional details below on our new and improved services.

-David DiSalvo, Director

FRS ONLINE: MORE SECURITY, MORE CONVENIENCE

FRS Online has new security features to better protect your private information and make it more convenient for new users to get started using online services. Here are new features you can expect to see (if you haven't already):

One-Time Passcode

When creating or updating your FRS Online account, a one-time passcode is required to help guarantee that only you can make changes to your account. A one-time passcode is a randomly generated code sent to either your phone or email. Once received, you will enter that code into FRS Online to access your account.

No More PIN

In the past, FRS Online required a unique PIN sent to members when they first joined the Florida Retirement System to create an account. Replacement PINs were a common request and, due to security precautions, these PINs could only be mailed resulting in a 10-day process.

With these new changes, we were able to develop a more streamlined process to create your FRS Online account without risking the security of your information or benefits!

FRS ONLINE: A NEW LOOK & FEEL

In addition to enhancing security for FRS Online, we have updated the website to look and feel more modern. We redesigned all pages in FRS Online to improve organization, presentation, and responsiveness.

We wanted to rearrange the site in a way that better presents the things you most use it for without removing any features. It has never been easier to find the things most important to you.

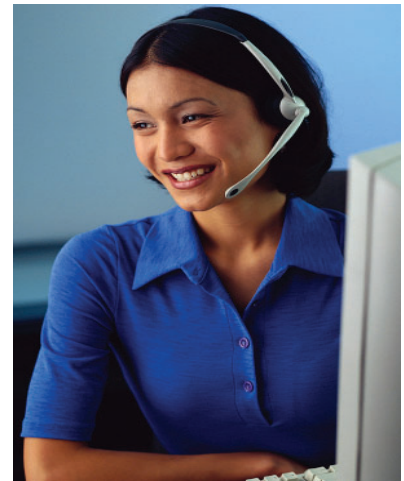
In the future, we are looking to find new features and tools we can add to FRS Online to better serve your needs. As always, feel free to use our new survey features within the site to provide us insight on the types of functionality you would like to see.

HELP IS ALWAYS AVAILABLE

Last year, we rolled out our Interactive Voice Response (IVR) to make it even easier to fulfill your most common requests. Day or night, you can call the Division of Retirement and make these requests using an automated phone service. Many of you have already begun to take advantage of this service!

Requests for 1099Rs, income verification letters, and pay stubs can be completed with the IVR.

We are happy to provide the convenience of our IVR. We love talking to our retirees, but we understand that in today's world, some things really should be at the press of a button.



2021 COST OF LIVING ADJUSTMENT (COLA)

Florida law provides FRS Pension Plan retirees and Deferred Retirement Option Program (DROP) participants initially enrolled before July 1, 2011, with an annual cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) in their July benefit payment each year. Retirees and beneficiaries receiving FRS benefits will receive their annual COLA beginning with the payment issued on July 30, 2021. Income verification letters will reflect the new benefit amount beginning July 20, 2021.

If you have been retired for fewer than 12 calendar months, your first COLA will be prorated based on the number of months you have been retired, including DROP participation.

- If you earned all the service credit included in your retirement benefit before July 1, 2011, you receive an annual 3 percent COLA.
- If you earned any of the service credit included in your retirement benefit in July 2011 or after, you have an individually calculated COLA that is less than 3 percent.
- An individually calculated FRS COLA is calculated by dividing the total years of service credit before July 1, 2011, by the total years of service credit at retirement. Multiply this number by 3 percent to determine the annual individual COLA.

For example: A member retired effective July 1, 2021, with 30 years of service, and 20 of those years occurred before July 1, 2011. The calculation would be as follows:

$$20/30 = .6667 \times 3\% = 2.00\%$$

This retiree's annual COLA is 2.00 percent.

Retiree Health Insurance Subsidy (HIS) payments and National Guard Supplemental Retirement Program benefit payments do not receive the annual FRS COLA.

INCOME VERIFICATION LETTER REQUESTS

This time of year, one of our most common requests is for income verification letters (sometimes referred to as an award letter or a benefit statement letter). We provide two convenient ways to make these requests at any time:

- You can view and print a current income verification letter from your FRS Online account (frs.fl.gov). Just log in and look for Income Verification Letter on the left-side navigation.
- You can call and request an income verification letter be mailed to you using our Interactive Voice Response system.

DIRECT DEPOSIT IS REQUIRED

Enrolling in direct deposit ensures timely and secure payment of your retirement benefits. It is also mandatory for members who retired on or after July 1, 2000, pursuant to section 17.0176, Florida Statutes. You can setup direct deposit through your FRS Online account (frs.fl.gov) at any time.

FRS ONLINE: WHY SHOULD YOU SIGN UP?

If you have yet to sign up, you may be wondering why FRS Online is useful to you. FRS Online is the primary online portal to use for managing your FRS Pension Plan benefit.

Here are some things you can do with your FRS Online account:

- Start or update your direct deposit authorization. Direct deposit is the most convenient and secure way of receiving your benefit.
- View the most recent 24 months of your payment history. You can also access individual payment stubs and view any insurance deductions on file.
- View or print your current IRS Form 1099-R. You may also view or print copies from the past seven years.
- View or print an income verification letter. These are helpful in any situation where you need to verify your income. This can also be helpful for understanding your monthly benefit at a glance.
- View or update your federal income tax withholding. This includes a convenient estimator tool to see how a new tax withholding status will impact your monthly benefit amount.
- Update important contact information (mailing address, email address, and telephone number).

RETIREMENT PAYMENT SCHEDULE

Retirement benefits are payable on the last state business day of the month. If you use direct deposit, your benefit payments will be available to you on the scheduled dates shown below for 2021:

2021 Remaining Retirement Payment Schedule		
Friday, July 30	Tuesday, Aug. 31	Thursday, Sept. 30
Friday, Oct. 29	Tuesday, Nov. 30	Thursday, Dec. 30

To access a payment schedule anytime, see the Retirement Payment Schedule available on the Retirees page of our website (frs.myflorida.com).

If you receive benefit payments by mail, your payment will be mailed two business days before the scheduled dates above; however, we cannot guarantee that the payment will arrive by the scheduled date.

ARE YOU RECEIVING THE HEALTH INSURANCE SUBSIDY?

The Health Insurance Subsidy (HIS) benefit is available to certain FRS benefit recipients with eligible health insurance coverage (including Medicare or TRICARE). This HIS benefit is not health insurance coverage and, unlike your FRS retirement benefit, is not a guaranteed payment.

You must apply to receive the HIS benefit. If eligible, the amount you will receive is determined by multiplying your total years of creditable service at retirement (up to a maximum of 30 years) by \$5. Any years of DROP participation are not used in the calculation of your HIS payment.

The easiest way to know if you are receiving your HIS benefit is through your FRS Online account (frs.fl.gov). Once logged in, look for the Payment Information page. You can also look at a pension income verification letter to confirm if you are receiving this benefit.

If you want to learn more about eligibility for the HIS benefit, you can find more information in our Ready. Set. Retire guide on the Publications page of the our website (frs.myflorida.com) or contact us directly.



CONTACTING THE DIVISION OF RETIREMENT

Our contact center representatives are available to assist you Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. ET, at (toll-free) 844-377-1888 or 850-907-6500.

If you would like to contact the Division of Retirement by fax, our fax number is 850-410-2010.

Mailing Address:	Physical Address:
Division of Retirement	Division of Retirement
P.O. Box 9000	3189 S. Blair Stone Rd.
Tallahassee, FL 32315-9000	Tallahassee, FL 32301-6812

For all other contact information, see the Contact Us page of our website (frs.myflorida.com).

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