

WAC 415-108-550 Elected officials—Eligibility and application for retirement service membership. (1) **Definition:** For the purposes of this section and WAC 415-108-570, and pursuant to RCW 41.40.010, 41.40.023 and 41.40.035, "elected" officials means individuals elected to any state, local or political subdivision office or individuals appointed to any vacant elective office.

(2) **Voluntary application for membership:** Under RCW 41.40.023 (3)(a), elected officials are exempt from mandatory retirement system membership. You have the option to apply for membership during your current term of elected office. To apply for membership, submit a written application directly to the department. When the department approves your application, you will be entitled to establish membership effective the first day of your current term of elected service. Once membership is established, you will be required to pay the employee contributions from the first day of your current term of elected service with interest as determined by the department.

(3) If you are not currently a retiree and when the department approves your application, you may establish membership retroactive to the first day of any previous elected term or terms of office. Your plan membership that you established under subsection (2) of this section remains the same. To exercise this option, you must apply to the department pursuant to subsection (2) of this section. When the department approves the application, you must:

(a) Pay the required employee contributions for such previous term or terms of elected service with interest as determined by the department; and

(b) Pay the required employer contributions for such previous term or terms of elected service with interest as determined by the department. The employer may, in its discretion, pay the required employer contributions plus interest in lieu of your paying this amount.

(4)(a) If you are a retiree and you become an elected official, you may establish membership prospectively from the first day of the month following the date the department accepts your application.

(b) If you chose not to establish membership, the reemployment provisions of RCW 41.40.037 and WAC 415-108-710 will apply to you.

(5) **Multiple positions:** If you are employed in an eligible position at the time of election to office and will hold multiple positions concurrently, you may:

(a) Apply to the department to participate in membership pursuant to your elected position as provided in subsection (2) of this section; or

(b) Choose not to participate pursuant to your elected position while continuing membership through the nonelected position.

(6) **Membership length:** Except as provided under RCW 41.40.023 (3)(b), once you become a member of the retirement system you shall remain a member until you separate from all eligible public employment pursuant to RCW 41.40.150. It is not a separation if:

(a) Your term of office ends and you begin another term of office in the same or a different position for the same employer without a break in service; or

(b) You resign from your elected position and you are later reappointed to the same position during the same term.

(7) This section codifies the department's long-standing administrative practice in relation to elected officials. The department will apply this section to service by elected officials which occurred prior to the effective date of this section.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 41.50.050. WSR 21-16-020, § 415-108-550, filed 7/23/21, effective 8/23/21. Statutory Authority: RCW 41.50.050(5), 41.40.023, 41.40.037. WSR 03-08-090, § 415-108-550, filed 4/2/03, effective 5/1/03. Statutory Authority: RCW 41.50.050. WSR 94-12-014, § 415-108-550, filed 5/23/94, effective 6/23/94.]