

RCW 41.40.270 Death before retirement or within sixty days following application for disability retirement—Military service—Payment of contributions to nominee, surviving spouse, or legal representative—Waiver of payment, effect—Benefits. (1) Except as specified in subsection (4) of this section, should a member die before the date of retirement the amount of the accumulated contributions standing to the member's credit in the employees' savings fund, less any amount identified as owing to an obligee upon withdrawal of accumulated contributions pursuant to a court order filed under RCW 41.50.670, at the time of death:

(a) Shall be paid to the member's estate, or such person or persons, trust, or organization as the member shall have nominated by written designation duly executed and filed with the department; or

(b) If there be no such designated person or persons still living at the time of the member's death, or if a member fails to file a new beneficiary designation subsequent to marriage, remarriage, dissolution of marriage, divorce, or reestablishment of membership following termination by withdrawal or retirement, such accumulated contributions, less any amount identified as owing to an obligee upon withdrawal of accumulated contributions pursuant to a court order filed under RCW 41.50.670, shall be paid to the surviving spouse as if in fact such spouse had been nominated by written designation as aforesaid, or if there be no such surviving spouse, then to the member's legal representatives.

(2) Upon the death of any member who is qualified but has not applied for a service retirement allowance or has completed ten years of service at the time of death, the designated beneficiary, or the surviving spouse as provided in subsection (1) of this section, may elect to waive the payment provided by subsection (1) of this section. Upon such an election, a joint and one hundred percent survivor option under RCW 41.40.188, calculated under the retirement allowance described in RCW 41.40.185 or 41.40.190, whichever is greater, actuarially reduced, except under subsection (5) of this section, by the amount of any lump sum benefit identified as owing to an obligee upon withdrawal of accumulated contributions pursuant to a court order filed under RCW 41.50.670 shall automatically be given effect as if selected for the benefit of the designated beneficiary. If the member is not then qualified for a service retirement allowance, such benefit shall be based upon the actuarial equivalent of the sum necessary to pay the accrued regular retirement allowance commencing when the deceased member would have first qualified for a service retirement allowance.

(3) Subsection (1) of this section, unless elected, shall not apply to any member who has applied for service retirement in RCW 41.40.180, as now or hereafter amended, and thereafter dies between the date of separation from service and the member's effective retirement date, where the member has selected a survivorship option under RCW 41.40.188. In those cases the beneficiary named in the member's final application for service retirement may elect to receive either a cash refund, less any amount identified as owing to an obligee upon withdrawal of accumulated contributions pursuant to a court order filed under RCW 41.50.670, or monthly payments according to the option selected by the member.

(4) If a member dies within sixty days following application for disability retirement under RCW 41.40.230, the beneficiary named in the application may elect to receive the benefit provided by:

(a) This section; or
(b) RCW 41.40.235, according to the option chosen under RCW 41.40.188 in the disability application.

(5) The retirement allowance of a member who is killed in the course of employment, as determined by the director of the department of labor and industries, or the retirement allowance of a member who has left the employ of an employer due to service in the national guard or military reserves and dies while honorably serving in the national guard or military reserves during a period of war as defined in RCW 41.04.005, is not subject to an actuarial reduction. The member's retirement allowance is computed under RCW 41.40.185. [2009 c 226 § 11; 2009 c 111 § 1; 2003 c 155 § 6; 1997 c 73 § 2; 1996 c 227 § 2; 1995 c 144 § 5; 1991 c 365 § 27; 1990 c 249 § 11; 1979 ex.s. c 249 § 11; 1972 ex.s. c 151 § 12; 1969 c 128 § 11; 1965 c 155 § 5; 1963 c 174 § 13; 1961 c 291 § 9; 1953 c 201 § 1; 1953 c 200 § 14; 1951 c 141 § 1; 1949 c 240 § 19; 1947 c 274 § 28; Rem. Supp. 1949 § 11072-28.]

Reviser's note: This section was amended by 2009 c 111 § 1 and by 2009 c 226 § 11, each without reference to the other. Both amendments are incorporated in the publication of this section under RCW 1.12.025(2). For rule of construction, see RCW 1.12.025(1).

Applicability—2003 c 155: See note following RCW 41.32.520.

Effective date—1997 c 73: See note following RCW 41.32.520.

Severability—1991 c 365: See note following RCW 41.50.500.

Findings—1990 c 249: See note following RCW 2.10.146.

Severability—1969 c 128: See note following RCW 41.40.010.