

RCW 41.26.040 System created—Membership—Funds. The Washington law enforcement officers' and firefighters' retirement system is hereby created for firefighters and law enforcement officers.

(1) Notwithstanding *RCW 41.26.030(20), all firefighters and law enforcement officers employed as such on or after March 1, 1970, on a full time fully compensated basis in this state shall be members of the retirement system established by this chapter with respect to all periods of service as such, to the exclusion of any pension system existing under any prior act.

(2) Any employee serving as a law enforcement officer or firefighter on March 1, 1970, who is then making retirement contributions under any prior act shall have his or her membership transferred to the system established by this chapter as of such date. Upon retirement for service or for disability, or death, of any such employee, his or her retirement benefits earned under this chapter shall be computed and paid. In addition, his or her benefits under the prior retirement act to which he or she was making contributions at the time of this transfer shall be computed as if he or she had not transferred. For the purpose of such computations, the employee's creditability of service and eligibility for service or disability retirement and survivor and all other benefits shall continue to be as provided in such prior retirement act, as if transfer of membership had not occurred. The excess, if any, of the benefits so computed, giving full value to survivor benefits, over the benefits payable under this chapter shall be paid whether or not the employee has made application under the prior act. If the employee's prior retirement system was the Washington public employees' retirement system, payment of such excess shall be made by that system; if the employee's prior retirement system was the statewide city employees' retirement system, payment of such excess shall be made by the employer which was the member's employer when his or her transfer of membership occurred: PROVIDED, That any death in line of duty lump sum benefit payment shall continue to be the obligation of that system as provided in RCW 41.44.210; in the case of all other prior retirement systems, payment of such excess shall be made by the employer which was the member's employer when his or her transfer of membership occurred.

(3) All funds held by any firefighters' or police officers' relief and pension fund shall remain in that fund for the purpose of paying the obligations of the fund. The municipality shall continue to levy the dollar rate as provided in RCW 41.16.060, and this dollar rate shall be used for the purpose of paying the benefits provided in chapters 41.16 and 41.18 RCW. The obligations of chapter 41.20 RCW shall continue to be paid from whatever financial sources the city has been using for this purpose. [2012 c 117 § 39; 1991 c 35 § 15; 1989 c 273 § 11; 1979 ex.s. c 45 § 1; 1974 ex.s. c 120 § 7; 1973 1st ex.s. c 195 § 44; 1970 ex.s. c 6 § 2; 1969 ex.s. c 209 § 4.]

***Reviser's note:** RCW 41.26.030 was amended by 2018 c 230 § 1, changing subsection (20) to subsection (21).

Intent—1991 c 35: See note following RCW 41.26.005.

Effective date—1979 ex.s. c 45: "This amendatory act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, and safety, the support of the state government and its existing public institutions, and shall take effect on July 1, 1979." [1979 ex.s. c 45 § 8.]

Severability—1974 ex.s. c 120: See note following RCW 41.26.030.

**Severability—Effective dates and termination dates—Construction
—1973 1st ex.s. c 195:** See notes following RCW 84.52.043.