

Fiscal: Fiscal impact issued

Revenue: No Revenue Impact

Action Date: 03/06/15

Action: Do Pass As Amended, Be Printed Engrossed, And Bill Be Referred To Ways
And Means.

Meeting Dates: 02/18, 02/27, 03/06

Vote:

Yeas: 10 - Barreto, Barton, Doherty, Evans, Fagan, Heard, Holvey, Kennemer, Nosse, Weidner

Exc: 1 - Esquivel

Prepared By: Jan Nordlund, Committee Administrator

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Classifies as “police officer” under Public Employees Retirement System any employees of the Department of Human Services whose duties include maintaining safety, behavior and control and residents of certain residential facilities. Applies police and fire level of benefits to service performed on and after the effective date. Declares emergency, effective on passage.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Working conditions in a Stabilization and Crisis Unit
- Justification for Police and Fire classification in Public Employees Retirement System
- Concern with labeling caregivers as police officers

EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT:

Applies police and fire level of benefits to service performed on and after the effective date.

BACKGROUND:

Oregon’s Public Employees Retirement System (PERS) enables public employers to provide their employees with retirement benefits. State government, public schools, community colleges, and many local governments (cities, counties, and special districts) participate in PERS. There are approximately 900 public employers currently participating in PERS, covering about 95 percent of all public employees in Oregon.

There are two types of classifications for all primary PERS plans. Examples of qualified positions for the Police and Fire (P&F) classification include certain Department of Corrections employees, Oregon State Police officers, local government police officers, parole and probation officers, the state and deputy state fire marshal, and persons employed by cities, counties, or districts whose duties involve firefighting. All other qualifying positions are classified as General Service. For both General Service and P&F, the level of benefits differs depending on the hire date. An employee is a Tier One member if they began working for a PERS-participating employer before January 1, 1996; Tier Two employees are those who were first employed on or after January 1, 1996 and before August 29, 2003. All other employees are members of the OPSRP Pension Program.

Employees classified as P&F under PERS statutes can retire at an earlier age and have a higher benefit factor used in calculating their retirement benefits.

House Bill 2618-A classifies as “police officers” under PERS statutes employees of the Department of Human Services whose duties include maintaining safety, behavior and control of the residents of residential facilities that house individuals with intellectual or developmental disabilities on or after the effective date of the Act.