

# WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE

## 2019 REGULAR SESSION

**Introduced**

### **House Bill 2595**

BY DELEGATES PACK, GRAVES, COOPER, PAYNTER,  
STEELE, HARSHBARGER, SYPOLT, JENNINGS, EVANS,  
STORCH AND MAYNARD

[Introduced January 22, 2019; Referred  
to the Committee on Pensions and Retirement then  
Finance.]

1 A BILL to amend and reenact §5-10-17 and §5-10D-1 of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as  
 2 amended; to amend said code by adding thereto a new article, designated §20-17-1, §20-  
 3 17-2, §20-17-3, §20-17-4, §20-17-5, §20-17-6, §20-17-7, §20-17-8, §20-17-9, §20-17-10,  
 4 §20-17-11, §20-17-12, §20-17-13, §20-17-14, §20-17-15, §20-17-16, §20-17-17, §20-17-  
 5 18, §20-17-19, §20-17-20, §20-17-21, §20-17-22, §20-17-23, §20-17-24, §20-17-25, §20-  
 6 17-26, §20-17-27, §20-17-28, §20-17-29, §20-17-30, §20-17-31, §20-17-32, §20-17-33,  
 7 §20-17-34, §20-17-35 and §20-17-36; to amend and reenact §20-2B-10 of said code; and  
 8 to amend said code by adding thereto a new article, designated §20-18-1, all relating to  
 9 establishing the West Virginia Division of Natural Resources Police Officer Retirement  
 10 System.

*Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:*

**CHAPTER 5. GENERAL POWERS AND AUTHORITY OF THE  
 GOVERNOR, SECRETARY OF STATE AND ATTORNEY GENERAL;  
 BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS; MISCELLANEOUS AGENCIES,  
 COMMISSIONS, OFFICES, PROGRAMS, ETC.**

**ARTICLE 10. WEST VIRGINIA PUBLIC EMPLOYEES RETIREMENT ACT.**

**§5-10-17. Retirement system membership.**

1 The membership of the retirement system consists of the following persons:  
 2 (a) All employees, as defined in §5-10-2 of this code, who are in the employ of a political  
 3 subdivision the day preceding the date it becomes a participating public employer and who  
 4 continue in the employ of the participating public employer on and after that date shall become  
 5 members of the retirement system; and all persons who become employees of a participating  
 6 public employer on or after that date shall thereupon become members of the system; except as  
 7 provided in subdivisions (b), (c) and (d) of this section.

8 (b) The membership of the Public Employees Retirement System ~~shall~~ may not include  
9 any person who is an active contributing member of, or who has been retired by, any of the state  
10 Teachers retirement systems, the Judges Retirement System, any Retirement System of the  
11 West Virginia State Police, the Deputy Sheriff Retirement System, the Natural Resources Police  
12 Officer Retirement System or any municipal retirement system for either, or both, police or  
13 firefighter; and the Bureau of Employment Programs, by the Commissioner of the Bureau, may  
14 elect whether its employees will accept coverage under this article or be covered under the  
15 authorization of a separate enactment: *Provided*, That the exclusions of membership do not apply  
16 to any member of the State Legislature, the Clerk of the House of Delegates, the Clerk of the  
17 State Senate or to any member of the legislative body of any political subdivision provided he or  
18 she once becomes a contributing member of the retirement system: *Provided, however*, That any  
19 retired member of the State Police Death, Disability and Retirement Fund, the West Virginia State  
20 Police Retirement System, the Deputy Sheriff Retirement System, the Natural Resources Police  
21 Officer Retirement System and any retired member of any municipal retirement system for either,  
22 or both, police or firefighter may on and after the effective date of this section become a member  
23 of the retirement system as provided in this article, without receiving credit for prior service as a  
24 municipal police officer or firefighter or as a member of the State Police Death, Disability and  
25 Retirement Fund, the West Virginia State Police Retirement System or the Deputy Sheriff  
26 Retirement System, or the Natural Resources Police Officer Retirement System: *Provided further*,  
27 That any retired member of the State Police Death, Disability and Retirement Fund, the West  
28 Virginia State Police Retirement System, the Deputy Sheriff Retirement System, the Natural  
29 Resources Police Officer Retirement System and any retired member of any municipal retirement  
30 system for either, or both, police or firefighters, who begins participation in the retirement system  
31 established in this article on or after July1,2005, may not receive a combined retirement benefit

32 in excess of 105 percent of the member's highest annual salary earned while either a member of  
33 the retirement system established in this article or while a member of the other retirement system  
34 or systems from which he or she previously retired when adding the retirement benefit from the  
35 retirement system created in this article to the retirement benefit received by that member from  
36 the other retirement system or systems set forth herein from which he or she previously retired:  
37 *And provided further*, That the membership of the retirement system does not include any person  
38 who becomes employed by the Pretera Center for Mental Health Services, Valley  
39 Comprehensive Mental Health Center, Westbrook Health Services or Eastern Panhandle Mental  
40 Health Center on or after July1,1997, *And provided further*, That membership of the retirement  
41 system does not include any person who becomes a member of the federal Railroad Retirement  
42 Act on or after July1, 2000.

43 (c) Any member of the State Legislature, the Clerk of the House of Delegates, the Clerk  
44 of the State Senate and any employee of the State Legislature whose employment is otherwise  
45 classified as temporary and who is employed to perform services required by the Legislature for  
46 its regular sessions or during the interim between regular sessions and who has been or is  
47 employed during regular sessions or during the interim between sessions in seven consecutive  
48 calendar years, as certified by the Clerk of the House in which the employee served, or any  
49 member of the legislative body of any other political subdivision shall become a member of the  
50 retirement system provided he or she notifies the retirement system in writing of his or her  
51 intention to be a member of the system and files a membership enrollment form as prescribed by  
52 the Board of Trustees, and each person, upon filing his or her written notice to participate in the  
53 retirement system, shall by that act authorize the Clerk of the House of Delegates or the Clerk of  
54 the State Senate or such person or legislative agency as the legislative body of any other political  
55 subdivision shall designate to deduct the member's contribution, as provided in §5-10-29(b) of

56 this code, and after the deductions have been made from the member's compensation, the  
57 deductions shall be forwarded to the retirement system.

58 (d) Any employee, as defined in §5-10-2 of this code, who has concurrent employment in  
59 an additional job or jobs which would require the employee to be a member of the West Virginia  
60 Deputy Sheriff Retirement System, the West Virginia Municipal Police Officers and Firefighters  
61 Retirement System, the Natural Resources Police Officer Retirement System or the West Virginia  
62 Emergency Medical Services Retirement System shall abide by the concurrent employment  
63 statutory provisions of said retirement system and shall participate in only one retirement system  
64 administered by the board.

65 (e) If question arises regarding the membership status of any employee, the Board of  
66 Trustees has the final power to decide the question.

67 (f) Any individual who is a leased employee is not eligible to participate in the system. For  
68 the purposes of this article, the term "leased employee" means any individual who performs  
69 services as an independent contractor or pursuant to an agreement with an employee leasing  
70 organization or other similar organization. If a question arises regarding the status of an individual  
71 as a leased employee, the board has final authority to decide the question.

#### **ARTICLE 10D. CONSOLIDATED PUBLIC RETIREMENT BOARD.**

##### **§5-10D-1. Consolidated Public Retirement Board continued; members; vacancies; investment of plan funds.**

1 (a) The Consolidated Public Retirement Board is continued to administer all public  
2 retirement plans in this state. It shall administer the Public Employees Retirement System  
3 established in §5-10-1 *et seq.* of this code; the Teachers Retirement System established in §18-  
4 7A-1 *et seq.* of this code; the Teachers' Defined Contribution Retirement System created by §18-  
5 7B-1 *et seq.* of this code; the West Virginia State Police Death, Disability and Retirement Fund

6 created by §15-2-1 *et seq.* of this code; the West Virginia State Police Retirement System created  
7 by §15-2A-1 *et seq.* of this code; the Deputy Sheriff Death, Disability and Retirement Fund created  
8 by §7-14D-1 *et seq.* of this code; the Judges' Retirement System created under §51-9-1 *et seq.*  
9 of this code; the Emergency Medical Services Retirement System established in §16-5V-1 *et seq.*  
10 of this code; the Municipal Police Officers and Firefighters Retirement System established in §8-  
11 22A-1 *et seq.* of this code and the West Virginia Division of Natural Resources Retirement System  
12 created by §20-17-1 *et seq.* of this code.

13 (b) The membership of the Consolidated Public Retirement Board consists of:

14 (1) The Governor or his or her designee;

15 (2) The State Treasurer or his or her designee;

16 (3) The State Auditor or his or her designee;

17 (4) The Secretary of the Department of Administration or his or her designee;

18 (5) Four residents of the state, who are not members, retirants or beneficiaries of any of  
19 the public retirement systems, to be appointed by the Governor, with the advice and consent of  
20 the Senate; and

21 (6) A member, annuitant or retirant of the Public Employees Retirement System who is or  
22 was a state employee; a member, annuitant or retirant of the Public Employees Retirement  
23 System who is not or was not a state employee; a member, annuitant or retirant of the Teachers  
24 Retirement System; a member, annuitant or retirant of the West Virginia State Police Death,  
25 Disability and Retirement Fund; a member, annuitant or retirant of the Deputy Sheriff Death,  
26 Disability and Retirement Fund; a member, annuitant or retirant of the Teachers' Defined  
27 Contribution Retirement System; a member, annuitant or retirant of the Emergency Medical  
28 Services Retirement System; ~~and beginning as soon as practicable after January 1, 2010 one~~  
29 person who is a member, annuitant or retirant of a municipal policemen's or firemen's pension

30 and relief fund, or the West Virginia Municipal Police Officers and Firefighters Retirement System,  
31 and beginning as soon as practicable after January 1, 2020, one person who is a member,  
32 annuitant or retirant of the West Virginia Division of Natural Resources Police Officer Retirement  
33 System, all to be appointed by the Governor, with the advice and consent of the Senate. The  
34 Governor shall choose the member representing the municipal policemen's or firemen's pension  
35 and relief fund or the West Virginia Municipal Police Officers and Firefighters Retirement System  
36 from two names submitted by the state's largest organization of professional police officers and  
37 two names submitted by the state's largest organization of professional firefighters.  
38 Representation of the municipal police officers and firefighters shall alternate after each term on  
39 the board between persons having police officer and firefighter affiliation so that each professional  
40 group is represented on the board every other term.

41 All appointees to the board shall have recognized competence or significant experience  
42 in pension management or administration, actuarial analysis, institutional management or  
43 accounting. Those members appointed prior to January 1, 2010, shall be considered to have met  
44 these qualifications. One trustee shall be an attorney experienced in finance and pension matters  
45 and one trustee shall be a certified public accountant. Each member of the board must complete  
46 annual fiduciary training and timely complete any conflict of interest forms required to serve as a  
47 trustee.

48 (c) The appointed members of the board shall serve five-year terms. A member appointed  
49 pursuant to §5-10D-1(b)(6) of this code ceases to be a member of the board if he or she ceases  
50 to be a member of the represented system. If a vacancy occurs in the appointed membership, the  
51 Governor, within 60 days, shall fill the vacancy by appointment for the unexpired term. No more  
52 than six appointees may be of the same political party.

53 (d) The Consolidated Public Retirement Board has all the powers, duties, responsibilities

54 and liabilities of the Public Employees Retirement System established pursuant to §5-10-1 *et seq.*  
55 of this code; the Teachers Retirement System established pursuant to §18-7A-1 *et seq.* of this  
56 code; the Teachers' Defined Contribution Retirement System established pursuant to §18-7B-1  
57 *et seq.* of this code; the West Virginia State Police Death, Disability and Retirement Fund created  
58 pursuant to §15-2-1 *et seq.* of this code; the West Virginia State Police Retirement System created  
59 by §15-2A-1 *et seq.* of this code; the Deputy Sheriff Death, Disability and Retirement Fund created  
60 pursuant to §7-14D-1 *et seq.* of this code; the Judges' Retirement System created pursuant to  
61 §51-9-1 *et seq.* of this code; the Emergency Medical Services Retirement System established in  
62 article §16-5V-1 *et seq.* of this code; the Municipal Police Officers and Firefighters Retirement  
63 System created pursuant to §8-22A-1 *et seq.* of this code, and the West Virginia Division of  
64 Natural Resources Police Officers Retirement System created and established pursuant to article  
65 §20-17-1 *et seq.* of this code, and their appropriate governing boards.

66 (e) The Consolidated Public Retirement Board may propose rules for legislative approval,  
67 in accordance with §29A-3-1 *et seq.* of this code, necessary to effectuate its powers, duties and  
68 responsibilities: *Provided*, That the board may adopt any or all of the rules, previously  
69 promulgated, of a retirement system which it administers.

70 (f) (1) The Consolidated Public Retirement Board shall continue to transfer all funds  
71 received for the benefit of the retirement systems, including, but not limited to, all employer and  
72 employee contributions, to the West Virginia Investment Management Board: *Provided*, That the  
73 employer and employee contributions of the Teachers' Defined Contribution Retirement System,  
74 established in §18-7B-3 of this code, and voluntary deferred compensation funds invested by the  
75 West Virginia Consolidated Public Retirement Board pursuant to §5-10B-5 of this code may not  
76 be transferred to the West Virginia Investment Management Board.

77 (2) The board may recover from a participating employer that fails to pay any amount due

78 a retirement system in a timely manner the contribution due and an additional amount not to  
79 exceed interest or other earnings lost as a result of the untimely payment, or a reasonable  
80 minimum fee, whichever is greater, as provided by legislative rule promulgated pursuant to the  
81 provisions of §29A-3-1 *et seq.* of this code. Any amounts recovered shall be administered in the  
82 same manner in which the amount due is required to be administered.

83 (g) Notwithstanding any provision of this code or any legislative rule to the contrary, all  
84 assets of the public retirement plans set forth in subsection (a) of this section shall be held in trust.  
85 The Consolidated Public Retirement Board is a trustee for all public retirement plans, except with  
86 regard to the investment of funds: *Provided*, That the Consolidated Public Retirement Board is a  
87 trustee with regard to the investments of the Teachers' Defined Contribution Retirement System  
88 and any other assets of the public retirement plans administered by the Consolidated Public  
89 Retirement Board as set forth in subsection (a) of this section for which no trustee has been  
90 expressly designated in this code.

91 (h) The board may employ the West Virginia Investment Management Board to provide  
92 investment management consulting services for the investment of funds in the Teachers' Defined  
93 Contribution Retirement System.

## CHAPTER 20. NATURAL RESOURCES.

### ARTICLE 2B. WILDLIFE ENDOWMENT FUND.

#### §20-2B-10. Class CS/LE nonresident conservation law-enforcement and sports education stamp.

1 (a) Any nonresident hunter, angler or trapper licensed to hunt, fish or trap in this state, in  
2 addition to a Class E, EE, F, H, LL or XXJ license, shall have a Class CS/LE nonresident  
3 conservation, law-enforcement and sports education stamp. The fee for the stamp is ~~\$12~~ \$26.  
4 Any unexpended moneys derived from the sale of Class CS/LE nonresident stamps shall be

5 carried forward to the next fiscal year.

6 (b) The revenue derived from the sale of Class CS/LE nonresident stamps shall be  
7 deposited in the State Treasury and shall be credited ~~to the Division of Natural Resources and~~  
8 used as follows:

9 ~~(1) Fifty percent~~ Twenty-five percent of the revenue shall be used and paid out, upon order  
10 of the director, for the law-enforcement section's expenses relating to the general enforcement of  
11 state laws pertaining to the conservation of fish and wildlife and law-enforcement education  
12 programs for hunters, anglers and trappers: *Provided*, That no expenditures of the revenue  
13 derived from the sale of the ~~Class CS/LE stamp~~ 25 percent designated in and by this subsection  
14 shall be made for law-enforcement purposes not directly related to the wildlife resources of the  
15 state or for the educational programs set forth in this subsection.

16 ~~(2) Fifty percent~~ Twenty-five percent of the revenue shall be used and paid out for capital  
17 improvements and land purchases or leases benefitting wildlife except that at the discretion of the  
18 director, a maximum of 20 percent of the revenue designated in and by this subsection may be  
19 used for the operation and maintenance of the capital improvements and lands: *Provided*, That  
20 no expenditures of the revenue derived from the sale of the conservation and law-enforcement  
21 nonresident stamps shall be made for recreational facilities that are used by or for the benefit of  
22 the general public rather than by or for purchasers of hunting, fishing or trapping licenses. ~~Any~~  
23 ~~unexpended moneys derived from the sale of Class CS/LE stamps shall be carried forward to the~~  
24 ~~next fiscal year.~~

25 (3) Fifty percent shall be credited to the Division of Natural Resources Police Officer  
26 Retirement Fund created in §20-17-6 of this code, and shall be deposited into that fund.

**ARTICLE 17. WEST VIRGINIA DIVISION OF NATURAL RESOURCES POLICE**  
**OFFICER RETIREMENT SYSTEM.**

**§20-17-1. Short title.**

1           This article is known and may be cited as the “West Virginia Natural Resources Police  
2 Officers Retirement System Act.”

**§20-17-2. Definitions.**

1           As used in this article, unless a federal law or regulation or the context clearly requires a  
2 different meaning:

3           (a) “Accrued benefit” means on behalf of any member two and one-quarter percent of the  
4 member’s final average salary multiplied by the member’s years of credited service: *Provided,*  
5 That members who retire after July 1, 2024, shall have an accrued benefit of two and one-half  
6 percent of the member’s final average salary multiplied by the member’s years of credited service.  
7 A member’s accrued benefit may not exceed the limits of Section 415 of the Internal Revenue  
8 Code and is subject to the provisions of §20-17-9(a) of this code.

9           (b) “Accumulated contributions” means the sum of all amounts deducted from the  
10 compensation of a member or paid on his or her behalf pursuant to §5-10C-1 *et seq.* of this code,  
11 either pursuant to §20-17-8 or §5-10-29 of this code as a result of covered employment together  
12 with regular interest on the deducted amounts.

13           (c) “Active member” means a member who is active and contributing to the plan.

14           (d) “Active military duty” means full-time active duty with any branch of the Armed Forces  
15 of the United States, including service with the National Guard or reserve military forces when the  
16 member has been called to active full-time duty and has received no compensation during the  
17 period of that duty from any board or employer other than the Armed Forces.

18           (e) “Actuarial equivalent” means a benefit of equal value computed upon the basis of the  
19 mortality table and interest rates as set and adopted by the retirement board in accordance with  
20 the provisions of this article: *Provided,* That when used in the context of compliance with the  
21 federal maximum benefit requirements of Section 415 of the Internal Revenue Code, “actuarial  
22 equivalent” shall be computed using the mortality tables and interest rates required to comply with

23 those requirements.

24 (f) "Annual compensation" means the wages paid to the member during covered  
25 employment within the meaning of Section 3401(a) of the Internal Revenue Code, but determined  
26 without regard to any rules that limit the remuneration included in wages based upon the nature  
27 or location of employment or services performed during the plan year plus amounts excluded  
28 under Section 414(h)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code and less reimbursements or other expense  
29 allowances, cash, or noncash fringe benefits or both, deferred compensation, and welfare  
30 benefits. Annual compensation for determining benefits during any determination period may not  
31 exceed the maximum compensation allowed as adjusted for cost of living in accordance with §5-  
32 10D-7 of this code and Section 401(a)(17) of the Internal Revenue Code.

33 (g) "Annual leave service" means accrued annual leave.

34 (h) "Annuity starting date" means the first day of the first calendar month following receipt  
35 of the retirement application by the board or the required beginning date, if earlier: *Provided*, That  
36 the member has ceased covered employment and reached normal retirement age.

37 (i) "Base salary" means a member's cash compensation exclusive of overtime from  
38 covered employment during the last 12 months of employment. Until a member has worked 12  
39 months, annualized base salary is used as base salary.

40 (j) "Board" means the Consolidated Public Retirement Board created pursuant to §5-10D-  
41 1 *et seq.* of this code.

42 (k) "Covered employment" means either: (1) Employment as a Natural Resources Police  
43 Officer and the active performance of the duties required of a Natural Resources Police Officer;  
44 (2) the period of time which active duties are not performed but disability benefits are received  
45 under §20-17-16 or §20-17-17 of this code; or (3) concurrent employment by a Natural Resources  
46 Police Officer in a job or jobs in addition to his or her employment as a Natural Resources Police  
47 Officer where the secondary employment requires the Natural Resources Police Officer to be a  
48 member of another retirement system which is administered by the Consolidated Public

49 Retirement Board pursuant to §5-10D-1 et seq. of this code: *Provided*, That the Natural  
50 Resources Police Officer contributes to the fund created in §20-17-7 of this code the amount  
51 specified as the Natural Resource Police Officer's contribution in §20-17-8 of this code.

52 (l) "Credited service" means the sum of a member's years of service, active military duty,  
53 disability service, and annual leave service.

54 (m) "Dependent child" means either:

55 (1) An unmarried person under age 18 who is:

56 (A) A natural child of the member;

57 (B) A legally adopted child of the member;

58 (C) A child who at the time of the member's death was living with the member while the  
59 member was an adopting parent during any period of probation; or

60 (D) A stepchild of the member residing in the member's household at the time of the  
61 member's death; or

62 (2) Any unmarried child under age 23:

63 (A) Who is enrolled as a full-time student in an accredited college or university;

64 (B) Who was claimed as a dependent by the member for federal income tax purposes at  
65 the time of the member's death; and

66 (C) Whose relationship with the member is described in subparagraph (A), (B), or (C),  
67 paragraph (1) of this subdivision.

68 (n) "Dependent parent" means the father or mother of the member who was claimed as a  
69 dependent by the member for Federal Income Tax purposes at the time of the member's death.

70 (o) "Director" means Director of the Division of Natural Resources.

71 (p) "Disability service" means service credit received by a member, expressed in whole  
72 years, fractions thereof or both, equal to one half of the whole years, fractions thereof, or both,  
73 during which time a member receives disability benefits under §20-17-16 or §20-17-17 of this  
74 code.

75 (q) "Division of Natural Resources" means the West Virginia Division of Natural Resources

76 (r) "Employer error" means an omission, misrepresentation, or violation of relevant

77 provisions of the West Virginia Code or of the West Virginia Code of State Rules or the relevant

78 provisions of both the West Virginia Code and of the West Virginia Code of State Rules by the

79 participating public employer that has resulted in an underpayment or overpayment of

80 contributions required. A deliberate act contrary to the provisions of this section by a participating

81 public employer does not constitute employer error.

82 (s) "Effective date" means July 1, 2019.

83 (t) "Final average salary" means the average of the highest annual compensation received

84 for covered employment by the member during any five consecutive plan years within the

85 member's last 10 years of service. If the member did not have annual compensation for the five

86 full plan years preceding the member's attainment of normal retirement age and during that period

87 the member received disability benefits under §20-17-16 or §20-17-17 of this code then "final

88 average salary" means the average of the monthly salary determined paid to the member during

89 that period determined as if the disability first commenced after the effective date of this article

90 with monthly compensation equal to that average monthly compensation which the member was

91 receiving in the plan year prior to the initial disability multiplied by 12.

92 (u) "Fund" means the West Virginia Natural Resources Police Officer Retirement Fund

93 created pursuant to §20-17-7 of this code.

94 (v) "Hour of service" means:

95 (1) Each hour for which a member is paid or entitled to payment for covered employment

96 during which time active duties are performed. These hours shall be credited to the member for

97 the plan year in which the duties are performed;

98 (2) Each hour for which a member is paid or entitled to payment for covered employment

99 during a plan year but where no duties are performed due to vacation, holiday, illness, incapacity

100 including disability, layoff, jury duty, military duty, leave of absence, or any combination thereof

101 and without regard to whether the employment relationship has terminated. Hours under this  
102 paragraph shall be calculated and credited pursuant to West Virginia Division of Labor rules. A  
103 member will not be credited with any hours of service for any period of time he or she is receiving  
104 benefits under §20-17-16 or §20-17-17 of this code; and

105 (3) Each hour for which back pay is either awarded or agreed to be paid by the Division of  
106 Natural Resources, irrespective of mitigation of damages. The same hours of service may not be  
107 credited both under this subdivision and subdivision (1) or (2) of this subsection. Hours under this  
108 paragraph shall be credited to the member for the plan year or years to which the award or  
109 agreement pertains rather than the plan year in which the award, agreement, or payment is made.

110 (w) "Member" means a person first hired as a Natural Resources Police Officer after the  
111 effective date of this article, as defined in subsection (y) of this section, or a Natural Resources  
112 Police Officer first hired prior to the effective date and who elects to become a member pursuant  
113 to §20-17-6 of this code. A member shall remain a member until the benefits to which he or she  
114 is entitled under this article are paid or forfeited or until cessation of membership pursuant to §20-  
115 17-6 of this code.

116 (x) "Monthly salary" means the portion of a member's annual compensation which is paid  
117 to him or her per month.

118 (y) "Natural Resources Police Officer" means any person regularly employed in the service  
119 of the agency as a law-enforcement officer on or after the effective date of this article, and who is  
120 eligible to participate in the fund. The term shall not include Emergency Natural Resources Police  
121 Officers as defined in §20-7-1(c) of this code, Special Natural Resources Police Officers as  
122 defined in §20-7-1(d) of this code, Forestry Special Natural Resources Police Officers as defined  
123 in §20-7-1(e) of this code, or Federal Law Enforcement Officer as defined in §20-7-1(b) of this  
124 code.

125 (z) "Normal form" means a monthly annuity which is 1/12 of the amount of the member's  
126 accrued benefit which is payable for the member's life. If the member dies before the sum of the

127 payments he or she receives equals his or her accumulated contributions on the annuity starting  
128 date, the named beneficiary shall receive in one lump sum the difference between the  
129 accumulated contributions at the annuity starting date and the total of the retirement income  
130 payments made to the member.

131 (aa) "Normal retirement age" means the first to occur of the following: (1) Attainment of  
132 age 55 years and the completion of 15 or more years of service; (2) while still in covered  
133 employment, attainment of at least age 55 years, and when the sum of current age plus years of  
134 service equals or exceeds 70 years; or (3) while still in covered employment, attainment of at least  
135 age 62 years, and completion of 10 years of service.

136 (bb) "Partially disabled" means a member's inability to engage in the duties of Natural  
137 Resources Police Officer by reason of any medically determinable physical or mental impairment  
138 that can be expected to result in death or that has lasted or can be expected to last for a  
139 continuous period of not less than 12 months. A member may be determined partially disabled  
140 for the purposes of this article and maintain the ability to engage in other gainful employment  
141 which exists within the state but which ability would not enable him or her to earn an amount at  
142 least equal to two thirds of the average annual compensation earned by all active members of  
143 this plan during the plan year ending as of the most recent June 30, as of which plan data has  
144 been assembled and used for the actuarial valuation of the plan.

145 (cc) "Public Employees Retirement System" means the West Virginia Public Employees  
146 Retirement System created by §5-10-1 et seq. of this code.

147 (dd) "Plan" means the West Virginia Natural Resources Police Officer Retirement Plan  
148 established by this article.

149 (ee) "Plan year" means the 12-month period commencing on July 1 of any designated  
150 year and ending the following June 30.

151 (ff) "Qualified public safety employee" means any employee of a participating state or  
152 political subdivision who provides police protection, fire-fighting services, or emergency medical

153 services for any area within the jurisdiction of the state or political subdivision, or such other  
154 meaning given to the term by Section 72(t)(10)(B) of the Internal Revenue Code or by Treasury  
155 Regulation §1.401(a)-1(b)(2)(v) as they may be amended from time to time.

156 (gg) “Regular interest” means the rate or rates of interest per annum, compounded  
157 annually, as the board adopts in accordance with the provisions of this article.

158 (hh) “Required beginning date” means April 1 of the calendar year following the later of:  
159 (i) The calendar year in which the member attains age 70 and 1/2; or (ii) the calendar year in  
160 which he or she retires or otherwise separates from covered employment.

161 (ii) “Retire” or “retirement” means a member’s withdrawal from the employ of a  
162 participating public employer and the commencement of an annuity by the plan.

163 (jj) “Retirement income payments” means the annual retirement income payments payable  
164 under the plan.

165 (kk) “Spouse” means the person to whom the member is legally married on the annuity  
166 starting date.

167 (ll) “Surviving spouse” means the person to whom the member was legally married at the  
168 time of the member’s death and who survived the member.

169 (mm) “Totally disabled” means a member’s inability to engage in substantial gainful activity  
170 by reason of any medically determined physical or mental impairment that can be expected to  
171 result in death or that has lasted or can be expected to last for a continuous period of not less  
172 than 12 months. For purposes of this subdivision:

173 (1) A member is totally disabled only if his or her physical or mental impairment or  
174 impairments are so severe that he or she is not only unable to perform his or her previous work  
175 as Natural Resources Police Officer but also cannot, considering his or her age, education, and  
176 work experience, engage in any other kind of substantial gainful employment which exists in the  
177 state regardless of whether: (A) The work exists in the immediate area in which the member lives;  
178 (B) a specific job vacancy exists; or (C) the member would be hired if he or she applied for work.

179 (2) "Physical or mental impairment" is an impairment that results from an anatomical,  
 180 physiological, or psychological abnormality that is demonstrated by medically accepted clinical  
 181 and laboratory diagnostic techniques. A member's receipt of Social Security disability benefits  
 182 creates a rebuttable presumption that the member is totally disabled for purposes of this plan.  
 183 Substantial gainful employment rebuts the presumption of total disability.

184 (nn) "Year of service" A member shall, except in his or her first and last years of covered  
 185 employment, be credited with year of service credit, based upon the hours of service performed  
 186 as covered employment and credited to the member during the plan year based upon the following  
 187 schedule:

<u>Hours of Service</u>	<u>Years of Service Credited</u>
<u>Less than 500</u>	<u>0</u>
<u>500 to 999</u>	<u>1/3</u>
<u>1,000 to 1,499</u>	<u>2/3</u>
<u>1,500 or more</u>	<u>1</u>

193 During a member's first and last years of covered employment, the member shall be  
 194 credited with 1/12 of a year of service for each month during the plan year in which the member  
 195 is credited with an hour of service. A member is not entitled to credit for years of service for any  
 196 time period during which he or she received disability payments under §20-17-14 or §20-17-15 of  
 197 this code. Except as specifically excluded, years of service include covered employment prior to  
 198 the effective date. Years of service which are credited to a member prior to his or her receipt of  
 199 accumulated contributions upon termination of employment pursuant to §20-17-14 or §5-10-30 of  
 200 this code, shall be disregarded for all purposes under this plan unless the member repays the  
 201 accumulated contributions with interest pursuant to §20-17-13 of this code or had prior to the  
 202 effective date made the repayment pursuant to §5-10-18 of this code.

**§20-17-3. Meaning of terms.**

1 Any term used in this article has the same meaning as when used in a comparable context

2 in the laws of the United States, unless a different meaning is clearly required. Any reference in  
3 this article to the Internal Revenue Code means the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as it has  
4 been amended.

**§20-17-4. Creation and administration of West Virginia Deputy Sheriffs Retirement Natural Resources Police Officer System; specification of actuarial assumptions.**

1 There is hereby created the West Virginia Natural Resources Police Officer System. The  
2 purpose of this system is to provide for the orderly retirement of Natural Resources Police Officers  
3 who become superannuated because of age or permanent disability and to provide certain  
4 survivor death benefits, and it is contemplated that substantially all of the members of the  
5 retirement system shall be qualified public safety employees as defined in §20-17-2 of this code.  
6 The retirement system constitutes a body corporate. All business of the system shall be  
7 transacted in the name of the West Virginia Natural Police Officers Retirement System. The board  
8 shall specify and adopt all actuarial assumptions for the plan at its first meeting of every calendar  
9 year or as soon thereafter as may be practicable, which assumptions shall become part of the  
10 plan.

**§20-17-5. Article to be liberally construed; supplements federal social security; federal qualification requirements.**

1 (a) The provisions of this article shall be liberally construed to provide a general retirement  
2 system for Natural Resources Police Officers eligible to retire under the provisions of this plan.  
3 Nothing in this article may be construed to permit the state to substitute this plan for federal social  
4 security now in force in West Virginia.

5 (b) The board shall administer the plan in accordance with its terms and may construe the  
6 terms and determine all questions arising in connection with the administration, interpretation and  
7 application of the plan. The board may sue and be sued, contract and be contracted with and  
8 conduct all the business of the system in the name of the plan. The board may employ those  
9 persons it considers necessary or desirable to administer the plan. The board shall administer the

10 plan for the exclusive benefit of the members and their beneficiaries subject to the specific  
11 provisions of the plan.

12 (c) The plan is intended to meet the federal qualification requirements of Section 401(a)  
13 and related sections of the Internal Revenue Code as applicable to governmental plans.  
14 Notwithstanding any other provision of state law, the board shall administer the plan to fulfill this  
15 intent for the exclusive benefit of the members and their beneficiaries. Any provision of this article  
16 referencing or relating to these federal qualification requirements shall be effective as of the date  
17 required by federal law. The board may promulgate rules and amend or repeal conflicting rules in  
18 accordance with the authority granted to the board pursuant to §5-10D-1 of this code to assure  
19 compliance with the requirements of this section.

**§20-17-6. Members.**

1 (a) Any Natural Resources Police Officer first employed in covered employment after the  
2 effective date of this article shall be a member of this retirement system and does not qualify for  
3 membership in any other retirement system administered by the board, so long as he or she  
4 remains employed in covered employment: *Provided*, That any Natural Resources Police Officer  
5 who has concurrent employment in an additional job or jobs which would require the Natural  
6 Resources Police Officer to be a member of the West Virginia Municipal Police Officers and  
7 Firefighters Retirement System or the West Virginia Emergency Medical Services Retirement  
8 System shall participate in only one retirement system administered by the board, and the  
9 retirement system applicable to the concurrent employment for which the employee has the  
10 earliest date of hire shall prevail. The membership of any person in the plan ceases: (1) Upon the  
11 withdrawal of accumulated contributions after the cessation of service; (2) upon retirement; or (3)  
12 at death.

13 (b) Any Natural Resources Police Officer employed in covered employment on the  
14 effective date of this article shall within six months of that effective date notify in writing both the  
15 Division of Natural Resources and the board, of his or her desire to become a member of the

16 plan: Any Natural Resources Police Officer who elects to become a member of the plan ceases  
17 to be an active member in any other retirement system administered by the board and shall  
18 continue to be ineligible for future membership in any other retirement system administered by  
19 the board so long as the Natural Resources Police Officer remains employed in covered  
20 employment in this plan; any deputy sheriff Natural Resources Police Officer who does not  
21 affirmatively elect to become a member of the plan continues to be eligible for any other retirement  
22 system as is from time to time offered to other county employees but is ineligible for this plan  
23 regardless of any subsequent termination of employment and rehire.

24 (c) Any Natural Resources Police Officer employed in covered employment on the  
25 effective date of this article, who has timely elected to transfer into this plan as provided in  
26 subsection (b) of this section, shall be given credited service at the time of transfer for all credited  
27 service then standing to the Natural Resources Police Officer service credit in the Public  
28 Employees Retirement System regardless of whether the credited service (as that term is defined  
29 in §5-10-2 of this code) was earned as a Natural Resources Police Officer. All the credited service  
30 standing to the transferring Natural Resources Police Officer's credit in the Public Employees  
31 Retirement Fund System at the time of transfer into this plan shall be transferred into the plan  
32 created by this article, and the transferring Natural Resources Police Officer shall be given the  
33 same credit for the purposes of this article for all service transferred from the Public Employees  
34 Retirement System, as that transferring Natural Resources Police Officer would have received  
35 from the Public Employees Retirement System as if the transfer had not occurred. In connection  
36 with each transferring Natural Resources Police Officer receiving credit for prior employment as  
37 provided in this subsection, a transfer from the Public Employees Retirement System to this plan  
38 shall be made pursuant to the procedures described in section eight of this article: *Provided, That*  
39 a member of this plan who has elected to transfer from the Public Employees Retirement System  
40 into this plan pursuant to subsection (b) of this section may not, after having transferred into and  
41 become an active member of this plan, reinstate to his or her credit in this plan any service credit

42 relating to periods of nonNatural Resources Police Officer service which were withdrawn from the  
43 Public Employees Retirement System prior to his or her elective transfer into this plan.

44 (d) Any Natural Resources Police Officer who was employed as a Natural Resources  
45 Police Officer prior to the effective date of this article but was not employed as a Natural  
46 Resources Police Officer on the effective date of this article, shall become a member upon rehire  
47 as a Natural Resources Police Officer. For purposes of this subsection, the member's years of  
48 service and credited service in the Public Employees Retirement System prior to the effective  
49 date of this article may not be counted for any purposes under this plan unless: (1) The Natural  
50 Resources Police Officer has not received the return of his or her accumulated contributions in  
51 the Public Employees Retirement System pursuant to §5-10-30 of this code; or (2) the  
52 accumulated contributions returned to the member from the Public Employees Retirement System  
53 have been repaid pursuant to §2-17-13 of this code. If the conditions of subdivision (1) or (2) of  
54 this subsection are met, all years of the Natural Resources Police Officer's covered employment  
55 shall be counted as years of service for the purposes of this article.

56 (e) Once made, the election provided in this section is irrevocable. All Natural Resources  
57 Police Officers first employed after the effective date and Natural Resources Police Officers  
58 electing to become members as described in this section shall be members as a condition of  
59 employment and shall make the contributions required by §20-17-7 of this code.

60 (f) Notwithstanding any other provisions of this article, any individual who is a leased  
61 employee is not eligible to participate in the plan. For purposes of this plan, a "leased employee"  
62 means any individual who performs services as an independent contractor or pursuant to an  
63 agreement with an employee leasing organization or similar organization. If a question arises  
64 regarding the status of an individual as a leased employee, the board has final power to decide  
65 the question. Additionally, any individual who is an Emergency Natural Resources Police Officer  
66 as defined in §20-7-1(c) of this code, Special Natural Resources Police Officer as defined in §20-  
67 7-1(d) of this code, Forestry Special Natural Resources Police Officer as defined in §20-7-1(e) of

68 this code, or Federal Law Enforcement Officer as defined in §20-7-1b of this code, is not eligible  
69 to participate in the plan.

**§20-17-7. Creation of fund; investments.**

1 (a) There is hereby created the “West Virginia Natural Resources Police Officer  
2 Retirement Fund” for the benefit of the members of the retirement system created pursuant to this  
3 article and the dependents of any deceased or retired member of the system.

4 (b) All moneys paid into and accumulated in the fund, except such amounts as are  
5 designated by the board for payment of benefits as provided in this article, shall be held in trust  
6 and invested in the consolidated pensions fund as administered by the state Investment  
7 Management Board as provided by law.

**§20-17-8. Members’ contributions; employer contributions.**

1 (a) There shall be deducted from the monthly salary of each member and paid into the  
2 fund an amount equal to eight and one-half percent of his or her monthly salary. An additional 12  
3 percent of the monthly salary of each member shall be paid to the fund by the employer. If the  
4 board finds that the benefits provided by this article can be actually funded with a lesser  
5 contribution, then the board shall reduce the required member or employer contributions or both.  
6 The sums withheld each calendar month shall be paid to the fund no later than 15 days following  
7 the end of the calendar month.

8 (b) Any active member who has concurrent employment in an additional job or jobs and  
9 the additional employment requires the Natural Resources Police Officer to be a member of  
10 another retirement system which is administered by the Consolidated Public Retirement Board  
11 pursuant to §5-10D-1 et seq. of this code shall make an additional contribution to the fund of eight  
12 and one-half percent of his or her monthly salary earned from any additional employment which  
13 requires the Natural Resources Police Officer to be a member of another retirement which is  
14 administered by the Consolidated Public Retirement Board pursuant to §5-10D-1 et seq. of this  
15 code. An additional amount shall be paid to the fund by the concurrent employer for which the

16 member is employed in an amount determined by the board: *Provided*, That the total of the  
17 contributions provided in this section, to be paid by the concurrent employer, may not exceed 13  
18 percent of the monthly salary of the employee. If the board finds that the benefits provided by this  
19 article can be funded with a lesser contribution, then the board shall reduce the required member,  
20 or employer contributions or both. The sums withheld each calendar month shall be paid to the  
21 fund no later than 15 days following the end of the calendar month.

**§20-17-9. Correction of errors; underpayments; overpayments.**

1 (a) *General rule*: Upon learning of errors, the board shall correct errors in the retirement  
2 plan in a timely manner whether the individual, entity or board was at fault for the error with the  
3 intent of placing the affected individual, entity and board in the position each would have been in  
4 had the error not occurred.

5 (b) *Underpayments to the plan*: Any error resulting in an underpayment to the plan may  
6 be corrected by the member or retirant remitting the required employee contribution or  
7 underpayment and the participating public employer remitting the required employer contribution  
8 or underpayment. Interest shall accumulate in accordance with the legislative rule 162 CSR 7  
9 concerning retirement board refund, reinstatement, retroactive service, loan and correction of  
10 error interest factors and any accumulating interest owed on the employee and employer  
11 contributions or underpayments resulting from an employer error is the responsibility of the  
12 participating public employer. The participating public employer may remit total payment and the  
13 employee reimburse the participating public employer through payroll deduction over a period  
14 equivalent to the time period during which the employer error occurred. If the correction of an  
15 error involving an underpayment to the plan will result in the plan paying a retirant an additional  
16 amount, this additional payment may be made only after the board receives full payment of all  
17 required employee and employer contributions or underpayments, including interest.

18 (c) *Overpayments to the plan by an employer*: When mistaken or excess employer  
19 contributions or other employer overpayments have been made to the plan, the board shall credit

20 the employer with an amount equal to the overpayment, to be offset against the employer's future  
21 liability for employer contributions to the plan. If the employer has no future liability for employer  
22 contributions to the retirement system, the board shall refund the erroneous contributions directly  
23 to the employer. Earnings or interest may not be returned, offset or credited to the employer under  
24 any of the means used by the board for returning employer overpayments made to the plan.

25 (d) *Overpayments to the plan by an employee:* When mistaken or excess employee  
26 contributions or overpayments have been made to the retirement system, the board has sole  
27 authority for determining the means of return, offset or credit to or for the benefit of the individual  
28 making the mistaken or excess employee contribution of the amounts, and may use any means  
29 authorized or permitted under the provisions of section 401(a), et seq. of the Internal Revenue  
30 Code and guidance issued thereunder applicable to governmental plans. Alternatively, the board  
31 may require the participating public employer employing the individual to pay the individual the  
32 amounts as wages, with the board crediting the participating public employer with a corresponding  
33 amount to offset against its future contributions to the plan. If the employer has no future liability  
34 for employer contributions to the plan, the board shall refund said amount directly to the employer:  
35 *Provided, That the wages paid to the individual shall not be considered compensation for any*  
36 *purposes of this article. Earnings or interest shall not be returned, offset, or credited under any of*  
37 *the means used by the board for returning employee overpayments.*

38 (e) *Overpayments from the plan:* If any error results in any member, retirant, beneficiary,  
39 entity or other individual receiving from the system more than he or she would have been entitled  
40 to receive had the error not occurred the board shall correct the error in a timely manner. If  
41 correction of the error occurs after annuity payments to a retirant or beneficiary have commenced,  
42 the board shall prospectively adjust the payment of the benefit to the correct amount. In addition,  
43 the member, retirant, beneficiary, entity or other person who received the overpayment from the  
44 plan shall repay the amount of any overpayment to the plan in any manner permitted by the board.  
45 Interest shall not accumulate on any corrective payment made to the plan pursuant to this

46 subsection.

47 (f) Underpayments from the plan: If any error results in any member, retirant, beneficiary,  
48 entity or other individual receiving from the plan less than he or she would have been entitled to  
49 receive had the error not occurred, the board, upon learning of the error, shall correct the error in  
50 a timely manner. If correction of the error occurs after annuity payments to a retirant or beneficiary  
51 have commenced, the board shall prospectively adjust the payment of the benefit to the correct  
52 amount. In addition, the board shall pay the amount of such underpayment to the member,  
53 retirant, beneficiary or other individual in a lump sum. Interest shall not be paid on any corrective  
54 payment made by the plan pursuant to this subsection.

55 (g) Eligibility errors: If the board finds that an individual, employer, or both individual and  
56 employer formerly or currently participating in the plan is not eligible to participate, the board shall  
57 notify the individual and his or her employer of the determination and terminate participation in  
58 the plan. Any erroneous payments to the retirement system shall be returned to the employer and  
59 individual in accordance with the methods described in subsections (c) and (d) of this section and  
60 any erroneous payments from the plan to such individual shall be returned to the plan in  
61 accordance with the methods described in subsection (e) of this section. Any erroneous service  
62 credited to the individual shall be removed. If the board determines that an individual or employer,  
63 or both, has not been participating in the plan, but was eligible to and required to be participating  
64 in the plan, the board shall as soon as practicable notify the individual and his or her employer of  
65 the determination, and the individual and his or her employer shall prospectively commence  
66 participation in the plan as soon as practicable. Service credit for service prior to the date on which  
67 the individual prospectively commences participation in the plan shall be granted only if the board  
68 receives the required employer and employee contributions for such service, in accordance with  
69 subsection (b) of this section, including interest.

**§20-17-10. Transfer from Public Employees Retirement System.**

1 (a) The consolidated retirement board shall, within 90 days of the effective date of the

2 transfer of a Natural Resources Police Officer from the Public Employees Retirement System to  
3 the plan, transfer assets from the Public Employees Retirement System trust fund into the West  
4 Virginia Natural Police Officers Retirement trust fund.

5 (b) The amount of assets to be transferred for each transferring Natural Resources Police  
6 Officer shall be computed as of July 1, 2019, using the actuarial valuation assumptions in effect  
7 for July 1, 2019, actuarial valuation of Public Employees Retirement System, and updated with  
8 seven and one-half percent annual interest to the date of the actual asset transfer. The market  
9 value of the assets of the transferring Natural Resources Police Officer in the Public Employees  
10 Retirement System shall be determined as of the end of the month preceding the actual transfer.  
11 To determine the computation of the asset share to be transferred the board shall:

12 (1) Compute the market value of the Public Employees Retirement System assets;

13 (2) Compute the accrued liability for all Public Employees Retirement System retirees,  
14 beneficiaries, disabled retirees and terminated inactive members;

15 (3) Reduce the market value of Public Employees Retirement System assets by the  
16 accrued liability determined in subdivision (2) of this subsection;

17 (4) Compute the entry age method accrued liability for all active Public Employees  
18 Retirement System members;

19 (5) Compute the share of accrued liability as determined pursuant to subdivision (4) of this  
20 subsection, that is attributable to those Natural Resources Police Officers in Public Employees  
21 Retirement System who have elected to transfer to the plan;

22 (6) Compute the percentage of active's accrued liability computed to the Natural  
23 Resources Police Officers by dividing subdivision (5) by subdivision (4) of this subsection;

24 (7) Determine the asset share to be transferred from Public Employees Retirement  
25 System to the plan by multiplying subdivision (3) times subdivision(6) of this subsection.

26 (c) Once a Natural Resources Police Officer has elected to transfer from the Public  
27 Employees Retirement System, transfer of that amount as calculated in accordance with the

28 provisions of subsection (b) of this section by the Public Employees Retirement System shall  
29 operate as a complete bar to any further liability to the transferring from the Public Employees  
30 Retirement System, and constitutes an agreement whereby the transferring Natural Resources  
31 Police Officer forever indemnifies and holds harmless the Public Employees Retirement System  
32 from providing him or her any form of retirement benefit whatsoever until such time as that Natural  
33 Resources Police Officer obtains other employment which would make him or her eligible to  
34 reenter the Public Employees Retirement System with no credit whatsoever for the amounts  
35 transferred to the Natural Resources Police Officer retirement system.

36 (d) Any Natural Resources Police Officer who elected, on or before January 30, 2020, to  
37 transfer to the plan created by this article, has until January 1, 2021, to pay any amounts required  
38 by section seven of this article as a result of the Natural Resources Police Officer's transfer to the  
39 Natural Resources Police Officer retirement fund.

**§20-17-11. Notice requirements; test case.**

1 (a) The Division of Natural Resources shall prepare a written notice to be delivered to  
2 each Natural Resources Police Officer employed prior to July 1, 2019. This notice shall clearly  
3 and accurately explain the benefits, financial implications and consequences to a Natural  
4 Resources Police Officer of electing to participate in the retirement plan created in this article,  
5 including the consequences and financial implications in regard to the benefits under the public  
6 employees insurance plan as set forth in §5-16-1 et seq. of this code. This notice shall be  
7 distributed to each Natural Resources Police Officer and the West Virginia Division of Natural  
8 Resources shall obtain a signed receipt from each Natural Resources Police Officer  
9 acknowledging that the Natural Resources Police Officer was provided a copy of the notice  
10 required in this subsection. If a Natural Resources Police Officer makes the election provided for  
11 in §20-17-8 of this code, he or she shall be considered to have made a voluntary, informed  
12 decision in regard to the election to participate in the retirement system created in this article.

13 (b) Nothing in this section may be construed to alter, affect or change any of the rights and

14 benefits of any Natural Resources Police Officer who has insurance coverage under §5-16-1 et  
15 seq. of this code as a result of being a spouse or dependent of a participant who is the primary  
16 insured under §5-16-1 et seq. of this code.

17 (d) Nothing contained in this section may be construed to affect or pertain to any life  
18 insurance coverage under §5-16-1 et seq. of this code.

**§20-17-12. Retirement; commencement of benefits.**

1 A member may retire and commence to receive retirement income payments on the first  
2 day of the calendar month following the board's receipt of the member's voluntary written  
3 application for retirement or the required beginning date, if earlier. Before receiving retirement  
4 income payments, the member shall have ceased covered employment and reached normal  
5 retirement age. The retirement income payments shall be in an amount as provided under section  
6 §20-17-11 of this code: *Provided*, That retirement income payments under this plan shall be  
7 subject to the provisions of this article. Upon receipt of a request for estimation of benefits, the  
8 board shall promptly provide the member with an explanation of his or her optional forms of  
9 retirement benefits and the estimated gross monthly annuity. Upon receipt of properly executed  
10 retirement application forms from the member, the board shall process the member's request and  
11 commence payments as soon as administratively feasible.

**§20-17-13. Federal law maximum benefit limitations.**

1 Notwithstanding any other provision of this article or state law, the board shall administer  
2 the retirement system in compliance with the limitations of Section 415 of the Internal Revenue  
3 Code and regulations under that section, to the extent applicable to governmental plans (hereafter  
4 sometimes referred to as the "415 limitation(s)" or "415 dollar limitation(s)"), so that the annual  
5 benefit payable under this system to a member may not exceed those limitations. Any annual  
6 benefit payable under this system shall be reduced or limited, if necessary, to an amount which  
7 does not exceed those limitations. The extent to which any annuity or other annual benefit payable  
8 under this retirement system shall be reduced, as compared to the extent to which an annuity,

9 contributions or other benefits under any other defined benefit plans or defined contribution plans  
10 required to be taken into consideration under Section 415 of the Internal Revenue Code shall be  
11 reduced, shall be proportional on a percentage basis to the reductions made in such other plans  
12 administered by the board and required to be so taken into consideration under Section 415,  
13 unless a disproportionate reduction is determined by the board to maximize the aggregate  
14 benefits payable to the member. If the reduction is under this retirement system, the board shall  
15 advise affected members of any additional limitation on the annuities or other annual benefit  
16 required by this section. For purposes of the 415 limitations, the "limitation year" shall be the  
17 calendar year. The 415 limitations are incorporated herein by reference, except to the extent the  
18 following provisions may modify the default provisions thereunder:

19 (a) The annual adjustment to the 415 dollar limitations made by Section 415(d) of the  
20 Internal Revenue Code and the regulations thereunder shall apply for each limitation year. The  
21 annual adjustments to the dollar limitations under Section 415(d) of the Internal Revenue Code  
22 which become effective: (i) After a retirant's severance from employment with the employer; or (ii)  
23 after the annuity starting date in the case of a retirant who has already commenced receiving  
24 benefits, shall apply with respect to a retirant's annual benefit in any limitation year. A retirant's  
25 annual benefit payable in any limitation year from this retirement system may not be greater than  
26 the limit applicable at the annuity starting date, as increased in subsequent years pursuant to  
27 Section 415(d) of the Internal Revenue Code and the regulations thereunder.

28 (b) For purposes of this section, the "annual benefit" means a benefit that is payable  
29 annually in the form of a straight life annuity. Except as provided below, where a benefit is payable  
30 in a form other than a straight life annuity, the benefit shall be adjusted to an actuarially equivalent  
31 straight life annuity that begins at the same time as such other form of benefit, using factors  
32 prescribed in the 415 limitation regulations, before applying the 415 limitations. No actuarial  
33 adjustment to the benefit shall be made for: (1) Survivor benefits payable to a surviving spouse  
34 under a qualified joint and survivor annuity to the extent such benefits would not be payable if the

35 member's benefit were paid in another form; (2) benefits that are not directly related to retirement  
36 benefits (such as a qualified disability benefit, preretirement incidental death benefits, and post-  
37 retirement medical benefits); or (3) the inclusion in the form of benefit of an automatic benefit  
38 increase feature, provided the form of benefit is not subject to Section 417(e)(3) of the Internal  
39 Revenue Code and would otherwise satisfy the limitations of this article, and the plan provides  
40 that the amount payable under the form of benefit in any limitation year shall not exceed the limits  
41 of this article applicable at the annuity starting date, as increased in subsequent years pursuant  
42 to Section 415(d) of the Internal Revenue Code. For this purpose, an automatic benefit increase  
43 feature is included in a form of benefit if the form of benefit provides for automatic, periodic  
44 increases to the benefits paid in that form.

45 (c) Adjustment for benefit forms not subject to Section 417(e)(3). -- The straight life annuity  
46 that is actuarially equivalent to the member's form of benefit shall be determined under this  
47 subsection if the form of the member's benefit is either: (1) A nondecreasing annuity (other than  
48 a straight life annuity) payable for a period of not less than the life of the member (or, in the case  
49 of a qualified preretirement survivor annuity, the life of the surviving spouse); or (2) an annuity  
50 that decreases during the life of the member merely because of: (i) The death of the survivor  
51 annuitant (but only if the reduction is not below 50 percent of the benefit payable before the death  
52 of the survivor annuitant); or (ii) the cessation or reduction of Social Security supplements or  
53 qualified disability payments (as defined in Section 411(a)(9) of the Internal Revenue Code). The  
54 actuarially equivalent straight life annuity is equal to the greater of: (I) The annual amount of the  
55 straight life annuity (if any) payable to the member under the plan commencing at the same  
56 annuity starting date as the member's form of benefit; and (II) the annual amount of the straight  
57 life annuity commencing at the same annuity starting date that has the same actuarial present  
58 value as the member's form of benefit, computed using a five percent interest rate assumption  
59 and the applicable mortality table defined in Treasury Regulation §1.417(e)-1(d)(2) (Revenue  
60 Ruling 2001-62 or any subsequent Revenue Ruling modifying the applicable provisions of

61 Revenue Ruling 2001-62) for that annuity starting date.

62 (d) Adjustment for benefit forms subject to Section 417(e)(3). -- The straight life annuity  
63 that is actuarially equivalent to the member's form of benefit shall be determined under this  
64 subsection if the form of the member's benefit is other than a benefit form described in subdivision  
65 (c) of this section. The actuarially equivalent straight life annuity shall be determined as follows:  
66 The actuarially equivalent straight life annuity is equal to the greatest of: (1) The annual amount  
67 of the straight life annuity commencing at the same annuity starting date that has the same  
68 actuarial present value as the member's form of benefit, computed using the interest rate specified  
69 in this retirement system and the mortality table (or other tabular factor) specified in this retirement  
70 system for adjusting benefits in the same form; (2) the annual amount of the straight life annuity  
71 commencing at the same annuity starting date that has the same actuarial present value as the  
72 member's form of benefit, computed using a five and a half percent interest rate assumption and  
73 the applicable mortality table defined in Treasury Regulation §1.417(e)-1(d)(2) (Revenue Ruling  
74 2001-62 or any subsequent Revenue Ruling modifying the applicable provisions of Revenue  
75 Ruling 2001-62) for that annuity starting date; and (3) the annual amount of the straight life annuity  
76 commencing at the same annuity starting date that has the same actuarial present value as the  
77 member's form of benefit, computed using the applicable interest rate defined in Treasury  
78 Regulation §1.417(e)-1(d)(3) and the applicable mortality table defined in Treasury Regulation  
79 §1.417(e)-1(d)(2) (the mortality table specified in Revenue Ruling 2001-62 or any subsequent  
80 Revenue Ruling modifying the applicable provisions of Revenue Ruling 2001-62), divided by 1.05.

81 (e) Benefits payable prior to age 62:

82 (1) Except as provided in paragraphs (2) and (3) of this subdivision, if the member's  
83 retirement benefits become payable before age 62, the 415 dollar limitation prescribed by this  
84 section shall be reduced in accordance with regulations issued by the Secretary of the Treasury  
85 pursuant to the provisions of Section 415(b) of the Internal Revenue Code, so that the limitation  
86 (as so reduced) equals an annual straight life benefit (when the retirement income benefit begins)

87 which is equivalent to an annual benefit in the amount of the applicable dollar limitation of Section  
88 415(b)(1)(A) of the Internal Revenue Code (as adjusted pursuant to Section 415(d) of the Internal  
89 Revenue Code) beginning at age 62.

90 (2) The limitation reduction provided in paragraph (1) of this subdivision may not apply if  
91 the member commencing retirement benefits before age 62 is a qualified participant. A qualified  
92 participant for this purpose is a participant in a defined benefit plan maintained by a state, or any  
93 political subdivision of a state, with respect to whom the service taken into account in determining  
94 the amount of the benefit under the defined benefit plan includes at least 15 years of service: (i)  
95 As a full-time employee of any police or fire department organized and operated by the state or  
96 political subdivision maintaining the defined benefit plan to provide police protection, fire-fighting  
97 services or emergency medical services for any area within the jurisdiction of such state or political  
98 subdivision; or (ii) as a member of the Armed Forces of the United States.

99 (3) The limitation reduction provided in paragraph (1) of this subdivision is not applicable  
100 to preretirement disability benefits or preretirement death benefits.

101 (4) For purposes of adjusting the 415 dollar limitation for benefit commencement before  
102 age 62 or after age 65 (if the plan provides for such adjustment), no adjustment is made to reflect  
103 the probability of a member's death: (i) After the annuity starting date and before age 62; or (ii)  
104 after age 65 and before the annuity starting date.

105 (f) Adjustment when member has less than 10 years of participation. -- if a member has  
106 less than 10 years of participation in the retirement system (within the meaning of Treasury  
107 Regulation §1.415(b)-1(g)(1)(ii)), the 415 dollar limitation (as adjusted pursuant to Section 415(d)  
108 of the Internal Revenue Code and subdivision (e) of this section) shall be reduced by multiplying  
109 the otherwise applicable limitation by a fraction, the numerator of which is the number of years of  
110 participation in the plan (or one, if greater), and the denominator of which is 10. This adjustment  
111 is not applicable to preretirement disability benefits or preretirement death benefits.

112 (g) The application of the provisions of this section may not cause the maximum annual

113 benefit provided to a member to be less than the member's accrued benefit as of December 31,  
114 2008 (the end of the limitation year that is immediately prior to the effective date of the final  
115 regulations for this retirement system as defined in Treasury Regulation §1.415(a)-1(g)(2)), under  
116 provisions of the retirement system that were both adopted and in effect before April 5, 2007,  
117 provided that these provisions satisfied the applicable requirements of statutory provisions,  
118 regulations, and other published guidance relating to Section 415 of the Internal Revenue Code  
119 in effect as of December 31, 2008, as described in Treasury Regulation §1.415(a)-1(g)(4). If  
120 additional benefits are accrued for a member under this retirement system after January 1, 2009,  
121 then the sum of the benefits described under the first sentence of this subsection and benefits  
122 accrued for a member after January 1, 2009, shall satisfy the requirements of Section 415, taking  
123 into account all applicable requirements of the final 415 Treasury Regulations.

**§20-17-14. Federal law minimum required distributions.**

1 The requirements of this section apply to any distribution of a member's or beneficiary's  
2 interest and take precedence over any inconsistent provisions of this plan. This section applies to  
3 plan years beginning after December 31, 1986. Notwithstanding anything in the plan to the  
4 contrary, the payment of benefits under this article shall be determined and made in accordance  
5 with Section 401(a)(9) of the Internal Revenue Code and the federal regulations promulgated  
6 thereunder as applicable to governmental plans. Any term used in this article has the same  
7 meaning as when used in a comparable context in Section 401(a)(9) of the Internal Revenue  
8 Code and the federal regulations promulgated thereunder unless a different meaning is clearly  
9 required by the context or definition in this article. The following provisions apply to payments of  
10 benefits required under this article:

11 (a) The payment of benefits under the plan to any member shall be distributed to him or  
12 her not later than the required beginning date, or be distributed to him or her commencing not  
13 later than the required beginning date, in accordance with regulations prescribed under Section  
14 401(a)(9) of the Internal Revenue Code, over the life of the member or over the lives of the

15 member and his or her beneficiary or over a period not extending beyond the life expectancy of  
16 the member and his or her beneficiary: *Provided*, That the requirements of this section may not  
17 be construed to grant a right to a form of benefit which is not otherwise available to a particular  
18 member under this retirement system. Benefit payments under this section may not be delayed  
19 pending, or contingent upon, receipt of an application for retirement from the member.

20 (b) If a member dies after distribution to him or her has commenced pursuant to this  
21 section but before his or her entire interest in the plan has been distributed, then the remaining  
22 portion of that interest shall be distributed at least as rapidly as under the method of distribution  
23 being used at the date of his or her death.

24 (c) If a member dies before distribution to him or her has commenced, then his or her  
25 entire interest in the retirement system is to be distributed by December 31 of the calendar year  
26 containing the fifth anniversary of the member's death, unless the provisions of subsection (d) of  
27 this section apply.

28 (d) If a member dies before distribution to him or her has commenced, and the member's  
29 interest is eligible to be paid in the form of a survivor annuity to a designated beneficiary,  
30 distributions are to be made over the life of that beneficiary or over a period certain not greater  
31 than the life expectancy of that beneficiary, commencing on or before the following:

32 (1) December 31 of the calendar year immediately following the calendar year in which  
33 the member died; or

34 (2) If the member's sole designated beneficiary is either the surviving spouse or a former  
35 spouse who, as an alternate payee under a Qualified Domestic Relations Order, is receiving 100  
36 percent of the survivor benefit, distributions are to commence on or before the later of:

37 (A) December 31 of the calendar year in which the member would have attained age 70  
38 and one-half; or

39 (B) December 31 of the calendar year immediately following the calendar year in which  
40 the member died.

41 (e) If a member dies before distribution to him or her has commenced and the survivor  
42 annuity provisions of subsection (d) of this section are not applicable, any designated beneficiary  
43 who is eligible to receive a distribution pursuant to the provisions of subsection (c) of this section  
44 may elect to have life expectancy treatment apply to the distribution for purposes of determining  
45 whether any portion of the distribution is an eligible rollover distribution: *Provided*, That any such  
46 election may not delay the required distribution of the deceased member's entire interest in the  
47 retirement system beyond December 31 of the calendar year containing the fifth anniversary of  
48 the member's death as required by subsection (c) of this section: *Provided, however*, That the  
49 election is timely made in a form acceptable to the board on or before the following:

50 (1) December 31 of the calendar year immediately following the calendar year in which  
51 the member died; or

52 (2) If the member's sole designated beneficiary is either the surviving spouse or a former  
53 spouse who, as an alternate payee under a Qualified Domestic Relations Order, is receiving 100  
54 percent of the survivor benefit, election of life expectancy treatment must be made on or before  
55 the earlier of (A) or (B) below:

56 (A) The later of: (i) December 31 of the calendar year immediately following the calendar  
57 year in which the member died; or (ii) December 31 of the calendar year in which the member  
58 would have attained age 70 and one-half; or

59 (B) October 31 of the calendar year containing the fifth anniversary of the member's death.

**§20-17-15. Direct rollovers.**

1 Except where otherwise stated, this section applies to distributions made on or after  
2 January 1, 1993. Notwithstanding any provision of this article to the contrary that would otherwise  
3 limit a distributee's election under this plan, a distributee may elect, at the time and in the manner  
4 prescribed by the board, to have any portion of an eligible rollover distribution paid directly to an  
5 eligible retirement plan specified by the distributee in a direct rollover. For purposes of this section,  
6 the following definitions apply:

7           (1) "Eligible rollover distribution" means any distribution of all or any portion of the balance  
8 to the credit of the distributee, except that an eligible rollover distribution does not include any of  
9 the following: (A) Any distribution that is one of a series of substantially equal periodic payments  
10 not less frequently than annually made for the life or life expectancy of the distributee or the joint  
11 lives or the joint life expectancies of the distributee and the distributee's designated beneficiary,  
12 or for a specified period of 10 years or more; (B) any distribution to the extent the distribution is  
13 required under Section 401(a)(9) of the Internal Revenue Code; (C) the portion of any distribution  
14 that is not includable in gross income determined without regard to the exclusion for net unrealized  
15 appreciation with respect to employer securities; (D) any hardship distribution described in  
16 Section 401(k)(2)(B)(i)(iv) of the Internal Revenue Code. For distributions after December 31,  
17 2001, a portion of a distribution may not fail to be an eligible rollover distribution merely because  
18 the portion consists of after-tax employee contributions which are not includable in gross income.  
19 However, this portion may be paid only to an individual retirement account or annuity described  
20 in Section 408(a) or (b) of the Internal Revenue Code, or (for taxable years beginning before  
21 January 1, 2007) to a qualified trust which is part of a defined contribution plan described in  
22 Section 401(a) or (for taxable years beginning after December 31, 2006) to a qualified trust or to  
23 an annuity contract described in Section 403(a) or (b) of the Internal Revenue Code that agrees  
24 to separately account for amounts transferred (including interest or earnings thereon), including  
25 separately accounting for the portion of the distribution which is includable in gross income and  
26 the portion of the distribution which is not so includable, or (for taxable years beginning after  
27 December 31, 2007) to a Roth IRA described in Section 408A of the Internal Revenue Code.

28           (2) "Eligible retirement plan" means an individual retirement account described in Section  
29 408(a) of the Internal Revenue Code, an individual retirement annuity described in Section 408(b)  
30 of the Internal Revenue Code, an annuity plan described in Section 403(a) of the Internal Revenue  
31 Code or a qualified plan described in Section 401(a) of the Internal Revenue Code that accepts  
32 the distributee's eligible rollover distribution: *Provided*, That in the case of an eligible rollover

33 distribution prior to January 1, 2002, to the surviving spouse, an eligible retirement plan is limited  
34 to an individual retirement account or individual retirement annuity. For distributions after  
35 December 31, 2001, an eligible retirement plan also means an annuity contract described in  
36 Section 403(b) of the Internal Revenue Code and an eligible plan under Section 457(b) of the  
37 Internal Revenue Code which is maintained by a state, political subdivision of a state, or any  
38 agency or instrumentality of a state or political subdivision of a state and which agrees to  
39 separately account for amounts transferred into the plan from this system. For distributions after  
40 December 31, 2007, an eligible retirement plan also means a Roth IRA described in Section 408A  
41 of the Internal Revenue Code: *Provided*, That in the case of an eligible rollover distribution after  
42 December 31, 2007, to a designated beneficiary (other than a surviving spouse) as that term is  
43 defined in Section 402(c)(11) of the Internal Revenue Code, an eligible retirement plan is limited  
44 to an individual retirement account or individual retirement annuity which meets the conditions of  
45 Section 402(c)(11) of the Internal Revenue Code.

46 (3) "Distributee" means an employee or former employee. In addition, the employee's or  
47 former employee's surviving spouse and the employee's or former employee's spouse or former  
48 spouse who is the alternate payee under a qualified domestic relations order, as defined in  
49 Section 414(p) of the Internal Revenue Code with respect to governmental plans, are distributees  
50 with regard to the interest of the spouse or former spouse. For distributions after December 31,  
51 2007, "distribute" also includes a designated beneficiary (other than a surviving spouse) as such  
52 term is defined in Section 402(c)(11) of the Internal Revenue Code.

53 (4) "Direct rollover" means a payment by the plan to the eligible retirement plan.

**§20-17-16. Rollovers and transfers to purchase service credit or repay withdrawn contributions.**

1 (a) This section applies to rollovers and transfers as specified in this section made on or  
2 after January 1, 2002. Notwithstanding any provision of this article to the contrary that would  
3 otherwise prohibit or limit rollovers and plan transfers to this system, the retirement system shall

4 accept the following rollovers and plan transfers on behalf of a member solely for the purpose of  
5 purchasing permissive service credit, in whole or in part, as otherwise provided in this article or  
6 for the repayment of withdrawn or refunded contributions, in whole and in part, with respect to a  
7 previous forfeiture of service credit as otherwise provided in this article: (i) One or more rollovers  
8 within the meaning of Section 408(d)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code from an individual  
9 retirement account described in Section 408(a) of the Internal Revenue Code or from an individual  
10 retirement annuity described in Section 408(b) of the Internal Revenue Code; (ii) one or more  
11 rollovers described in Section 402(c) of the Internal Revenue Code from a retirement plan that is  
12 qualified under Section 401(a) of the Internal Revenue Code or from a plan described in Section  
13 403(b) of the Internal Revenue Code; (iii) one or more rollovers described in Section 457(e)(16)  
14 of the Internal Revenue Code from a governmental plan described in Section 457 of the Internal  
15 Revenue Code; or (iv) direct trustee-to-trustee transfers or rollovers from a plan that is qualified  
16 under Section 401(a) of the Internal Revenue Code, from a plan described in Section 403(b) of  
17 the Internal Revenue Code or from a governmental plan described in Section 457 of the Internal  
18 Revenue Code: *Provided*, That any rollovers or transfers pursuant to this section shall be  
19 accepted by the system only if made in cash or other asset permitted by the board and only in  
20 accordance with such policies, practices and procedures established by the board from time to  
21 time. For purposes of this article, the following definitions and limitations apply:

22 (1) "Permissive service credit" means service credit which is permitted to be purchased  
23 under the terms of the retirement system by voluntary contributions in an amount which does not  
24 exceed the amount necessary to fund the benefit attributable to the period of service for which  
25 the service credit is being purchased, all as defined in Section 415(n)(3)(A) of the Internal  
26 Revenue Code: *Provided*, That no more than five years of "nonqualified service credit", as defined  
27 in Section 415(n)(3)(C) of the Internal Revenue Code, may be included in the permissive service  
28 credit allowed to be purchased (other than by means of a rollover or plan transfer), and no  
29 nonqualified service credit may be included in any such purchase (other than by means of a

30 rollover or plan transfer) before the member has at least five years of participation in the retirement  
31 system.

32 (2) "Repayment of withdrawn or refunded contributions" means the payment into the  
33 retirement system of the funds required pursuant to this article for the reinstatement of service  
34 credit previously forfeited on account of any refund or withdrawal of contributions permitted in this  
35 article, as set forth in Section 415(k)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

36 (3) Any contribution (other than by means of a rollover or plan transfer) to purchase  
37 permissive service credit under any provision of this article must satisfy the special limitation rules  
38 described in Section 415(n) of the Internal Revenue Code, and shall be automatically reduced,  
39 limited, or required to be paid over multiple years if, necessary, to ensure such compliance. To  
40 the extent any such purchased permissive service credit is qualified military service within the  
41 meaning of Section 414(u) of the Internal Revenue Code, the limitations of Section 415 of the  
42 Internal Revenue Code shall be applied to such purchase as described in Section 414(u)(1)(B) of  
43 the Internal Revenue Code.

44 (4) For purposes of Section 415(b) of the Internal Revenue Code, the annual benefit  
45 attributable to any rollover contribution accepted pursuant to this section shall be determined in  
46 accordance with Treasury Regulation §1.415(b)-1(b)(2)(v), and the excess, if any, of the annuity  
47 payments attributable to any rollover contribution provided under the retirement system over the  
48 annual benefit so determined shall be taken into account when applying the accrued benefit  
49 limitations of Section 415(b) of the Internal Revenue Code and §20-17-9a of this code.

50 (b) Nothing in this section shall be construed as permitting rollovers or transfers into this  
51 system or any other system administered by the retirement board other than as specified in this  
52 section and no rollover or transfer shall be accepted into the system in an amount greater than  
53 the amount required for the purchase of permissive service credit or repayment of withdrawn or  
54 refunded contributions.

55 (c) Nothing in this section shall be construed as permitting the purchase of service credit

56 or repayment of withdrawn or refunded contributions except as otherwise permitted in this article.

**§20-17-17. Retirement credited service through member's use, as option, of accrued annual or sick leave days; conversion of annual and sick leave authorized for health or retirement benefits.**

1 (a) Accrued annual and sick leave days may be applied to acquire additional credited  
2 service pursuant to §5-10-15a of this code. Conversion of annual and sick leave for health and  
3 retirement benefits is authorized pursuant to §5-16-13 of this code. The credited service shall be  
4 allowed and not considered to controvert the requirement of no more than twelve months' credited  
5 service in any year's period.

6 (b) This includes annual leave or sick leave days accrued by any member who was a  
7 member of the Public Employee Retirement System prior to the effective date of this article who  
8 elected to become a member of this plan pursuant to §20-17-5 of this code except as provided in  
9 subsections (c) and (d) of this section.

10 (c) Pursuant to §5-10-15a(b) of this code those persons who first became members of the  
11 Public Employees Retirement System retirement system on or after July 1, 2015, accrued annual  
12 or sick days may not be applied to acquire additional credited service.

13 (d) Pursuant to §5-16-13(m) of this code those persons who first became members of the  
14 Public Employees Retirement System retirement system on or after July 1, 2001, accrued annual  
15 or sick days may not be applied toward the cost of premiums for extended insurance coverage  
16 upon his or her retirement.

**§20-17-18. Retirement benefits.**

1 This section provides for a member's accrued benefit payable starting at the member's  
2 annuity starting date which follows the completion of a written application for the commencement  
3 of benefits. The member shall receive the accrued retirement benefit in the normal form or in an  
4 actuarial equivalent amount in an optional form as provided under section twelve of this article,  
5 subject to reduction, if necessary to comply with the maximum benefit provisions of Section 415

6 of the Internal Revenue Code and §20-17-9a of this code. The first day of the calendar month  
7 following the calendar month of birth shall be used in lieu of any birth date that does not fall on  
8 the first day of a calendar month.

9 (a) Normal retirement. -- A member whose annuity starting date is the date the member  
10 attains normal retirement age or later is entitled to his or her accrued retirement benefit based on  
11 years of service and final average salary at termination of employment.

12 (b) Retirement benefits shall be paid monthly in an amount equal to one twelfth of the  
13 retirement income payments elected and at those times established by the board.  
14 Notwithstanding any other provision of the plan, a member who is married on the annuity starting  
15 date will receive his or her retirement income payments in the form of a 66 and two-thirds percent  
16 joint and survivor annuity with his or her spouse unless prior to the annuity starting date the  
17 spouse waives the form of benefit.

**§20-17-19. Annuity options.**

1 (a) Prior to the effective date of retirement, but not thereafter, except as provided in  
2 subsection (c) of this section, a member may elect to receive retirement income payments in the  
3 normal form, or the actuarial equivalent of the normal form from the following options:

4 (1) Option A -- Joint and Survivor Annuity. -- A life annuity payable during the joint lifetime  
5 of the member and his or her beneficiary who is a natural person with an insurable interest in the  
6 member's life. Upon the death of either the member or his or her beneficiary, the benefit shall  
7 continue as a life annuity to the survivor in an amount equal to 50 percent, 66 and two-thirds  
8 percent, 75 percent, or 100 percent of the amount paid while both were living as selected by the  
9 member. If the retiring member is married, the spouse shall sign a waiver of benefit rights if the  
10 beneficiary is to be other than the spouse.

11 (2) Option B -- Contingent Joint and Survivor Annuity. -- A life annuity payable during the  
12 joint lifetime of the member and his or her beneficiary who must be a natural person with an  
13 insurable interest in the member's life. Upon the death of the member, the benefit shall continue

14 as a life annuity to the beneficiary in an amount equal to 50 percent, 66 and two-thirds percent,  
15 75 percent, or 100 percent of the amount paid while both were living as selected by the member.  
16 If the beneficiary dies first, the monthly amount of benefits may not be reduced, but shall be paid  
17 at the amount that was in effect before the death of the beneficiary. If the retiring member is  
18 married, the spouse shall sign a waiver of benefit rights if the beneficiary is to be other than the  
19 spouse.

20 (3) Option C -- Ten Years Certain and Life Annuity. -- A life annuity payable during the  
21 member's lifetime but in any event for a minimum of 10 years. If the member dies before the  
22 expiration of 10 years, the remaining payments shall be made to a designated beneficiary, if any,  
23 or otherwise to the member's estate.

24 (4) Option D -- Level Income Annuity. -- A life annuity payable monthly in an increased  
25 amount "A" from the time of retirement until the member is Social Security retirement age, and  
26 then a lesser amount "B" payable for the member's lifetime thereafter, with these amounts  
27 computed actuarially to satisfy the following two conditions:

28 (A) Actuarial equivalence. -- The actuarial present value at the date of retirement of the  
29 member's annuity if taken in the normal form must equal the actuarial present value of the term  
30 life annuity in amount "A" plus the actual present value of the deferred life annuity in amount "B";  
31 and

32 (B) Level income. -- The amount "A" equals the amount "B" plus the amount of the  
33 member's estimated monthly Social Security primary insurance amount that would commence at  
34 the date amount "B" becomes payable. For this calculation, the primary insurance amount is  
35 estimated when the member applies for retirement, using Social Security law then in effect, using  
36 assumptions established by the board.

37 (b) If a member who has elected the options set forth in subdivisions(a)(1) or (2) of this  
38 section, whose beneficiary dies prior to the member's death, the member may name an alternative  
39 beneficiary. If an alternative beneficiary is named within 18 months following the death of the prior

40 beneficiary, the benefit shall be adjusted to be the actuarial equivalent of the benefit the member  
41 is receiving just after the death of the member's named beneficiary. If the election is not made  
42 until 18 months after the death of the prior beneficiary, the amount shall be reduced so that it is  
43 only 90 percent of the actuarial equivalent of the benefit the member is receiving just after the  
44 death of the member's named beneficiary.

45 (c) (1) If a retired member who has elected an option set forth in subdivision (a)(1) or (2)  
46 of this section, designated his or her spouse as beneficiary, upon divorce or annulment, the  
47 retirant may elect to change the retirement benefit options offered by those subdivisions to a life  
48 annuity in an amount adjusted on a fair basis to be of equal actuarial value of the annuity  
49 prospectively in effect relative to the retirant at the time the option is elected: *Provided*, That the  
50 retirant furnishes to the board satisfactory proof of entry of a final decree of divorce or annulment:  
51 *Provided, however*, That the retirant certifies under penalty of perjury that no qualified domestic  
52 relations order, final decree of divorce or other court order that would restrict the election is in  
53 effect: *Provided further*, That no cause of action against the board arises or may be maintained  
54 on the basis of having permitted the retirant to change the retirement benefit option pursuant to  
55 the provisions of this subdivision.

56 (2) Upon remarriage, a retirant may name the new spouse as an annuitant for any of the  
57 retirement benefit options offered by subdivision (a)(1) or (2) of this section: *Provided*, That the  
58 retirant shall furnish to the board proof of marriage: *Provided, however*, That the retirant certifies  
59 under penalty of perjury that no qualified domestic relations order, final decree of divorce or other  
60 court order that would restrict the designation is in effect: *Provided further*, That no cause of action  
61 against the board arises or may be maintained on the basis of having permitted the retirant to  
62 name a new spouse as annuitant for any of the survivorship retirement benefit options. The value  
63 of the new survivorship annuity shall be the actuarial equivalent of the retirant's benefit  
64 prospectively in effect at the time the new annuity is elected.

**§20-17-20. Refunds to certain members upon discharge or resignation; deferred**

**retirement; forfeitures.**

1       (a) Any member who terminates covered employment and is not eligible to receive  
2 disability or retirement income benefits under this article is, by written request filed with the board,  
3 entitled to receive from the fund the member's accumulated contributions. Except as provided in  
4 subsection (b) of this section, upon withdrawal the member shall forfeit his or her accrued benefit  
5 and cease to be a member.

6       (b) Any member of this plan who ceases employment in covered employment and active  
7 participation in this plan, and who thereafter becomes reemployed in covered employment may  
8 not receive any credited service for any prior withdrawn or offset accumulated contributions from  
9 either this plan or the Public Employees Retirement System relating to the prior covered  
10 employment unless following his or her return to covered employment and active participation in  
11 this plan, the member redeposits in this plan the amount of the withdrawn accumulated  
12 contributions submitted on salary earned while a Natural Resources Police Officer, together with  
13 interest on the accumulated contributions at the rate determined by the board from the date of  
14 withdrawal to the date of redeposit. Upon repayment he or she shall receive the same credit on  
15 account of his or her former service in covered employment as if no refund had been made. The  
16 repayment authorized by this subsection shall be made in a lump sum within 60 months of the  
17 Natural Resources Police Officer's reemployment in covered employment or if later, within 60  
18 months of the effective date of this article.

19       (c) A member of this plan who has elected to transfer from the Public Employees  
20 Retirement System into this plan pursuant to §20-17-5(b) of this code may not, after having  
21 transferred into and become an active member of this plan, reinstate to his or her credit in this  
22 plan any service credit relating to periods of non-Natural Resources Police Officer service which  
23 were withdrawn from the Public Employees Retirement System plan prior to his or her elective  
24 transfer into this plan.

25       (d) Every member who completes 120 of covered employment is eligible, upon cessation

26 of covered employment, to either withdraw his or her accumulated contributions in accordance  
27 with subsection (a) of this section, or to choose not to withdraw his or her accumulated contribution  
28 and to receive retirement income payments upon attaining normal retirement age.

29 (e) Notwithstanding any other provision of this article, forfeitures under the plan may not  
30 be applied to increase the benefits any member would otherwise receive under the plan.

**§20-17-21. Awards and benefits for disability -- Duty related.**

1 (a) Any member who after the effective date of this article and during covered employment:  
2 (1) Has been or becomes either totally or partially disabled by injury, illness or disease; and (2)  
3 the disability is a result of an occupational risk or hazard inherent in or peculiar to the services  
4 required of members; or (3) the disability was incurred while performing law-enforcement  
5 functions during either scheduled work hours or at any other time; and (4) in the opinion of the  
6 board, the member is by reason of the disability unable to perform adequately the duties required  
7 of a Natural Resources Police Officer, is entitled to receive and shall be paid from the fund in  
8 monthly installments the compensation under either subsection (b) or (c) of this section.

9 (b) If the member is totally disabled, the member shall receive 90 percent of his or her  
10 average full monthly compensation for the 12-month contributory period preceding the member's  
11 disability award, or the shorter period if the member has not worked 12 months.

12 (c) If the member is partially disabled, the member shall receive 45 percent of his or her  
13 average full monthly compensation for the 12-month contributory period preceding the member's  
14 disability award, or the shorter period if the member has not worked 12 months.

15 (d) If the member remains partially disabled until attaining 60 years of age, the member  
16 shall then receive the retirement benefit provided in §20-12-11 and §20-12-12 of this code.

17 (e) The disability benefit payments will begin the first day of the month following  
18 termination of employment and receipt of the disability retirement application by the Consolidated  
19 Public Retirement Board.

**§20-17-22. Same -- Due to other causes.**

1 (a) Any member who after the effective date of this article and during covered employment:

2 (1) Has been or becomes totally or partially disabled from any cause other than those set forth in  
3 §20-17-16 of this code and not due to vicious habits, intemperance, or willful misconduct on his  
4 or her part; and (2) in the opinion of the board, he or she is by reason of the disability unable to  
5 perform adequately the duties required of a Natural Resources Police Officer, is entitled to receive  
6 and shall be paid from the fund in monthly installments the compensation set forth in either  
7 subsection (b) or (c) of this section.

8 (b) If the member is totally disabled, he or she shall receive 66 and two-thirds percent of  
9 his or her average full monthly compensation for the 12-month contributory period preceding the  
10 disability award, or the shorter period, if the member has not worked 12 months.

11 (c) If the member is partially disabled, he or she shall receive 33 and one-third percent of  
12 his or her average full monthly compensation for the 12-month contributory period preceding the  
13 disability award, or the shorter period, if the member has not worked 12 months.

14 (d) If the member remains disabled until attaining 60 years of age, then the member shall  
15 receive the retirement benefit provided in §20-17-13 and §20-17-14 of this code.

16 (e) The board shall propose legislative rules for promulgation in accordance with the  
17 provisions of §29A-3-1 et seq. of this code concerning member disability payments so as to  
18 ensure that the payments do not exceed 100 percent of the average current salary for the position  
19 last held by the member.

20 (f) The disability benefit payments will begin the first day of the month following termination  
21 of employment and receipt of the disability retirement application by the Consolidated Public  
22 Retirement Board.

**§20-17-23. Awards and benefits for disability -- Physical examinations; termination of**  
**disability.**

1 (a) The board may require any member who has applied for or is receiving disability  
2 benefits under this article to submit to a physical examination, mental examination or both, by a

3 physician or physicians selected or approved by the board and may cause all costs incident to  
4 the examination and approved by the board to be paid from the fund. The costs may include  
5 hospital, laboratory, X ray, medical, and physicians' fees. A report of the findings of any physician  
6 shall be submitted in writing to the board for its consideration. If, from the report, independent  
7 information, or from the report and any hearing on the report, the board is of the opinion and finds  
8 that: (1) The member has become reemployed as a law-enforcement officer; (2) two physicians  
9 who have examined the member have found that considering the opportunities for law  
10 enforcement in West Virginia, the member could be so employed as a Natural Resources Police  
11 Officer; or (3) other facts exist to demonstrate that the member is no longer totally disabled or  
12 partially disabled as the case may be, then the disability benefits shall cease. If the member was  
13 totally disabled and is found to have recovered, the board shall determine whether the member  
14 continues to be partially disabled. If the board finds that the member is no longer totally disabled  
15 but is partially disabled, then the member shall continue to receive partial disability benefits in  
16 accordance with this article. Benefits shall cease once the member has been found to be no  
17 longer either totally or partially disabled: *Provided*, That the board shall require recertification for  
18 each partial or total disability at regular intervals as specified by the guidelines adopted by the  
19 Natural Resources Police Officer System.

20 (b) If from the report, or from the report and hearing on the report, the board is of the  
21 opinion and finds that the disabled retirant has recovered from the disability to the extent that he  
22 or she is able to perform adequately the duties of a law-enforcement officer, the board shall within  
23 five working days provide written notice of the finding to the Director of the Division of Natural  
24 Resources, who shall reinstate the retirant to active duty as a member of the department at his or  
25 her rank or classification and assigned to his or her area of assignment prior to the disability  
26 retirement within 45 days of the finding, unless the retirant declines to be reinstated.

27 (c) A disability retirant who is returned to active duty as a Natural Resources Police Officer  
28 for the West Virginia Division of Natural Resources shall again become a member of the

29 retirement system in which he or she was enrolled and the retirant's credited service in force at  
30 the time of retirement shall be restored.

31 (d) If a retirant refuses to submit to a medical examination or submit a statement by his or  
32 her physician certifying continued disability in any period, his or her disability annuity may be  
33 discontinued by the board until the retirant complies. If the refusal continues for one year, all the  
34 retirant's rights in and to the annuity may be revoked by the board.

**§20-17-24. Prior disability.**

1 Any Natural Resources Police Officer who became totally disabled as a result of illness or  
2 injury incurred in the line of duty prior to the effective date of this article may not be a member of  
3 the Natural Resources Police Officer Retirement System.

**§20-17-25. Awards and benefits to surviving spouse -- When member dies in performance**  
**of duty, etc.**

1 (a) The surviving spouse of any member who, after the effective date of this article while  
2 in covered employment, has died or dies by reason of injury, illness or disease resulting from an  
3 occupational risk or hazard inherent in or peculiar to the service required of members, while the  
4 member was or is engaged in the performance of his or her duties as a Natural Resources Police  
5 Officer, or the survivor spouse of a member who dies from any cause while receiving benefits  
6 pursuant to §20-17-14 of this code, is entitled to receive and shall be paid from the fund benefits  
7 as determined in subsection (b) of this section: To the surviving spouse annually, in equal monthly  
8 installments during his or her lifetime an amount equal to the greater of: (i) Two thirds of the  
9 annual compensation received in the preceding 12-month period by the deceased member; or (ii)  
10 if the member dies after his or her normal retirement age, the monthly amount which the spouse  
11 would have received had the member retired the day before his or her death, elected a 100  
12 percent joint and survivor annuity with the spouse as the joint annuitant, and then died.

13 (b) Benefits for a surviving spouse received under this section, §20-17-20, and §20-17-21  
14 of this code, are in lieu of receipt of any other benefits under this article for the spouse, or any

15 other person, or under the provisions of any other state retirement system based upon the  
16 member's covered employment.

**§20-17-26. Awards and benefits to surviving spouse -- When member dies from nonservice-connected causes.**

1 (a) In any case where a member who has been a member for at least 10 years, while in  
2 covered employment after the effective date of this article, has died or dies from any cause other  
3 than those specified in §20-17-18 of this code, and not due to vicious habits, intemperance, or  
4 willful misconduct on his or her part, the fund shall pay annually in equal monthly installments to  
5 the surviving spouse during his or her lifetime, a sum equal to the greater of: (i) One half of the  
6 annual compensation received in the preceding 12-month employment period by the deceased  
7 member; or (ii) if the member dies after his or her early or normal retirement age, the monthly  
8 amount which the spouse would have received had the member retired the day before his or her  
9 death, elected a 100 percent joint and survivor annuity with the spouse as the joint annuitant, and  
10 then died. Where the member is receiving disability benefits under §20-17-15 of this code, at the  
11 time of his or her death, the most recent monthly compensation determined under §20-17-17 of  
12 this code, shall be substituted for the annual compensation in (i) of this section.

13 (b) Benefits for a surviving spouse received under §20-17-20 and §20-17-21 of this code,  
14 are in lieu of receipt of any other benefits under this article for the spouse or any other person or  
15 under the provisions of any other state retirement system based upon the member's covered  
16 employment.

**§20-17-27 Additional death benefits and scholarships - Dependent children.**

1 (a) In addition to the spouse death benefits in §20-17-20 and §20-17-21 of this code, the  
2 surviving spouse is entitled to receive and there shall be paid to the spouse \$100 monthly for  
3 each dependent child.

4 (b) If the surviving spouse dies or if there is no surviving spouse, the fund shall pay monthly  
5 to each dependent child a sum equal to one fourth of the surviving spouse's entitlement under

6 either §20-7-20 or §20-17-21 of this code. If there is neither a surviving spouse nor a dependent  
7 child, the fund shall pay in equal monthly installments to the dependent parents of the deceased  
8 member during their joint lifetimes a sum equal to the amount which a surviving spouse, without  
9 children, would have received: *Provided*, That when there is only one dependent parent surviving,  
10 that parent is entitled to receive during his or her lifetime one-half the amount which both parents,  
11 if living, would have been entitled to receive: *Provided, however*, That if there is no surviving  
12 spouse, dependent child nor dependent parent of the deceased member the accumulated  
13 contributions shall be paid to a named beneficiary or beneficiaries: *Provided further*, That if there  
14 is no surviving spouse, dependent child, nor dependent parent of the deceased member, nor any  
15 named beneficiary or beneficiaries then the accumulated contributions shall be paid to the estate  
16 of the deceased member.

17 (c) Any person qualifying as a dependent child under this section, in addition to any other  
18 benefits due under this or other sections of this article, is entitled to receive a scholarship to be  
19 applied to the career development education of that person. This sum, up to but not exceeding  
20 \$7,500 per year, shall be paid from the fund to any higher education institution in this state, career-  
21 technical education provider in this state, or other entity in this state approved by the board, to  
22 offset the expenses of tuition, room and board, books, fees or other costs incurred in a course of  
23 study at any of these institutions so long as the recipient makes application to the board on an  
24 approved form and under such rules as the board may provide, and maintains scholastic eligibility  
25 as defined by the institution or the board. The board may propose legislative rules for promulgation  
26 in accordance with §29A-3-1 *et seq.* of this code which define age requirements, physical and  
27 mental requirements, scholastic eligibility, disbursement methods, institutional qualifications and  
28 other requirements as necessary and not inconsistent with this section. Scholarship benefits  
29 awarded pursuant to this subsection are not subject to division or payable to an alternate payee  
30 by any Qualified Domestic Relations Order.

**§20-17-28 Burial benefit.**

1        Any member who dies as a result of any service related illness or injury after the effective  
2 date is entitled to a lump sum burial benefit of \$5,000. If the member is married, the burial benefit  
3 shall be paid to the member's spouse. If the member is not married, the burial benefit shall be  
4 paid to the member's estate for the purposes of paying burial expenses, settling the member's  
5 final affairs, or both. Any unspent balance shall be distributed as a part of the member's estate.  
6 Burial benefits awarded pursuant to this section are not subject to division or payable to an  
7 alternate payee by any Qualified Domestic Relations Order.

**§20-17-29 Double death benefits prohibited.**

1        A surviving spouse is not entitled to receive simultaneous death benefits under this article  
2 as a result of the death of two or more members to whom the spouse was married. Any spouse  
3 who becomes eligible for a subsequent death benefit under this article while receiving a death  
4 benefit under this article shall receive the higher benefit, but not both.

**§20-17-30. Return to covered employment by retired member.**

1        The annuity of any member who retires under the provisions of this article and who  
2 resumes service in covered employment shall be suspended while the member continues in  
3 covered employment. The monthly annuity payment for the month in which the service resumes  
4 shall be prorated to the date of commencement of service, and the member shall again become  
5 a contributing member during resumption of service. At the conclusion of resumed service in  
6 covered employment the member shall have his or her annuity recalculated to take into account  
7 the entirety of service in covered employment.

**§20-17-31. Exemption from garnishment and other process; exception for certain qualified domestic relations orders.**

1        The moneys in the fund and the right of a member, spouse or other beneficiary to benefits  
2 under this article, to the return of contributions, or to any retirement, death, or disability payments  
3 under the provisions of this article are not subject to execution, garnishment, attachment, or any  
4 other process whatsoever with the exception that the benefits or contributions under the system

5 shall be subject to “qualified domestic relations orders” as that term is defined in Section 414(p)  
 6 of the Internal Revenue Code with respect to governmental plans, and are unassignable except  
 7 as is provided in this article.

**§20-17-32. Fraud; penalties; and repayment.**

1 Any person who knowingly makes any false statement or who falsifies or permits to be  
 2 falsified any record of the retirement system in any attempt to defraud that system is guilty of a  
 3 misdemeanor and, upon conviction, shall be fined not to exceed \$1,000 or confined in jail not to  
 4 exceed one year, or both fined and confined. Any increased benefit received by any person as a  
 5 result of the falsification or fraud shall be returned to the fund upon demand by the board.

**§20-17-33. Credit toward retirement for member's prior military service; credit toward**  
**retirement when member has joined Armed Forces in time of armed conflict;**  
**qualified military service.**

1 (a) Any member who has previously served on active military duty is entitled to receive  
 2 additional years of service for the purpose of determining his or her years of credited service for  
 3 a period equal to the active military duty not to exceed five years, subject to the following:

- 4 (1) That he or she has been honorably discharged from the Armed Forces;
- 5 (2) That he or she substantiates by appropriate documentation or evidence his or her  
 6 period of active military duty; and
- 7 (3) That he or she is receiving no benefits from any other retirement system for his or her  
 8 active military duty.

9 (b) In addition, any member who while in covered employment was commissioned,  
 10 enlisted or inducted into the Armed Forces of the United States or, being a member of the reserve  
 11 officers' corps, was called to active duty in the Armed Forces between September 1, 1940, and  
 12 the close of hostilities in World War II, or between the June 27, 1950, and the close of the armed  
 13 conflict in Korea on July 27, 1953, between August 1, 1964, and the close of the armed conflict  
 14 in Vietnam, or during any other period of armed conflict by the United States whether sanctioned

15 by a declaration of war by congress or by executive or other order of the president, is entitled to  
16 and shall receive credited service, for a period equal to the full time that he or she has or, pursuant  
17 to that commission, enlistment, induction or call, shall have served with the Armed Forces subject  
18 to the following:

19 (1) That he or she has been honorably discharged from the Armed Forces:

20 (2) That within 90 days after honorable discharge from the Armed Forces, he or she  
21 presented himself or herself to the West Virginia Division of Natural Resources and offered to  
22 resume service as a Natural Resources Police Officer; and

23 (3) That he or she has made no voluntary act, whether by reenlistment, waiver of  
24 discharge, acceptance of commission or otherwise, to extend or participate in extension of the  
25 period of service with the Armed Forces beyond the period of service for which he or she was  
26 originally commissioned, enlisted, inducted or called.

27 (c) The total amount of service allowable under subsections (a) and (b) of this section may  
28 not exceed five years.

29 (d) Any service credit allowed under this section may be credited one time only for each  
30 Natural Resources Police Officer, regardless of any changes in job title or responsibilities.

31 (e) Notwithstanding the preceding provisions of this section, contributions, benefits, and  
32 service credit with respect to qualified military service shall be provided in accordance with  
33 Section 414(u) of the Internal Revenue Code. For purposes of this section, "qualified military  
34 service" has the same meaning as in Section 414(u) of the Internal Revenue Code. The retirement  
35 board is authorized to determine all questions and make all decisions relating to this section and,  
36 pursuant to the authority granted to the retirement board in §5-10D-1 of this code, may promulgate  
37 rules relating to contributions, benefits and service credit to comply with Section 414(u) of the  
38 Internal Revenue Code.

**§20-17-34. Pro rata reduction of annuities.**

1 Any provision in this article to the contrary notwithstanding, if at the end of any fiscal year

2 the total of the annuities paid from the retirement fund during the said fiscal year is more than 10  
 3 percent of the sum of the balances in the fund at the end of the said fiscal year, the said annuities  
 4 payable in the next ensuing fiscal year shall be reduced, pro rata, so that the sum of the annuities  
 5 so reduced shall not exceed 10 percent of the sum of the said balances in the fund. The said pro  
 6 rata reduction shall be applied to all annuities payable in the said ensuing fiscal year.

**§20-17-35. Liability of participating public employer for delinquent retirement contributions; liability of participating public employer's successor for delinquent retirement contributions; lien for delinquent contributions; collection by suit.**

1 The requirements for this section shall be the same as the requirements of §5-10D-11 of  
 2 this code.

**§20-17-36. Benefits not forfeited if system terminates.**

1 If the retirement system is terminated or contributions are completely discontinued, the  
 2 rights of all members to benefits accrued or contributions made to the date of such termination or  
 3 discontinuance, to the extent then funded, are not forfeited.

**ARTICLE 18. ESTABLISHMENT OF CERTAIN LICENSE AND STAMP FEES; DEDICATION OF FEES TO NATURAL POLICE OFFICER'S RETIREMENT SYSTEM.**

**§20-18-1. Legislative findings and purpose.**

1 (a) The Legislature hereby finds and declares that the preservation of the peace is a  
 2 necessary and important function and a requirement for an orderly society. This important function  
 3 is carried on throughout the State of West Virginia at both the state and local level. Very important  
 4 components of law enforcement in this state are the Natural Resources Police Officers.

5 (b) The Legislature, cognizant that it has enacted retirement legislation for municipal police  
 6 officers, deputy sheriffs and for the state police, declares that Natural Resources Police Officers  
 7 are now in need of a retirement system. The Legislature further declares that the Natural

8 Resources Police Officers of this state are professional law-enforcement officers who keep the  
9 peace, help and protect the citizens of this state. The Legislature finds that, when it comes to  
10 retirement, the Natural Resources Police Officers are treated differently than other law-  
11 enforcement officers in this state.

12 (c) For the foregoing reasons, and for other important reasons, the Legislature created the  
13 Natural Resources Police Officer's retirement system under §20-17-1 et seq. of this code. The  
14 fees established under §20-2B-10 of this code are to help ensure the actuarial soundness of the  
15 Natural Resources Police Officer's retirement system.

NOTE: The purpose of this bill is to establish the West Virginia Division of Natural Resources Police Officer Retirement System.

Strike-throughs indicate language that would be stricken from a heading or the present law and underscoring indicates new language that would be added.