

RCW 41.26.805 Local law enforcement officers' and firefighters' retirement system benefits improvement account—Creation—Use—

Administration—Investments. (1) The local law enforcement officers' and firefighters' retirement system benefits improvement account (benefits account) is created within the law enforcement officers' and firefighters' retirement system plan 2 fund.

(2) The funds in the benefits account shall not be included by the actuary retained by the board in the calculation of the market value of assets of the law enforcement officers' and firefighters' retirement system plan 2 fund until the board directs the actuary retained by the board in writing to do so for purposes of financing benefits enacted by the legislature. The board shall, in consultation with the state investment board and within ninety days of the transfer of funds into the benefits account, provide the actuary retained by the board, in writing, the market value of the amount directed from the benefits account for inclusion in the calculation of the market value of assets of the law enforcement officers' and firefighters' retirement system plan 2 fund. The market value of the amount directed from the benefits account shall be an amount determined by the state actuary to sufficiently offset the unfunded actuarial accrued liabilities of benefit improvements financed from this account. The market value of the amount directed from the benefits account shall be determined as of the date of the direction from the board to include this amount for purposes of financing benefits enacted by the legislature.

(3) The law enforcement officers' and firefighters' plan 2 retirement board shall administer the fund in an actuarially sound manner.

(4) The state investment board has the full power to invest, reinvest, manage, contract, sell, or exchange investment money in the benefits account. The state investment board is authorized to adopt investment policies for the money in the benefits account. All investment and operating costs associated with the investment of money within the benefits account shall be paid pursuant to RCW 43.33A.160 and 43.84.160. With the exception of these expenses, the earnings from the investment of the money shall be retained by the benefits account.

(5) All investments made by the state investment board shall be made with the exercise of that degree of judgment and care pursuant to RCW 43.33A.140 and the investment policy established by the state investment board.

(6) When appropriate for investment purposes, the state investment board may commingle money in the fund with other funds.

(7) The authority to establish all policies relating to the benefits account, other than the investment policies set forth in this section, resides with the law enforcement officers' and firefighters' plan 2 retirement board. Other than investments by and expenses of the state investment board, disbursements from this fund may be made only on the authorization of the law enforcement officers' and firefighters' plan 2 retirement board for purposes of funding the member, employer, and state cost of financing benefits enacted by the legislature.

(8) The state investment board shall routinely consult with and communicate with the law enforcement officers' and firefighters' plan 2 retirement board on the investment policy, earnings of the trust, and related needs of the benefits account.

(9) Funds in the benefits account cannot be used to finance future benefit improvements if the state actuary determines that the actuarial present value of fully projected benefits for current and future members for all benefits being financed from this account exceeds the actuarial present value of the revenue provided under RCW 41.26.802 and the accrued earnings of the benefits account. When making the determination under this subsection, the state actuary shall select assumptions and methods to reduce the risk that the actual revenue received is less than the assumed revenue. [2019 c 366 § 3; 2008 c 99 § 3.]

Finding—2019 c 366: "The legislature finds that the current benefit formula and contributions for the law enforcement officers' and firefighters' plan 2 are inadequate to modify that formula to achieve pension adequacy for the shorter working careers of firefighters and police officers. The legislature recognizes that although some officers and firefighters are able to work comfortably beyond twenty-five years, the combat nature of fire suppression and law enforcement generally require earlier retirement ages. In recognition of the physical demands of the professions and the inherent risks faced by law enforcement officers and firefighters, eligibility for retirement in the law enforcement officers' and firefighters' plan 2 system has been set at age fifty-three. However, the benefit formula is designed for careers of thirty-five to forty years, making retirement at age fifty-three an unrealistic option for many.

Therefore, the legislature declares that it is the purpose of this act to hasten the affordability of law enforcement officers' and firefighters' plan 2 benefit improvements, consistent with the intent associated with the creation of the benefits improvement fund, and designate reserves of the law enforcement officers' and firefighters' plan 2 for the sole purpose of benefit improvements." [2019 c 366 § 1.]

Effective date—2019 c 366: "This act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the state government and its existing public institutions, and takes effect immediately [May 13, 2019]." [2019 c 366 § 5.]

Findings—Purpose—2008 c 99: See note following RCW 41.26.802.