

**Chapter 41.20 RCW**  
**POLICE RELIEF AND PENSIONS IN FIRST-CLASS CITIES**

**Sections**

41.20.005	Definitions.
41.20.010	Board of trustees—Composition.
41.20.020	Officers of board—Annual report.
41.20.030	Meetings—Disbursements of fund—Quorum.
41.20.040	Additional powers of board.
41.20.050	Pension on retirement for years of service.
41.20.060	Pension on retirement for duty connected disability.
41.20.061	Increase in presently payable benefits for service or disability authorized.
41.20.065	Pension on retirement for nonduty disability.
41.20.070	Certificate of disability.
41.20.080	Pension on death before or after retirement.
41.20.085	Pension on death before or after retirement—Surviving spouse not formerly covered—"Surviving spouse" defined.
41.20.086	Increase in certain presently payable death benefits authorized.
41.20.090	Lump sum payment on death before or after retirement.
41.20.100	Examination of disability pensioners—Emergency duty.
41.20.120	Sick benefits.
41.20.130	Fund created.
41.20.140	Pension payments monthly—Surplus to general fund.
41.20.150	Return of member's contributions—Option to be classified as vested member.
41.20.155	Return of member's contributions—Applicability.
41.20.160	Credit for membership in private organization acquired by city of first class.
41.20.170	Transfer of membership.
41.20.175	Transfer of service credit from firefighters' pension system to city's police pension system.
41.20.180	Exemption from taxation and judicial process—Exception—Assignability.
41.20.900	Construction—1959 c 6—Benefits retroactively authorized.
41.20.920	Construction—Chapter applicable to state registered domestic partnerships—2009 c 521.

**RCW 41.20.005 Definitions.** As used in chapter 41.20 RCW:

- (1) "Rank" means civil service rank.
- (2) "Position" means the particular employment held at any particular time, which may or may not be the same as civil service rank.
- (3) Words importing masculine gender shall extend to females also.
- (4) "Salary" means the basic monthly rate of salary or wages, including longevity pay but not including overtime earnings or special salary or wages. [1969 ex.s. c 209 s 39; 1959 c 78 s 1.]

**Effective date—Severability—Construction—1969 ex.s. c 209:** See RCW 41.26.3901, 41.26.3902, and 41.26.3903.

**RCW 41.20.010 Board of trustees—Composition.** (1) The mayor or his or her designated representative who shall be an elected official of the city, and the clerk, treasurer, president of the city council or mayor pro tem of each city of the first class, or in case any such city has no city council, the commissioner who has supervision of the police department, together with three active or retired members of the police department, to be elected as herein provided, in addition to the duties now required of them, are constituted a board of trustees of the relief and pension fund of the police department of each such city, and shall provide for the disbursement of the fund, and designate the beneficiaries thereof.

(2) The police department and the retired law enforcement officers of each city of the first class shall elect three members to act as members of the board. Members shall be elected for three year terms. Existing members shall continue in office until replaced as provided for in this section.

(3) Such election shall be held in the following manner. Not more than thirty nor less than fifteen days preceding the first day of June in each year, written notice of the nomination of any member or retired member of the department for membership on the board may be filed with the secretary of the board. Each notice of nomination shall be signed by not less than five members or retired members of the department, and nothing herein contained shall prevent any member or retired member of the department from signing more than one notice of nomination. The election shall be held on a date to be fixed by the secretary during the month of June. Notice of the dates upon which notice of nomination may be filed and of the date fixed for the election of such members of the board shall be given by the secretary of the board by posting written notices thereof in a prominent place in the police headquarters. For the purpose of such election, the secretary of the board shall prepare and furnish printed or typewritten ballots in the usual form, containing the names of all persons regularly nominated for membership and shall furnish a ballot box for the election. Each member and each retired member of the police department shall be entitled to vote at the election for one nominee as a member of the board. The chief of the department shall appoint two members to act as officials of the election, who shall be allowed their regular wages for the day, but shall receive no additional compensation therefor. The election shall be held in the police headquarters of the department and the polls shall open at 7:30 a.m. and close at 8:30 p.m. The one nominee receiving the highest number of votes shall be declared elected to the board and his or her term shall commence on the first day of July succeeding the election. In the first election the nominee receiving the greatest number of votes shall be elected to the three year term, the second greatest to the two year term and the third greatest to the one year term. Retired members who are subject to the jurisdiction of the board have both the right to elect and the right to be elected under this section. Ballots shall contain all names of those nominated, both active and retired. Notice of nomination and voting by retired members shall be conducted by the board.

(4) If no eligible active or retired members of the police department are willing or able to be elected to the board under subsection (3) of this section, then the following individuals may be elected to the board under subsection (3) of this section:

(a) Any active or retired law enforcement officers who reside within the jurisdiction served by the board. This includes active and retired law enforcement officers under this chapter and chapter 41.26 RCW;

(b) The widow or widower of a law enforcement officer subject to the jurisdiction of the board. [2020 c 107 s 5; 2012 c 117 s 20; 1988 c 164 s 3; 1973 1st ex.s. c 16 s 1; 1955 c 69 s 1; 1911 c 18 s 1; 1909 c 39 s 1; RRS s 9579.]

**RCW 41.20.020 Officers of board—Annual report.** The mayor, or his or her designated representative, shall be ex officio chair, the clerk shall be ex officio secretary, and the treasurer shall be ex officio treasurer of said board. The secretary of said board, at the time of making his or her annual reports as said city clerk, shall annually report the condition of said fund, the receipts and disbursements on account of the same, together with a complete list of the beneficiaries of said fund, and the amounts paid to each of them. [2012 c 117 s 21; 1973 1st ex.s. c 16 s 2; 1909 c 39 s 2; RRS s 9580.]

**RCW 41.20.030 Meetings—Disbursements of fund—Quorum.** The board herein provided for shall hold monthly meetings on the first Mondays of each month and upon the call of its president. It shall issue warrants, signed by its president and secretary, to the persons entitled thereto under provisions of this chapter other than RCW 41.20.050, 41.20.060, 41.20.080 and 41.20.085 for the amounts of money ordered paid to such persons from such fund by said board, which warrants shall state for what purpose such payments are made; it shall keep a record of its proceedings, which record shall be a public record; it shall, at each monthly meeting, send to the treasurer of such city a written or printed list of all persons entitled to payment under provisions of this chapter other than RCW 41.20.050, 41.20.060, 41.20.080 and 41.20.085 from the fund herein provided for, stating the amount of such payments and for what granted, which list shall be certified to and signed by the president and secretary of such board, attested under oath. The treasurer of such city shall thereupon enter a copy of said list upon a book to be kept for that purpose and which shall be known as "the police relief and pension fund book", and the said board shall direct payment of the amounts named therein to the persons entitled thereto, out of such fund. The treasurer shall prepare and enter into such book an additional list showing those persons entitled to payment under RCW 41.20.050, 41.20.060, 41.20.080 and 41.20.085 and shall on the last day of each month issue warrants in the appropriate amounts to such persons. A majority of all the members of said board herein provided for shall constitute a quorum, and have power to transact business. [1973 c 143 s 1; 1911 c 18 s 5; 1909 c 39 s 11; RRS s 9589.]

**RCW 41.20.040 Additional powers of board.** The board shall, in addition to other powers herein granted, have power:

(1) To compel witnesses to attend and testify before it upon all matters connected with the administration of this chapter, in the same manner as provided by law for the taking of testimony in courts of

record in this state, and its president or any member of the board may administer oaths to such witnesses.

(2) To provide for the payment from the fund of all necessary expenses and printing.

No compensation or emolument shall be paid to any member of the board for any duty required or performed under this chapter.

Each board may make all needful rules and regulations for its guidance in the administration of and in conformity with the provisions of this chapter. [1955 c 69 s 2; 1909 c 39 s 12; RRS s 9590.]

**RCW 41.20.050 Pension on retirement for years of service.**

Whenever a person has been duly appointed, and has served honorably for a period of twenty-five years, as a member, in any capacity, of the regularly constituted police department of a city subject to the provisions of this chapter, the board, after hearing, if one is requested in writing, may order and direct that such person be retired, and the board shall retire any member so entitled, upon his or her written request therefor. The member so retired hereafter shall be paid from the fund during his or her lifetime a pension equal to fifty percent of the amount of salary at any time hereafter attached to the position held by the retired member for the year preceding the date of his or her retirement: PROVIDED, That, except as to a position higher than that of captain held for at least three calendar years prior to date of retirement, no such pension shall exceed an amount equivalent to fifty percent of the salary of captain, and all existing pensions shall be increased to not less than three hundred dollars per month as of April 25, 1973: PROVIDED FURTHER, That a person hereafter retiring who has served as a member for more than twenty-five years, shall have his or her pension payable under this section increased by two percent of his or her salary per year for each full year of such additional service to a maximum of five additional years.

Any person who has served in a position higher than the rank of captain for a minimum of three years may elect to retire at such higher position and receive for his or her lifetime a pension equal to fifty percent of the amount of the salary at any time hereafter attached to the position held by such retired member for the year preceding his or her date of retirement: PROVIDED, That such person make the said election to retire at a higher position by September 1, 1969 and at the time of making the said election, pay into the relief and pension fund in addition to the contribution required by RCW 41.20.130: (1) an amount equal to six percent of that portion of all monthly salaries previously received upon which a sum equal to six percent has not been previously deducted and paid into the police relief and pension fund; (2) and such person agrees to continue paying into the police relief and pension fund until the date of retirement, in addition to the contributions required by RCW 41.20.130, an amount equal to six percent of that portion of monthly salary upon which a six percent contribution is not currently deducted pursuant to RCW 41.20.130.

Any person affected by this chapter who at the time of entering the armed services was a member of such police department and is an honorably discharged veteran or received a discharge for physical reasons with an honorable record and whose military service was during a period of war as defined in RCW 41.04.005, shall have added to his or her period of employment as computed under this chapter, his or her

period of war service in the armed forces, but such credited service shall not exceed five years and such period of service shall be automatically added to each member's service upon payment by him or her of his or her contribution for the period of his or her absence at the rate provided in RCW 41.20.130. [2024 c 146 s 19. Prior: 2012 c 117 s 22; 1973 1st ex.s. c 181 s 3; 1969 ex.s. c 269 s 6; 1969 ex.s. c 219 s 1; 1969 ex.s. c 209 s 36; 1969 c 123 s 1; 1961 c 191 s 1; 1959 c 78 s 3; 1959 c 6 s 1; prior: 1957 c 84 s 1; 1955 c 69 s 3; 1945 c 45 s 1; 1937 c 24 s 1; 1915 c 40 s 2; 1911 c 18 s 2; 1909 c 39 s 4; Rem. Supp. 1945 s 9582.]

**Intent—2024 c 146:** See note following RCW 73.04.005.

**Effective date—Severability—Construction—1969 ex.s. c 209:** See RCW 41.26.3901, 41.26.3902, and 41.26.3903.

**RCW 41.20.060 Pension on retirement for duty connected disability.** Whenever any person, while serving as a police officer in any such city becomes physically disabled by reason of any bodily injury received in the immediate or direct performance or discharge of his or her duties as a police officer, or becomes incapacitated for service on account of any duty connected disability, such incapacity not having been caused or brought on by dissipation or abuse, of which the board shall be judge, the board may, upon his or her written request filed with the secretary, or without such written request, if it deems it to be for the benefit of the public, retire such person from the department, and order and direct that he or she be paid from the fund during his or her lifetime, a pension equal to fifty percent of the amount of salary \*at any time hereafter attached to the position which he or she held in the department at the date of his or her retirement, but not to exceed an amount equivalent to fifty percent of the salary of captain except as to a position higher than that of captain held for at least three calendar years prior to the date of retirement in which case as to such position the provisions of RCW 41.20.050 shall apply, and all existing pensions shall be increased to not less than three hundred dollars per month as of April 25, 1973: PROVIDED, That where, at the time of retirement hereafter for duty connected disability under this section, such person has served honorably for a period of more than twenty-five years as a member, in any capacity, of the regularly constituted police department of a city subject to the provisions of this chapter, the foregoing percentage factors to be applied in computing the pension payable under this section shall be increased by two percent of his or her salary per year for each full year of such additional service to a maximum of five additional years.

Whenever such disability ceases, the pension shall cease, and such person shall be restored to active service at the same rank he or she held at the time of his or her retirement, and at the current salary attached to said rank at the time of his or her return to active service.

Disability benefits provided for by this chapter shall not be paid when the police officer is disabled while he or she is engaged for compensation in outside work not of a police or special police nature. [2012 c 117 s 23; 1998 c 157 s 3; 1973 1st ex.s. c 181 s 4; 1969 ex.s. c 219 s 2; 1969 ex.s. c 209 s 37; 1969 c 123 s 2; 1961 c

191 s 2; 1959 c 78 s 4; 1959 c 6 s 2; 1957 c 84 s 2; 1955 c 69 s 5; 1937 c 24 s 2; 1911 c 18 s 3; 1909 c 39 s 5; RRS s 9583.]

**\*Reviser's note:** The words "at any time hereafter" first appear in the 1961 amendment.

**Application—1998 c 157 s 3:** "The provisions of section 3 of this act apply retrospectively to all line of duty disability retirement allowances heretofore granted under chapter 41.20 RCW." [1998 c 157 s 5.]

**Purpose—1998 c 157 ss 2-5:** "The purpose of sections 2 through 5 of this act is to clarify that the intent of the legislature in enacting RCW 41.20.060, insofar as that section provides benefits to members for disabilities incurred in the line of duty, was to provide a statute in the nature of a workers' compensation act that provides compensation to employees for personal injuries incurred in the course of employment. Accordingly this act amends and divides RCW 41.20.060 into two separate sections. Section 3 of this act clarifies and emphasizes the legislature's intent that the disability benefits granted by RCW 41.20.060, as amended, are granted only to those members who become disabled by any injury or incapacity that is incurred in the line of duty. Section 4 of this act continues to provide disability retirement benefits to members who become disabled by an injury or incapacity not incurred in the line of duty." [1998 c 157 s 2.]

**Effective date—1998 c 157:** See note following RCW 41.40.0931.

**Effective date—Severability—Construction—1969 ex.s. c 209:** See RCW 41.26.3901, 41.26.3902, and 41.26.3903.

**RCW 41.20.061 Increase in presently payable benefits for service or disability authorized.** See RCW 41.26.250.

**RCW 41.20.065 Pension on retirement for nonduty disability.**  
Whenever any person, while serving as a police officer in any such city becomes physically disabled by reason of any bodily injury not incurred in the line of duty, or becomes incapacitated for service, such incapacity not having been caused or brought on by dissipation or abuse, of which the board shall be judge, the board may, upon his or her written request filed with the secretary, or without such written request, if it deems it to be for the benefit of the public, retire such person from the department, and order and direct that he or she be paid from the fund during his or her lifetime, a pension equal to fifty percent of the amount of salary at any time hereafter attached to the position which he or she held in the department at the date of his or her retirement, but not to exceed an amount equivalent to fifty percent of the salary of captain, except as to a position higher than that of captain held for at least three calendar years prior to the date of retirement, in which case as to such position the provisions of RCW 41.20.050 shall apply, and all existing pensions shall be increased to not less than three hundred dollars per month as of April 25, 1973: PROVIDED, That where, at the time of retirement hereafter for disability under this section, such person has served honorably

for a period of more than twenty-five years as a member, in any capacity, of the regularly constituted police department of a city subject to the provisions of this chapter, the foregoing percentage factors to be applied in computing the pension payable under this section shall be increased by two percent of his or her salary per year for each full year of such additional service, to a maximum of five additional years.

Whenever such disability ceases, the pension shall cease, and such person shall be restored to active service at the same rank he or she held at the time of his or her retirement, and at the current salary attached to said rank at the time of his or her return to active service.

Disability benefits provided for by this chapter shall not be paid when the police officer is disabled while he or she is engaged for compensation in outside work not of a police or special police nature. [2012 c 117 s 24; 1998 c 157 s 4.]

**Purpose—1998 c 157 ss 2-5:** See note following RCW 41.20.060.

**Effective date—1998 c 157:** See note following RCW 41.40.0931.

**RCW 41.20.070 Certificate of disability.** No person shall be retired, as provided in RCW 41.20.060, or receive any benefit from said fund, unless there shall be filed with said board certificate of his or her disability, which certificate shall be subscribed and sworn to by said person, and by the city physician (if there be one) and two regularly licensed and practicing physicians of such city, and such board may require other evidence of disability before ordering such retirement and payment as aforesaid. [2012 c 117 s 25; 1909 c 39 s 6; RRS s 9584.]

**RCW 41.20.080 Pension on death before or after retirement.** Whenever any member of the police department of any such city loses his or her life while actually engaged in the performance of duty, or as the proximate result thereof, leaving a surviving spouse or child or children under the age of eighteen years, upon satisfactory proof of such facts made to it, the board shall order and direct that a pension, equal to one-half of the amount of the salary \*at any time hereafter attached to the position which such member held in the police department at the time of his or her death, shall be paid to the surviving spouse for life, or if there is no surviving spouse, or if the surviving spouse shall die, then to the child or children until they are eighteen years of age: PROVIDED, That if such spouse or child or children marry, the person so marrying shall thereafter receive no further pension from the fund: PROVIDED FURTHER, That all existing pensions shall be increased to not less than three hundred dollars per month as of April 25, 1973.

If any member so losing his or her life, leaves no spouse, or child or children under the age of eighteen years, the board shall pay the sum of two hundred dollars toward the funeral expenses of such member. [2012 c 117 s 26; 1973 1st ex.s. c 181 s 5; 1961 c 191 s 3; 1959 c 78 s 5; 1959 c 6 s 3; 1957 c 84 s 3; 1955 c 69 s 6; 1937 c 24 s 3; 1915 c 40 s 3; 1909 c 39 s 7; RRS s 9585.]

**\*Reviser's note:** The words "at any time hereafter" first appear in the 1961 amendment.

**RCW 41.20.085 Pension on death before or after retirement—Surviving spouse not formerly covered—"Surviving spouse" defined.** Whenever any member of the police department of any such city shall die, or shall have heretofore died, or whenever any such member who has been heretofore retired or who is hereafter retired for length of service or a disability, shall have died, or shall die, leaving a surviving spouse or child or children under the age of eighteen years, upon satisfactory proof of such facts made to it, the board shall order and direct that a pension equal to one-third of the amount of salary at any time hereafter attached to the position held by such member in the police department at the time of his or her death or retirement, not to exceed one-third of the salary of captain, shall be paid to the surviving spouse during the surviving spouse's life, and in addition, to the child or children, until they are eighteen years of age, as follows: For one child, one-eighth of the salary on which such pension is based; for two children, a total of one-seventh of said salary; and for three or more children, a total of one-sixth of said salary: PROVIDED, If such spouse or child or children marry, the person so marrying shall receive no further pension from the fund. In case there is no surviving spouse, or if the surviving spouse shall die, the child or children shall be entitled to the spouse's share in addition to the share specified herein until they reach eighteen years of age. No spouse shall be entitled to any payments on the death of a retired officer unless such surviving spouse has been married to such officer for a period of at least five years prior to the date of his or her retirement.

As of April 25, 1973, a surviving spouse not otherwise covered by the provisions of section 2, chapter 78, Laws of 1959, shall be entitled to a pension of three hundred dollars per month.

"Surviving spouse" as used in this section means surviving female or male spouse. [2012 c 117 s 27; 1973 1st ex.s. c 181 s 6; 1969 ex.s. c 209 s 26; 1961 c 140 s 1; 1959 c 78 s 2.]

**Effective date—Severability—Construction—1969 ex.s. c 209:** See RCW 41.26.3901, 41.26.3902, and 41.26.3903.

**RCW 41.20.086 Increase in certain presently payable death benefits authorized.** See RCW 41.26.260.

**RCW 41.20.090 Lump sum payment on death before or after retirement.** Whenever any member of the police department of such city shall, after five years of service in said department, die, his or her surviving spouse or, if there is no surviving spouse, the child or children under the age of eighteen years, or if there is no surviving spouse or child or children, then his or her parents or unmarried sister or sisters, minor brother or brothers, dependent upon him or her for support, shall be entitled to the sum of one thousand dollars from such fund. This section to apply to members who shall have been retired, for any reason, from active service under the provisions of



this chapter. [2012 c 117 s 28; 1959 c 78 s 6; 1937 c 24 s 4; 1915 c 40 s 4; 1911 c 18 s 4; 1909 c 39 s 8; RRS s 9586.]

**Construction—1937 c 24:** "Nothing contained in this act shall affect or be construed as affecting the validity of any act done, obligation entered into, or rights accrued, or any proceedings had or pending under the act of which this act is amendatory." [1937 c 24 s 6; RRS s 9592-1.]

**Severability—1937 c 24:** "If any section or part of this act shall be held to be unconstitutional and void, such holding shall not effect [affect] the remaining portions of the act." [1937 c 24 s 7; RRS s 9592-2.]

**RCW 41.20.100 Examination of disability pensioners—Emergency duty.** Any person retired for disability under this chapter may be summoned before the board herein provided for, at any time thereafter, and shall submit himself or herself thereto for examination as to his or her fitness for duty, and shall abide the decision and order of said board with reference thereto; and all members of such police force who may be retired under the provisions of this chapter, shall report to the chief of police of such city where so retired on the first Mondays of April, July, October, and January of each year; and in cases of emergency, may be assigned to and shall perform such duty as said chief of police may direct, and such persons shall have no claim against such city for payment for such duty so performed. [2012 c 117 s 29; 1909 c 39 s 9; RRS s 9587.]

**RCW 41.20.120 Sick benefits.** Whenever any active member of the police department, or any member \*hereafter retired, on account of service, sickness or disability, not caused or brought on by dissipation or abuse, of which the board shall be judge, is confined in any hospital or in his or her home and, whether or not so confined, requires nursing, care, or attention, the board shall pay for the active member the necessary hospital, care, and nursing expenses of the member out of the fund; and the board may pay for the retired member hospital, care, and nursing expenses as are reasonable, in the board's discretion. The board may, at its discretion, elect, in lieu of paying some or all such expenses for the retired member, to reimburse the retired member for premiums the member has paid for medical insurance that supplements medicare, including premiums the member has paid for medicare part B coverage. The salary of the active member shall continue while he or she is necessarily confined to the hospital or home or elsewhere during the period of recuperation, as determined by the board, for a period not exceeding six months; after which period the other provisions of this chapter shall apply: PROVIDED, That the board in all cases may have the active or retired member suffering from such sickness or disability examined at any time by a licensed physician or physicians, to be appointed by the board, for the purpose of ascertaining the nature and extent of the sickness or disability, the physician or physicians to report to the board the result of the examination within three days thereafter. Any active or retired member who refuses to submit to such examination or examinations shall forfeit all his or her rights to benefits under

this section: PROVIDED FURTHER, That the board shall designate the hospital and medical services available to the police officer who is sick or disabled. [2012 c 117 s 31; 1992 c 22 s 2; 1961 c 191 s 4; 1959 c 78 s 7; 1955 c 69 s 7; 1915 c 40 s 5; 1911 c 18 s 6; 1909 c 39 s 13; RRS s 9591.]

**\*Reviser's note:** The words "hereafter retired" first appear in the 1961 amendment.

**RCW 41.20.130 Fund created.** There is created in each city subject to the provisions of this chapter a police relief and pension fund. The fund shall be constituted as follows:

A sum equal to six percent thereof shall be deducted monthly from the salary of each police officer by the city treasurer and placed in the fund, but the maximum deduction shall not exceed six percent of the monthly salary of captain.

At the time the annual tax levy of the city is made, the city council, or other legislative body, shall order the transfer of an amount of money into the fund, sufficient with the salary deductions, to meet the financial requirements thereof:

- (1) From moneys collected or received from all licenses issued;
- (2) From fines and forfeitures collected or received in money for violation of city ordinances. [1959 c 78 s 8; 1955 c 69 s 8; 1933 c 30 s 1; 1929 c 101 s 3; 1923 c 54 s 1; 1915 c 40 s 1; 1909 c 39 s 3; RRS s 9581.]

**RCW 41.20.140 Pension payments monthly—Surplus to general fund.** Payments provided for in this chapter shall be made monthly upon proper vouchers. If at any time there is more money in the fund provided for in this chapter than is necessary for the purposes of this chapter, then such surplus shall be transferred from such fund to the general fund of the city: PROVIDED, That at all times enough money shall be kept in said fund to meet all payments provided for in this chapter. [1911 c 18 s 7; 1909 c 39 s 14; RRS s 9592.]

**RCW 41.20.150 Return of member's contributions—Option to be classified as vested member.** Whenever any member affected by this chapter terminates his or her employment prior to the completion of twenty-five years of service he or she shall receive seventy-five percent of his or her contributions made after \*the effective date of this act and he or she shall not receive any contributions made prior thereto: PROVIDED, That in the case of any member who has completed twenty years of service, such member, upon termination for any cause except for a conviction of a felony, shall have the option of electing, in lieu of recovery of his or her contributions as herein provided, to be classified as a vested member in accordance with the following provisions:

(1) Written notice of such election shall be filed with the board within thirty days after the effective date of such member's termination;

(2) During the period between the date of his or her termination and the date upon which he or she becomes a retired member as hereinafter provided, such vested member and his or her spouse or dependent children shall be entitled to all benefits available under

chapter 41.20 RCW to a retired member and his or her spouse or dependent children with the exception of the service retirement allowance as herein provided for: PROVIDED, That any claim for medical coverage under RCW 41.20.120 shall be attributable to service connected illness or injury;

(3) Any member electing to become a vested member shall be entitled at such time as he or she otherwise would have completed twenty-five years of service had he or she not terminated, to receive a service retirement allowance computed on the following basis: Two percent of the amount of salary at any time hereafter attached to the position held by the vested member for the year preceding the date of his or her termination, for each year of service rendered prior to the date of his or her termination. At such time the vested member shall be regarded as a retired member and, in addition to the retirement allowance herein provided for, shall continue to be entitled to all such other benefits as are by chapter 41.20 RCW made available to retired members. [2012 c 117 s 32; 1969 c 123 s 3; 1955 c 69 s 4.]

**\*Reviser's note:** The words "the effective date of this act" first appear in 1955 c 69 s 4, which became effective midnight June 8, 1955.

**RCW 41.20.155 Return of member's contributions—Applicability.**

The provisions of RCW 41.20.050, 41.20.060 and 41.20.150 shall be applicable to all members employed on June 12, 1969, and to those who shall thereafter become members, but shall not apply to any former member who has terminated his or her employment prior to June 12, 1969. [2012 c 117 s 33; 1969 c 123 s 4.]

**RCW 41.20.160 Credit for membership in private organization acquired by city of first class.** Any person affected by this chapter who was a member of a police organization operated by a private enterprise which police organization shall be hereafter acquired before September 1, 1959, by a city of the first class as its police department as a matter of public convenience or necessity, where it is in the public interest to retain the trained personnel of such police organization, shall have added to his or her period of employment as computed under this chapter his or her period of service with said private enterprise, except that this shall apply only to those persons who are in the service of such police organization at the time of its acquisition by the city of the first class and who remain in the service of that city until this chapter shall become applicable to such persons.

No such person shall have added to his or her period of employment as computed under this chapter his or her period of service with said private enterprise unless he or she or a third party shall pay to the city his or her contribution for the period of such service with the private enterprise, or, if he or she shall be entitled to any private pension or retirement benefits as a result of such service with the private enterprise, unless he or she agrees at the time of his or her employment by the city to accept a reduction in the payment of any benefits payable under this chapter that are based in whole or in part on such added service by the amount of those private pension or retirement benefits received. The rate of such contribution shall be two percent of the wage or salary of such person during that added period of service with the private enterprise before midnight, June 8,

1955, and four and one-half percent of such wage or salary after midnight, June 8, 1955. Such contributions shall be paid into the police relief and pension fund and shall be held subject to the provisions of RCW 41.20.150, except that all such contributions shall be deemed to have been made after June 8, 1955. Such contributions may be invested in investments permitted under chapter 35.39 RCW and may be kept invested until required to meet payments of benefits to such persons.

The city may receive payments for these purposes from a third party and shall make from such payments contributions with respect to such prior service as may be necessary to enable the police relief and pension fund to assume its obligations. [2012 c 117 s 34; 1983 c 3 s 92; 1959 c 71 s 1.]

**Severability—1959 c 71:** "If any provision of this act, or its application to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the remainder of the act, or the application of the provision to other persons or circumstances is not affected." [1959 c 71 s 2.]

**RCW 41.20.170 Transfer of membership.** Any former employee of a department of a city of the first class who (1) was a member of the employees' retirement system of such city, and (2) is now employed within the police department of such city, may transfer his or her membership from the city employees' retirement system to the city's police relief and pension fund system by filing a written request with the board of administration and the board of trustees, respectively, of the two systems.

Upon the receipt of such request, the transfer of membership to the city's police relief and pension fund system shall be made, together with a transfer of all accumulated contributions credited to such member. The board of administration of the city's employees' retirement system shall transmit to the board of trustees of the city's police relief and pension fund system a record of service credited to such member which shall be computed and credited to such member as a part of his or her period of employment in the city's police relief and pension fund system. For the purpose of the transfer contemplated by this section, the affected individuals shall be allowed to restore withdrawn contributions to the city employees' retirement system and reinstate their membership service records.

Any employee so transferring shall have all the rights, benefits and privileges that he or she would have been entitled to had he or she been a member of the city's police relief and pension fund system from the beginning of his or her employment with the city.

No person so transferring shall thereafter be entitled to any other public pension, except that provided by chapter 41.26 RCW or social security, which is based upon service with the city.

The right of any employee to file a written request for transfer of membership as set forth herein shall expire December 31, 1973. [2012 c 117 s 35; 1973 c 143 s 2; 1969 ex.s. c 209 s 27; 1963 c 82 s 1.]

**Effective date—Severability—Construction—1969 ex.s. c 209:** See RCW 41.26.3901, 41.26.3902, and 41.26.3903.

**RCW 41.20.175 Transfer of service credit from firefighters' pension system to city's police pension system.** A former employee of a fire department of a city of the first class who (1) was a member of the firefighters' pension system created by chapters 41.16 or 41.18 RCW, and (2) is now employed within the police department of such city, will be regarded as having received membership service credit for such service to the fire department in the city's police and relief pension system at the time he or she recovers such service credit by paying withdrawn contributions to the Washington law enforcement officers' and firefighters' retirement system pursuant to \*RCW 41.26.030(28). [2012 c 117 s 36; 1974 ex.s. c 148 s 2.]

**\*Reviser's note:** RCW 41.26.030 was amended by 2018 c 230 s 1, changing subsection (28) to subsection (29).

**RCW 41.20.180 Exemption from taxation and judicial process—Exception—Assignability.** The right of a person to a pension, an annuity, or retirement allowance, or disability allowance, or death benefits, or any optional benefit, or any other right accrued or accruing to any person under the provisions of this chapter, and any fund created hereby, and all moneys and investments and income thereof, are exempt from any state, county, municipal, or other local tax, and shall not be subject to execution, garnishment, attachment, the operation of bankruptcy or insolvency laws, or other process of law whatsoever, whether the same be in actual possession of the person or be deposited or loaned and shall be unassignable: PROVIDED, That benefits under this chapter shall be payable to a spouse or ex-spouse to the extent expressly provided for in any court decree of dissolution or legal separation or in any court order or court-approved property settlement agreement incident to any court decree of dissolution or legal separation. [2012 c 159 s 19; 1979 ex.s. c 205 s 2; 1965 c 33 s 1.]

**RCW 41.20.900 Construction—1959 c 6—Benefits retroactively authorized.** The provisions of \*this act are intended to be remedial and procedural and any benefits heretofore paid to recipients hereunder pursuant to any previous act are retroactively included and authorized as a part of \*this act. [1959 c 6 s 4.]

**\*Reviser's note:** "this act" appears in chapter 6, Laws of 1959, which reenacted RCW 41.20.050, 41.20.060, and 41.20.080. These sections were subsequently amended by chapter 78, Laws of 1959.

**RCW 41.20.920 Construction—Chapter applicable to state registered domestic partnerships—2009 c 521.** For the purposes of this chapter, the terms spouse, marriage, marital, husband, wife, widow, widower, next of kin, and family shall be interpreted as applying equally to state registered domestic partnerships or individuals in state registered domestic partnerships as well as to marital relationships and married persons, and references to dissolution of marriage shall apply equally to state registered domestic partnerships that have been terminated, dissolved, or invalidated, to the extent that such interpretation does not conflict with federal law. Where necessary to implement chapter 521, Laws of

2009, gender-specific terms such as husband and wife used in any statute, rule, or other law shall be construed to be gender neutral, and applicable to individuals in state registered domestic partnerships. [2009 c 521 s 91.]

**Effective dates—2009 c 521 ss 5-8, 79, 87-103, 107, 151, 165, 166, 173-175, and 190-192:** See note following RCW 2.10.900.