

WAC 415-103-215 What are the WSPRS Plan 1 retirement benefit options? This section only applies to members commissioned before January 1, 2003. For purposes of this section, a registered domestic partnership is treated the same as a spousal relationship.

(1) When retiring for service, a married member can choose either Option A (historic retirement option) under RCW 43.43.260 and 43.43.270 or Option B under RCW 43.43.278. Both options include a survivor option that entitles the eligible surviving spouse and any eligible children to receive a monthly benefit after the retiree dies.

(2) **Option A (historic retirement option and survivor benefit).** The department pays the retiree a monthly retirement benefit in accordance with RCW 43.43.260 (Benefits). The department pays survivor benefits in accordance with RCW 43.43.270 (Retirement allowances).

(a) **Surviving spouse.** When the retiree dies, the department pays the retiree's surviving spouse a monthly retirement benefit equal to the gross monthly benefit then payable to the retiree, or a benefit equal to 50 percent of the average final salary (AFS) used to determine the retiree's benefit, whichever is less.

(b) **Surviving children when there is a surviving spouse.** If the retiree has a surviving spouse and surviving unmarried children under the age of 18 years, each child shall be entitled to a benefit equal to five percent of the retiree's average final salary (AFS) at retirement. The combined benefits to the surviving spouse and all children cannot exceed 60 percent of the retiree's AFS.

(3) **Option B (actuarially equivalent retirement option and survivor benefit).** The department pays the retiree a monthly retirement benefit that is actuarially reduced from the benefit calculated under Option A. The department pays survivor benefits in accordance with RCW 43.43.278 using an actuarial reduction. See WAC 415-02-380 for more information on how your benefit is affected by choosing an optional survivor option.

(a) **Surviving spouse.** When the retiree dies, the department pays the retiree's surviving spouse a monthly retirement benefit equal to the gross monthly benefit then payable to the retiree.

(b) **Surviving children when there is a surviving spouse.** If the retiree has a surviving spouse and surviving unmarried children under the age of 18 years, each surviving unmarried child under the age of 18 years shall be entitled to a benefit equal to five percent of the retiree's average final salary (AFS) at retirement.

(4) **Benefits included in Option A and Option B.**

(a) **Cost-of-living adjustment.** The retiree's annual adjustment every July is based upon the provisions in RCW 43.43.260(5). The annual adjustment applies to the eligible surviving spouse and any eligible children, who receive a monthly benefit after the retiree dies.

(b) **Surviving spouse eligibility.** To be eligible for a benefit, the surviving spouse of a retiree must either:

(i) Have been married to the retiree prior to his or her retirement and continuously thereafter until the retiree's death; or

(ii) Have been married to the retiree for at least two years prior to the retiree's death.

(c) **Remarriage of surviving spouse.** If a surviving spouse who is receiving benefits under this subsection marries another member of WSPRS and that retiree dies before the spouse, the spouse will receive only the higher of the two survivors' benefits for which he or she qualifies. The surviving spouse cannot receive more than one survivor benefit at a time under this subsection.

(d) **Surviving children when there is no surviving spouse.** If there is no surviving spouse or the surviving spouse dies, the unmarried child or children under the age of 18 years shall be entitled to a benefit equal to 30 percent of the retiree's AFS for one child and an additional 10 percent of AFS for each additional child. The combined benefits to the surviving children cannot exceed 60 percent of the retiree's AFS. Benefit payments under this subsection will be divided equally among the children.

(e) **End of benefits.** All benefits end when the surviving spouse dies or the youngest unmarried child reaches age 18, whichever occurs last.

(f) **Distribution of remaining contributions.** Any remaining balance of the retiree's accumulated contributions will be paid to:

(i) The person(s), trust, organization, or retiree's estate specified by the retiree on the appropriate department designated form, duly executed and properly on file with the department on or before the retiree's death; or

(ii) To the retiree's legal representative, if no person or entity designated in (f)(i) of this subsection is living or in existence at the time of the retiree's death.

(5) **Pop-up provision.**

(a) This subsection only applies to members retiring on or after July 1, 2000, who select Option B.

(b) If the retiree and spouse divorce, or if the spouse dies before the retiree, the retiree may request to have their benefit increased as described in WAC 415-02-380 (6) (a) (i).

[Statutory Authority: RCW 41.50.050. WSR 25-18-099, s 415-103-215, filed 9/2/25, effective 10/3/25; WSR 20-06-040, § 415-103-215, filed 2/27/20, effective 3/29/20. Statutory Authority: RCW 41.50.050(5). WSR 13-18-034, § 415-103-215, filed 8/28/13, effective 10/1/13; WSR 10-16-086, § 415-103-215, filed 7/30/10, effective 9/1/10. Statutory Authority: RCW 41.50.050(5), 43.43.260, [43.43.]270, [43.43.]278, [43.43.]280(1). WSR 02-23-037, § 415-103-215, filed 11/13/02, effective 1/1/03. Statutory Authority: RCW 41.50.050(5), 43.43.142, 43.43.278, 43.43.280. WSR 01-13-010, § 415-103-215, filed 6/8/01, effective 7/9/01. Statutory Authority: RCW 43.43.278 and 41.50.050. WSR 00-11-103, § 415-103-215, filed 5/18/00, effective 6/18/00.]