



Board of Administration Agenda Item 8c

March 16, 2016

Item Name: Proposed Decision – In the Matter of the Appeal Regarding Death Benefits Payable Upon the Death of GRANTLAND LEE JOHNSON by LEE TURNER JOHNSON, Respondent.

Program: Benefit Services Division

Item Type: Action

Parties' Positions

Staff argues that the Board of Administration should adopt the Proposed Decision.

Respondent Lee Turner Johnson (Respondent Turner Johnson) argues that the Board of Administration should decline to adopt the Proposed Decision.

Strategic Plan

This item is not a specific product of either the Strategic or Annual Plans. The determination of administrative appeals is a power reserved to the Board of Administration.

Procedural Summary

Grantland Lee Johnson (Decedent) retired for service on November 16, 2003. At the time of his retirement, Decedent selected the Option 2 allowance, and designated his then wife Charlot Bolton as beneficiary of the lifetime monthly benefits. On August 3, 2014, Decedent submitted an incomplete Application to Modify Option and/or Life Option Beneficiary. The application was incomplete because Decedent failed to attach a court order or marital settlement agreement awarding him the entire interest in his CalPERS pension benefits. Decedent passed away on August 19, 2014, prior to CalPERS sending him an election form and retirement estimates he had requested. On December 31, 2014, the family law court entered a judgment awarding Decedent his CalPERS pension in its entirety. CalPERS determined that Respondent Turner Johnson is not entitled to Decedent's lifetime Option 2 benefits or continued enrollment in employer-sponsored health insurance and dental insurance through CalPERS. Respondent Turner Johnson appealed this determination and the matter was heard by the Office of Administrative Hearings on October 6, 2015. A Proposed Decision was issued on January 8, 2016, denying Respondent Turner Johnson's appeal.

Alternatives

A. For use if the Board decides to adopt the Proposed Decision as its own Decision:

RESOLVED, that the Board of Administration of the California Public Employees' Retirement System hereby adopts as its own Decision the Proposed Decision dated January 8, 2016, concerning the appeal of Lee Turner Johnson; RESOLVED FURTHER that this Board Decision shall be effective 30 days following mailing of the Decision.

- B. For use if the Board decides not to adopt the Proposed Decision, and to decide the case upon the record:

RESOLVED, that the Board of Administration of the California Public Employees' Retirement System, after consideration of the Proposed Decision dated January 8, 2016, concerning the appeal of Lee Turner Johnson, hereby rejects the Proposed Decision and determines to decide the matter itself, based upon the record produced before the Administrative Law Judge and such additional evidence and arguments that are presented by the parties and accepted by the Board; RESOLVED FURTHER that the Board's Decision shall be made after notice is given to all parties.

- C. For use if the Board decides to remand the matter back to the Office of Administrative Hearings for the taking of further evidence:

RESOLVED, that the Board of Administration of the California Public Employees' Retirement System, after consideration of the Proposed Decision dated January 8, 2016, concerning the appeal of Lee Turner Johnson, hereby rejects the Proposed Decision and refers the matter back to the Administrative Law Judge for the taking of additional evidence as specified by the Board at its meeting.

- D. Precedential Nature of Decision (two alternatives; either may be used):

1. For use if the Board wants further argument on the issue of whether to designate its Decision as precedential:

RESOLVED, that the Board of Administration of the California Public Employees' Retirement System requests the parties in the matter concerning the appeal of Lee Turner Johnson, as well as interested parties, to submit written argument regarding whether the Board's Decision in this matter should be designated as precedential, and that the Board will consider the issue whether to designate its Decision as precedential at a time to be determined.

2. For use if the Board decides to designate its Decision as precedential, without further argument from the parties.

RESOLVED, that the Board of Administration of the California Public Employees' Retirement System, hereby designates as precedential its Decision concerning the appeal of Lee Turner Johnson.

Budget and Fiscal Impacts: Not applicable

Attachments

Attachment A: Proposed Decision

Attachment B: Staff's Argument

Attachment C: Respondent(s) Argument(s)

DONNA RAMEL LUM
Deputy Executive Officer
Customer Services and Support