



California Public Employees' Retirement System  
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## Announcements

# Circular Letter

November 18, 2021

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Distribution: IV, V, VI, X, XII, XVI

**To:** All CalPERS Employers  
**Subject:** Credit for Absence From Employment – Military Service

### Purpose

The purpose of this Circular Letter is to inform you of your responsibilities, pursuant to Government (Gov.) Code section 20997, to inform employees of their rights regarding Military Leave of Absence service credit.

### Government Code Section 20997

Section 20997 of the Gov. Code states that a member absent from employment for military service may be eligible to receive service credit for the absence at no cost. If the member is not eligible to receive the service credit at no cost, they may be eligible to purchase service credit by paying their outstanding contributions while on active duty.

### Employer Requirements

Gov. Code section 20997 requires you to inform your employees of their rights and provide the request details within 30 days of the employee's return to employment.

You are also responsible for updating [myCalPERS](#) with the employee's separation and return dates.

Gov. Code sections 21024 and 21029 enable a member to purchase credit for past active duty military service, served prior to establishing CalPERS membership.

These sections additionally require you to inform all new employees upon hire of their right to purchase their active duty military service credit.

## Request Details

Your employees can register or log in to their myCalPERS account to request military leave of absence. CalPERS will determine the member's eligibility upon receiving their completed request. Members should request to purchase service credit early in their career because the cost will be lower, and they can pay off their lump-sum balance in full prior to their retirement to maximize their benefit.

## Resources

For more information on Military Leave of Absence, refer your employees to [A Guide to Your CalPERS Military Service Credit Options \(PUB-15\) \(PDF\)](#). This publication contains valuable information for members requesting to purchase active duty military service credit prior to CalPERS membership and/or Military Leave of Absence service credit. The [Public Agency & Schools Reference Guide \(PDF\)](#), [State Reference Guide \(PDF\)](#), and additional information about the benefits of service credit purchases and other resources are available on our website at [www.calpers.ca.gov](http://www.calpers.ca.gov).

## Questions

If you have any questions, send us a secure message by logging in to your myCalPERS account or call us toll free at **888 CalPERS** (or **888-225-7377**).

Donald R. Martinez, Chief  
Member Account Management Division