



Board of Administration

Agenda Item 8a9

November 19, 2025

Item Name: Proposed Decision – In the Matter of the Appeal of Disability Retirement and Reinstatement from Disability Retirement of SAVANNA A. DAMBACHER, Respondent, and COUNTY OF SHASTA, Respondent.

Program: Disability and Survivor Benefits Division

Item Type: Action

Parties' Positions

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

Respondent Savanna A. Dambacher's (Respondent) position is included in Attachment C, if any.

Respondent County of Shasta's (Respondent County) position is included in Attachment C, if any.

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

On or about April 13, 2021, Respondent submitted an application for disability retirement based on a rheumatological condition (fibromyalgia) and orthopedic condition (neck and back). With respect to only her orthopedic condition, the disability retirement application was approved in part by CalPERS and Respondent retired for disability effective April 1, 2021. In 2023, Respondent was reevaluated and CalPERS determined that Respondent is no longer incapacitated due to any orthopedic condition (neck and back) from performing the duties of an Employment and Training Worker II. CalPERS also determined that Respondent was not substantially incapacitated due to her rheumatological (fibromyalgia) condition. Respondent appealed both determinations and the matter was heard by the Office of Administrative Hearings on September 15, 2025. Due to Respondent and Respondent County's failure to appear, the case proceeded as a default as to both Respondent and Respondent County under Government Code section 11520. A Proposed Decision was issued on October 6, 2025, affirming CalPERS' determination and denying the appeal.

Alternatives

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

RESOLVED, that the Board of Administration of the California Public Employees' Retirement System, pursuant to Government Code section 11517, subdivision (c)(2)(C), which authorizes the Board to "make technical or other minor changes in the proposed decision," hereby modifies the Proposed Decision on page 3, paragraph 5, by replacing "rheumatological" with "orthopedic" and on page 13, paragraph 5, deleting "uncertain" and replacing "employees" with "employing" and hereby adopts as its own Decision the Proposed Decision dated October 6, 2025, as modified, concerning the appeal of Savanna A. Dambacher; RESOLVED FURTHER that this Board Decision shall be effective 30 days following mailing of the Decision.

- B. 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 October 6, 2025, concerning the appeal of Savanna A. Dambacher; RESOLVED FURTHER that this Board Decision shall be effective 30 days following mailing of the Decision.

- C. 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 October 6, 2025, concerning the appeal of Savanna A. Dambacher, 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.

- D. 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 October 6, 2025, concerning the appeal of Savanna A. Dambacher, 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.

- E. 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 Savanna A. Dambacher, 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 Savanna A. Dambacher.

Budget and Fiscal Impacts: Not applicable

Attachments

Attachment A: Proposed Decision

Attachment B: Staff's Argument

Attachment C: Respondent(s) Argument(s)

Kimberly A. Malm
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Customer Services and Support