

## Retirement Checklist

**At this point, you should have received an estimate of your benefits from the Retirement Office 978-983-8620. If you are ready to apply for retirement please call the office so we can schedule a convenient time for you and your spouse to come in to the office to complete your paperwork.**

1. Prior to you retiring you should contact Social Security @ 1-800-772-1213 to find out if you are eligible for benefits and how those benefits might be affected. Lawrence office 978-686-6171.
2. If you have Massachusetts deferred compensation Smart Plan you need to contact Great West @ 1-877-457-1900 to declare a retirement date with them and discuss your options.
3. You should discuss your option choices with your family. If you are married, your spouse must accompany you when you choose an option. Ask as many questions as you need in order to completely understand your option choices. You should choose your option based on your personal financial situation, taking into consideration any other sources of income, expenses, etc. that you have. **ONCE YOU HAVE RETIRED, YOUR OPTION CHOICE CANNOT BE CHANGED! Choice of Option C requires you to provide a marriage certificate and spouse's birth certificate.**
4. Contact Connie Sousa @ 978-986-8577 to discuss your health and life insurance coverage. Proper health insurance is extremely important during your retirement years. You are allowed to make changes each year during the "Open Enrollment Period". If you carry life insurance, be sure to update your beneficiary with the Human Resource Department if anything changes.
5. It is suggested you consult a tax preparer to assist you in deciding what amount should be withheld from your monthly retirement check for taxes. Your City of Methuen pension is NOT taxable by the State of Massachusetts. If you are planning to move to another state once you retire, check with that state to see if it taxes your pension. Your pension (with the exception of the pension portion of accidental disability pensions) is taxable to the Federal Government. The Retirement Office **cannot** advise regarding taxes.
6. Decide how you want to receive your monthly retirement check – direct deposit or mailed to your home? The Retirement Board strongly recommends direct deposit. A great majority of those already retired have direct deposit.
7. Retirement checks are paid on the last business day of the month. You may not receive your first check until the last day of the next month following your retirement date. Make sure to plan your finances accordingly.
8. Every year you will be asked to confirm your status as a pensioner. This is absolutely required by Massachusetts General Laws. You are given 2 months to submit this confirmation. If not received, your pension will be stopped until it is received. If you are a disability retiree, you will be required by PERAC to undergo medical evaluations periodically in order to continue receiving your disability pension. If you do not comply, your pension will be stopped until you do comply.
9. Contact the payroll clerk within your department to verify your sick day balance and your payment date.
10. Please remember this decision will affect the rest of your life, please think it through very carefully and don't hesitate to ask questions.
11. The Retirement Board votes a Cost of Living Adjustment each year effective July 1<sup>st</sup> of that year. You must be retired one whole calendar year before you are eligible for this adjustment.
12. If you return to work in **public employment** after your retire, you are limited to working 960 hours per calendar year, AND your earnings for said work, when added to your annual retirement allowance, cannot be greater than the salary currently being paid for the position you retired from. **Effective 4/2/12 superannuation retirees who have been retired more than a year will be allowed earnings of up to \$15,000.00 above the salary currently being paid for the position you retired from. Your employment must cease when either limitation is reached. It is the responsibility of the retiree to certify to their employer the number of hours worked and excess earnings must be returned to the employer.**
13. When you are ready to apply for retirement, call the retirement office to set up an appointment for you and your spouse.
14. I hereby confirm that I have discussed and understand all of the items listed above.

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Signature of Retiring Employee

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Date Signed

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Signature of Retirement Representative

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Date Signed