



Benefits and Actuarial Committee (B&A) Meeting

VRS, 1111 E. Main Street
3rd Floor Board Room

Monday, 6/9/2025
1:00 - 3:00 PM ET

I. Welcome and Introductions

II. Approve Minutes

B&A Minutes 04.15.2025 final - Page 2

III. Election of Committee Vice Chair

IV. Purchase of Prior Service Normal Cost Adjustments

- **RBA: Approve Updated Rates for Purchase of Prior Service for Plan 1, Plan 2 and Hybrid Plan Members, Effective July 1, 2025.**

RBA - Approve PPS Rates - Page 5

New Proposed PPS Rates 2025 - Page 7

V. Recommendations from Experience Study - Adjustments to Funding Policy

- **RBA: Approve updates to Funding Policy**
 - Surplus Funding Policy for Statewide Plans
- RBA - Amendments to Funding Policy Statement - Page 8*
VRS Funding Policy 6-18 redlined - Page 9
VRS Funding Policy 6-18 clean - Page 23

VI. Information Item

- **Factors Study: Early Retirement Factors Analysis update**
- ERF Project Update 6.9.25 - Page 37*

VII. Other Business

Minutes

A regular meeting of the Benefits and Actuarial Committee was held on April 15, 2025, in Richmond, Virginia with the following members participating:

John M. Bennett, Chair
Lindsey K. Pantele, Vice Chair
Jessica L. Hood

VRS Staff:

Patricia Bishop, Andrew Junkin, Jennifer Schreck, Rory Badura, Judy Bolt, Jeanne Chenault, Michael Cooper, Sara Denson, Antonio Fisher, Krystal Groff, Sandy Jack, Angela Payne, Andrew Ringle, Amethyst Sloane and Leslie Weldon.

Guests:

Kimberly Sarte and Alexandria Jansson, Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission.

The meeting convened at 1:00 p.m.

Opening Remarks

Mr. Bennett called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone to the April 15, 2025, meeting of the Benefits and Actuarial Committee. Mr. Bennett took attendance with the following roll call:

Ms. Hood: Present.
Ms. Pantele: Present.
Mr. Bennett: Present.

Approval of Minutes

Upon a motion by Ms. Pantele, with a second by Ms. Hood, the Committee approved the minutes of its February 6, 2025, meeting.

Experience Study

Mr. Bennett introduced Jim Anderson, Becky Stouffer and Jennifer Cagasan of Gabriel, Roeder, Smith & Company, the VRS Plan Actuary, who presented the results of the Experience Study for the period of July 1, 2020, to June 30, 2024.

The *Code of Virginia* requires the Board to review plan experience at least once in each four-year period to validate assumptions and make any necessary adjustments based on a comparison of actual experience to expected experience based on current assumptions. In addition to reviewing assumptions, GRS also reviewed the VRS Funding policy to ensure VRS is reflecting best practices.

GRS reviewed both economic and demographic assumptions. Some of the most impactful assumptions to plan liabilities are economic assumptions, which includes the plan discount rate. During this review, no significant changes were recommended to the economic assumptions, with a reduction in the payroll growth assumption for VaLORS being the only recommendation.

Demographic assumptions include mortality, plan decrements (termination, retirement, etc.), as well as pay increases.

- Mortality table - Impactful assumption, however only small changes to mortality improvement scale were recommended which in turn had minor impacts to plan costs.
- Plan Decrements - only minor changes were made to plan decrements to reflect partial recognition of the actual experience observed.
- Pay Increases - continued trend of higher than expected salary increases which led to the recommendation to increase the salary scale by 0.50% for first 20 years of service, yet maintaining the ultimate rate of 3.5%. JRS salary assumptions were left unchanged.

The methodology was changed for how employers are grouped when developing assumptions for Political Subdivisions. Essentially, the Top 10 group was expanded to include employers in the same metropolitan regions as the current Top 10.

OPEB-specific (GLI, HIC, VSDP, VLDP, and LODA) assumptions were reviewed and slight updates were recommended. Certain HIC plans were using market value of assets for rate-setting and GRS has recommended that an actuarial value of assets be used for those plans going forward.

For LODA, a new classification of part-time employees was recognized for receiving less than a 100% weighting when determining the premiums. Additionally, the weightings for National Guard Weekenders and Volunteers were lowered. As a reminder LODA is pay-as-you go, so VRS has to collect enough in premiums to cover anticipated costs for the upcoming year. So as result of lowering the premium rates for members who are less than full time, full-time rates need to subsequently increase to cover the shortfall.

GRS recommended a modification to the methodology used in the development of the normal cost rate which will simplify the process but will also slightly increase rates.

Overall, the recommended changes were minor adjustments which are expected to have limited impacts on contribution rates and funded status during the next rate-setting.

Mr. Bennett thanked GRS for their presentation.

Upon a motion by Ms. Pantele, with a second by Ms. Hood, the Committee recommended approval of the following action to the full Board of Trustees:

RBA: Approval of Actuarial Assumptions based on July 1, 2020, to June 30, 2024, Experience Study.

Request for Board Action: The VRS Board of Trustees approves its plan actuary's recommendations as presented in the Experience Study (7/1/2020 to 6/30/2024) to change various assumptions, including: certain demographic assumptions regarding mortality rates, retirement rates, withdrawal rates, disability rates, salary increases and total payroll growth; method changes regarding the determination of normal cost; and various other post-employment benefits (OPEB) specific assumptions related to the Line of Duty Plan, Health Insurance Credit program, and the VSDP and VLDP disability programs.

Other Business

Lastly, Mr. Bennett noted the Audit and Compliance Committee will meet at 3:00 p.m. following the conclusion of the B&A meeting. The Administration, Finance and Talent Management Committee will meet on April 16 at 11:30 a.m., followed by the full Board of Trustees at 1:00 p.m.

Adjournment

Upon a motion by Ms. Pantele, with a second by Ms. Hood, the Committee agreed to adjourn the meeting.

There being no further business, the meeting concluded at 2:24 p.m.

Date

John M. Bennett, Chair
Benefits and Actuarial Committee



**Approve updated rates for purchase of prior service
for Plan 1, Plan 2, and Hybrid Plan members,
effective July 1, 2025**

Requested Action

The Board determines, after considering the recommendations of the Plan Actuary, that effective July 1, 2025, the rates for Plan 1 members to purchase prior service shall be 12.50% for regular VRS members, 23.78% for hazardous duty employees, and 31.97% for judges; that the rates for Plan 2 members to purchase prior service shall be 10.74% for regular VRS members, 19.15% for hazardous duty employees, and 29.67% for judges; that the rates for Hybrid Plan members to purchase prior service shall be 6.68% for regular VRS members and 19.21% for judges, and an alternative rate of 10.01% for certain affected hazardous duty employees whose employers have not adopted all the enhanced benefits for their hazardous duty employees.

Description/Background

Code of Virginia § 51.1-142.2(A) states in pertinent part, “For each year or portion thereof to be credited at the time of purchase under this subsection, the member shall pay the approximate normal cost of the retirement plan under which the member is covered at the time of such purchase, as determined by the Board in its sole discretion.” This approximate normal cost rate is applicable for a period of 24 months following the member’s first date of hire or the final day of any applicable leave of absence for which service credit may be purchased, after which the cost to purchase such service changes to the actuarial equivalent cost.

Rationale for Requested Action

The Plan Actuary developed three rate groups for this purpose, and each group for this purpose is considered the “retirement program under which the [affected] member is covered.” Moreover, the Plan Actuary developed a separate rate for Plan 1, Plan 2, Hybrid Plan, and alternate hazardous duty as applicable.

The groups are:

- Regular VRS (i.e., state employees, local non-hazardous duty employees, and teachers);
- Hazardous duty employees (i.e., SPORS, VaLORS and local hazardous duty); and
- Judges

The Plan Actuary’s calculations reflect assumption and method changes from the most recent experience study for the period from July 1, 2020, to June 30, 2024, and the combined normal cost for each of the groups above. The Board approved the Plan Actuary’s recommended changes to the assumptions and methods from this experience study at its meeting on April 16, 2025.

Following is a table with the recommended rates by group and plan.

Members	Plan 1	Plan 2	Hybrid	Alternate Hazardous Duty
Regular VRS (State, Teachers, and Political Subdivision Non-Hazardous Duty)	12.50%	10.74%	6.68%	
Hazardous Duty Employees (SPORS, VaLORS, and Political Subdivision)	23.78%	19.15%		10.01%
Judges	31.97%	29.67%	19.21%	

Hazardous duty employees are not eligible for the Hybrid Plan, making it unnecessary to calculate a normal cost rate for that category. The alternate hazardous duty rate applies to a very small number of employers who have not adopted all the enhanced benefits for their hazardous duty employees (e.g., age and service eligibility but no hazardous duty supplement).

Authority for Requested Action

Code of Virginia § 51.1-142.2(A) authorizes the Board to determine the rates for purchase of prior service by Plan 1, Plan 2 and Hybrid Plan members, and this determination may be made by the Board in its sole discretion.

The above action is approved.

 A. Scott Andrews, Chair
 VRS Board of Trustees

 Date

Approximate Normal Cost Rates for Purchase of Prior Service

Current Rates

Members	Plan 1	Plan 2	Hybrid	Alternate Hazardous Duty
Regular VRS (State, Teachers, and Political Subdivision Non-Hazardous Duty)	12.54%	10.89%	6.68%	
Hazardous Duty Employees (SPORS, VaLORS, and Political Subdivisions)	21.64%	19.97%		9.20%
Judges	35.03%	33.13%	18.12%	

Proposed Rates Effective 7/1/25

Members	Plan 1	Plan 2	Hybrid	Alternate Hazardous Duty
Regular VRS (State, Teachers, and Political Subdivision Non-Hazardous Duty)	12.50%	10.74%	6.68%	
Hazardous Duty Employees (SPORS, VaLORS, and Political Subdivisions)	23.78%	19.15%		10.01%
Judges	31.97%	29.67%	19.21%	



**Amend VRS Funding Policy Statement
Regarding the Surplus Funding Policy
for Statewide Plans**

Requested Action

The Board approves the changes to the VRS Funding Policy Statement (Funding Policy) regarding how to amortize surpluses in the statewide pension and other postemployment benefit (OPEB) plans once any such plan reaches 100% funded status. Effective July 1, 2025, a surplus credit in the derivation of the employer contribution amount will be recognized for a plan once the plan reaches a funded status of 120% on an actuarial value of assets (AVA) basis. The amortization of any overfunding over 100% funded status will use a rolling 20-year period.

Description/Background

VRS staff recommends this change to the Funding Policy in order to establish a strategy when plans get at or ahead of the funding schedule. The strategies prioritize protecting the plan’s funded status and reducing future risks.

Rationale for Requested Action

The VRS Funding Policy Statement memorializes the methods by which the Board has elected to fund each plan, and the proposed amendments to the policy statement allow for increased flexibility in dealing with employers with no active members.

A redlined version of the amended Funding Policy is attached to this RBA.

Authority for Requested Action

Article X, § 11 of the *Constitution of Virginia* requires that VRS benefits be funded using methods that are consistent with generally accepted actuarial principles, and *Code of Virginia § 51.1-124.22(A)(8)* authorizes the Board to promulgate regulations and procedures and make determinations necessary to carry out the provisions of Title 51.1.

The above action is approved.

A. Scott Andrews, Chair
VRS Board of Trustees

Date

VRS Funding Policy Statement¹

1. Introduction

A plan funding policy determines how much should be contributed each year by employers and participants to provide for the secure funding of benefits in a systematic fashion.

The principal goal of a funding policy is to ensure that future contributions along with current plan assets are sufficient to provide for all benefits expected to be paid to members and their beneficiaries when due. The funding policy should seek to manage and control future contribution volatility to the extent reasonably possible, consistent with other policy goals. The actuarially determined contribution should be calculated in a manner that fully funds the long-term costs of promised benefits, while balancing the goals of 1) keeping contributions relatively stable and 2) equitably allocating the costs over the employees' period of active service.

The current funding policy used by the VRS Board sets contribution rates using the Entry Age Normal cost method, an investment return assumption of 6.75%, an inflation assumption of 2.5%, and a closed 20-year amortization period for unfunded liabilities (Legacy unfunded liabilities as of 6/30/13 are amortized over a closed 30-year amortization period.)

Article X, § 11 of the *Constitution of Virginia* provides that the Virginia Retirement System benefits shall be funded using methods which are consistent with generally accepted actuarial principles. Until 2012, the Annual Required Contribution (ARC) as described in the Governmental Accounting Standards Board's (GASB's) Statements No. 25 and No. 27 was a de facto funding policy for many public-sector retirement systems, including the Virginia Retirement System.

The Board sets contribution rates for all local employers under this policy. However, with respect to the plans for state employees and the teacher plan, while the rates developed under the Board's policy are the certified contribution rates, the Governor and the General Assembly determine the funding that they will provide through the state budget process toward the Board certified contribution rates for the State and Teachers and other statewide OPEB plans. Beginning in FY 2013, § 51.1-145.K1 of the Code of Virginia set out guidelines for the General Assembly to follow for the funding of the contribution rates certified by the VRS Board, phasing in from approximately 67% of Board-certified rate to 100% of the Board-certified rate over the next four biennia. These statutory guidelines do not apply to funding levels for Other Postemployment Benefits (OPEBs) administered by VRS.

¹ Adopted October 17, 2013; amended November 14, 2013, June 7, 2016, November 15, 2017, November 20, 2019, October 18, 2022, October 18, 2023, ~~and~~ February 8, 2024, and June 18, 2025.

In June 2012, GASB revised public pension accounting standards and has communicated an important message in the process: accounting standards are no longer funding standards. However, GASB did not address how employers should calculate the annual required contribution (ARC). To assist state and local government employers, several national groups developed policy guidelines for funding standards. This document is the result of an extensive review of the current funding policy, industry standards and best practices, and the development and approval of funding policy assumptions effective with the June 30, 2013 valuation. A copy of Request for Board Action 2013-07-18 adopting the funding policy assumptions is attached. This Funding Policy is intended to provide guidance to future Boards on how to set employer contribution rates and support the plan's primary goals of contribution and budgetary predictability, accumulation of required assets over time to provide for all benefits earned and achievement of intergenerational equity.

In June 2015, GASB adopted two new statements regarding OPEBs. GASB statement 74, *Financial Reporting for Postemployment Benefits Other than Pension Plans*, and GASB statement 75, *Accounting and Financial Reporting for Postemployment Benefits Other than Pensions*. These statements replace GASB 43 and GASB 45. As was the case with GASB 67 and 68, these new statements represent a significant change to the methods used to account for postemployment benefits and provide for a clear separation between accounting for and funding of OPEBs. The new standards require the adoption of a new funding policy for OPEB plans. The current VRS funding policy has been modified to accommodate funding requirements for the VRS OPEB plans.

The VRS OPEB plans include the Health Insurance Credit Program, Group Life Insurance Program, the Virginia Sickness and Disability Program (VSDP), the Virginia Local Disability Program (VLDP) and the Long Term Care benefits associated with the VSDP and VLDP. The Line of Duty Act Fund is also a defined benefit OPEB plan, although it is not a benefit exclusively for VRS members.²

² As of April 2016 all VRS OPEBs already incorporate the actuarial methods outlined in the Funding Policy, with the following exceptions:

- Health Insurance Credit Program for Political Subdivisions will incorporate a five-year asset smoothing method for funding valuations effective with the June 30, 2016 actuarial valuation.
- The Long Term Care valuation will incorporate the Entry-Age Normal cost method and five-year smoothing method for funding valuations effective with the June 30, 2016 actuarial valuation.
- Line of Duty Act Program (LODA) is currently not prefunded and as set forth in the *Code* shall be funded on a current disbursement basis or in other words is considered a "pay-as-you-go" plan. As such, the plan has no unfunded liabilities and uses market value of assets for valuation purposes. In the event that the General Assembly takes action to begin prefunding this program, the Board of Trustees would move to adopt the various funding provisions contained in this document including moving the program to a five-year asset smoothing method for funding valuations effective with any decision to prefund the LODA program.

These changes were approved by the Board of Trustees at its June 7, 2016 meeting, and were incorporated into this amended Funding Policy. Where a particular actuarial method was already in use, the Funding Policy notes that the Board confirms the actuarial methods for OPEBs.

The Funding Policy addresses the following general policy objectives:

- Ensure funding of plans is based on actuarially determined contributions;
- Build funding discipline into the policy to ensure promised benefits can be paid;
- Maintain intergenerational equity so the cost of employee benefits is paid by the generation of individuals who receive services;
- Make employer costs a consistent percentage of payroll; and
- Require clear reporting to show how and when plans will be adequately funded.

This document serves as the Funding Policy for VRS. It has been prepared by VRS in collaboration with the Board and the VRS Plan Actuary and is effective as of the June 30, 2013 valuation, and modified to accommodate the OPEB plans effective as of the June 30, 2016 valuation.

2. Authority

The Virginia Retirement System is administered in accordance with Title 51.1, chapters 1, 2, 2.1, 3 and 4 of the *Code of Virginia*. The contribution to be paid by members of VRS is fixed at a level that covers only part of the cost of accruing benefits. The balance of the cost is paid by employers within the Trust Fund (the “Fund”).

The OPEB plans are administered in accordance with Title 51.1, chapters 5, 11, 11.1, and 14 of the *Code of Virginia*. The cost associated with OPEBs is generally borne by the employer and benefits are paid from the various trust funds. An exception to this practice is the Group Life Insurance Program. The Board determines the amount each insured shall contribute for the cost of insurance and by statute this amount is capped at \$0.70 per month for each \$1,000 of annual salary. Each employer determines whether this cost will be paid by the member or funded by the employer. The balance of the cost is paid by employers within the Fund. The Group Life Insurance plan, however, is a cost-sharing plan so all employers are charged the same rate.

The Funding Policy focuses on the pace at which these liabilities are funded and, in so far as is practical, the measures to ensure that employers pay for their own liabilities.

The Funding Policy is authorized by a framework that includes:

- Article X, § 11 of the *Constitution of Virginia*
- Title 51.1 of the *Code of Virginia*

This is the framework within which the VRS Plan Actuary carries out valuations to set employer contribution rates and provide recommendations to the Board when other funding decisions are required. The Funding Policy applies to all employers participating in the Fund.

The methods and assumptions used in the VRS funding policy are periodically reviewed as part of the quadrennial experience study as required under § 51.1-124.22(A)(4). As such, the content of this document may be updated to reflect changes approved by the VRS Board of Trustees.

3. Contributions

The Funding Policy provides for periodic employer contributions set at actuarially determined rates in accordance with recognized actuarial principles (§51.1-145(A)). Originally based on parameters set out in GASB 25/27 and GASB 43/45, the contribution should include the employer's normal cost and provisions for amortizing any unfunded actuarial accrued liability (UAAL) in accordance with the requirements originally defined in GASB 25/27 and GASB 43/45.

Member and employer contributions for retirement are required by §§ 51.1-144 and -145 of the *Code of Virginia*. Chapters 5, 11, 11.1, and 14 of Title 51.1 of the *Code of Virginia* and the applicable provisions in each year's Appropriation Act relate to contribution requirements for OPEB plans administered by VRS.

Employer contributions are normally made up of two main elements³:

- a) the estimated cost of future benefits being accrued, referred to as the "normal cost"; and
- b) an adjustment for the funding position of accrued benefits relative to the Fund's actuarially adjusted assets, or the "amortization payment UAAL." If there is a surplus there may be a contribution reduction; if there is a deficit, there will be a contribution addition, with the amount of surplus or deficit being spread over a number of years.

Items a) and b) above are then combined and expressed as a percentage of covered payroll.

Employer contribution rates are set each biennium and are in effect for the entire biennium. Valuations in the "off" years are for informational purposes only. Generally, employers with well-funded pension plans consistently pay their annual required contribution in full.

Where this process as applied to a political subdivision would, in the Plan Actuary's opinion, not be expected to maintain the plan's solvency, the VRS staff, working with the Plan Actuary, may determine alternative funding requirements that would maintain the political subdivision's solvency while also meeting the other objectives of this Funding Policy Statement. For employers with no active members who still have retirees or inactive members eligible for future VRS benefits, this includes ad hoc payments that may be necessary to cover future benefits if employer assets are insufficient to cover future cash flow needs.

With respect to statewide plans, if unfunded liabilities exist in a plan, the Board may recommend alternative contribution rates in excess of the actuarially determined rates if opportunities exist to accelerate paydown of unfunded liabilities. Examples of alternative rates could potentially include approaches such as maintaining rates from the prior year if rates drop in subsequent rate setting or maintaining a higher level contribution rate until a certain funded status is achieved.

³ Contributions also include administrative expenses.

4. Funding Target

VRS operates the same target funding level for all ongoing employers of 100% of its accrued liabilities valued on an ongoing basis. This means that contribution rates are set with the intent of funding 100% of a member's benefits during a member's working lifetime. The Line of Duty Act Fund is an exception, as employer contributions are currently determined by the Board on a current disbursement basis per statute. As such, the target funding level for all ongoing employers for LODA is at or near 0% of its accrued liabilities.

Funded Status is defined as the ratio of the actuarial value of assets to the value placed on the benefits, or plan's liabilities, by the VRS Plan Actuary. The VRS Plan Actuary reports on the funded status of each plan in the system in each annual valuation.

5. Actuarial Cost Method

The actuarial cost method is the means by which the total present value of all future benefits for current active and retired participants is allocated to each year of service (i.e., the "normal cost" for each year) including past years (i.e., the "actuarial accrued liability"). There are several available actuarial cost methods, but most governmental plans use the entry age normal (EAN) cost method while a significant minority use the projected unit credit (PUC) method. In the past, VRS has used the EAN method for most of the plans it administers.

Although the EAN and PUC cost methods are both considered reasonable under actuarial standards of practice and GASB 25 and GASB 43 in most circumstances, it is important for plan stakeholders to understand the implications of either method. EAN tends to recognize actuarial liabilities sooner than PUC, and it also tends to result in a more stable normal cost pattern over time for pay-related benefits, even in the face of demographic shifts. The more stable normal cost pattern over time should help in reducing the risk of higher levels of future contributions.

Under the PUC method, the plan's normal cost is the present value of the benefits "earned" during the year, but based on projected pay levels at retirement. For an individual participant, the PUC normal costs increase each year because the present value increases as the participant gets a year closer to retirement. In contrast, under the EAN method, the normal cost is specifically determined to remain a level percentage of pay over each participant's career.

Because EAN normal cost rates are level for each participant, the normal cost pattern for the entire plan under EAN is more stable for pay-related benefits in the face of demographic shifts in the workforce. It is this normal cost stability that makes the EAN method the preferred funding method for pay-related benefits of public plans.

GASB has reaffirmed its decision to require governmental pension plans to base their financial statement reporting on the EAN method. For comparability, GASB has also decided to require governmental OPEB plans, which may not provide pay-related benefits, to base their financial statement reporting on the EAN method.

Effective with the June 30, 2013 valuation, the Board has adopted the Entry-Age Normal cost method in deriving plan liabilities. This is a continuation of the Board's existing cost method. Effective with the June 30, 2016 valuation, the Board has adopted the Entry-Age Normal cost method for all OPEB plans.

6. Asset Valuation Method

Because investment markets are volatile and because pension plans typically have long investment horizons, asset-smoothing techniques can be an effective tool to manage contribution volatility and provide a more consistent measure of plan funding over time. Asset-smoothing methods reduce the effect of short-term market volatility on contributions, while still tracking the overall movement of the market value of plan assets, by recognizing the effects of investment gains and losses over a period of years. This is also in keeping with § 51.1-145(A), which requires that contribution rates be determined in a manner so as to remain relatively level from year to year.

Determining the ideal asset-smoothing policy involves balancing the two goals of ensuring fairness across generations and controlling contribution volatility for plan sponsors. A very long smoothing period will greatly reduce contribution volatility, but this may mean the impact of recent investment experience is deferred to future generations. However, a very short smoothing period (or none at all) may result in contribution requirements that fluctuate dramatically from year to year.

Such volatility may also result from an asset-smoothing method that constrains how far the smoothed value differs from the market value by imposing a market value "corridor." A corridor is typically expressed as a ratio of the smoothed value of assets to the market value of assets. Actuarial standards of practice and related actuarial studies seek to identify asset-smoothing methods that achieve a reasonable balance between how long it takes to recognize investment experience (the smoothing period) and how much smoothing is allowed in the meantime (the corridor). The resulting smoothing periods are in the range of three to 10 years (with five the most common) and a corridor wide enough to allow the smoothing method to function except in the most extreme conditions.

While the smoothing period for governmental plans is not limited by federal laws or regulations, the Actuarial Standards Board has set out principles for asset smoothing in ASOP No. 44. Under these principles, when a smoothed asset valuation method is used, the actuary should select a method so that the smoothed asset values fall within a reasonable range of the corresponding market values and any differences between the actuarial value and market value of assets should be recognized within a reasonable period.

Effective with the June 30, 2013 valuation, the Board has adopted a five-year asset smoothing period, which also includes a corridor that will restrict the smoothed value from falling below 80% of the true market value or exceeding 120% of the true market value. This is a continuation of the Board's existing asset valuation method. Effective with the June 30, 2016 valuation, the Board has adopted the same asset smoothing period and corridors for the OPEB plans, with the exception of the LODA program, which, by statute, does not prefund benefits. In the event a change to the statutory contribution requirements

of the LODA program necessitate an asset valuation method, the same asset smoothing period and corridors should be applied to the LODA program at that time.

7. Amortization Method

Amortization of unfunded liabilities is a major component of the annual contribution. Amortization policies involve a balance between controlling contribution volatility and ensuring a fair allocation of costs among generations. The Plan Actuary uses the specific amortization periods adopted by the Board for all employers when developing a method over which to pay down any unfunded liabilities that may exist. The amortization period should allow adjustments to contributions to be made over periods that appropriately balance intergenerational equity against the goal of keeping contributions level as a percentage of payroll over time as required by § 51.1-145.

Amortization of the unfunded actuarial accrued liability (UAAL) determines how current and future UAAL will be paid off or “amortized,” and so includes how changes in benefits or actuarial assumptions that affect the actuarial accrued liability should be funded over time. Even more than with asset smoothing methods, amortization policies involve a balance between controlling contribution volatility and ensuring a fair allocation of costs among generations. Longer amortization periods help keep contributions stable, but excessively long periods may inappropriately shift costs to future generations. In seeking to achieve an appropriate balance between these two important policy goals, a comprehensive amortization policy will involve the following distinct elements:

- Payment basis
- Payment structure
- Amortization period

A. Payment Basis: Level Dollar vs. Level Percent of Pay

One of the first considerations is whether amortization payments will be set at a level dollar amount (similar to a home mortgage) or as a level percent of pay. The great majority of public pension plans use level-percent-of-pay amortization where the payments toward the UAAL increase each year at the same rate as is assumed for payroll growth. Compared with the level-dollar approach, payments start at a lower dollar amount under the level percent approach, but then increase in proportion to payroll. The level-dollar method is more conservative in that it funds the UAAL faster in the early years. However, the level-percent-of-pay approach is consistent with the pay-related structure of benefits under most public plans. Moreover, because the normal cost is also determined as a level percent of pay, level percent amortization provides a total cost that remains level as a percentage of pay. In contrast, level-dollar amortization of UAAL will produce a total cost that decreases as a percentage of pay over the amortization period. A plan should balance these considerations in choosing between level-percent and level-dollar amortization. Section 51.1-145(A) of the *Code of Virginia* provides in part that “[t]he total annual employer contribution for each employer, expressed as a percentage of the annual membership payroll, shall be determined in a manner so as to remain relatively level from year to year....”

Effective with the June 30, 2013 valuation the Board has elected to use the level percent of pay payment basis. This is consistent with historical VRS practice. Effective with the June 30, 2016 valuation the Board confirms the continued use of the level percent of pay payment basis put in effect June 30, 2013 for the OPEB plans when an actuarially determined contribution is calculated.

B. Payment Structure

Amortization policy must also consider how amortization payments should be structured. For example, a determination needs to be made as to whether the entire UAAL should be aggregated and amortized as a single amount, or whether the plan should track individual bases for each source of UAAL or surplus each year, and amortize these separately. Amortization periods can be fixed, open or “rolling” (with the amortization period restarted each year).

Although use of a single amortization base provides simplicity, use of separate amortization bases for each source of UAAL has the advantage of tracking separately each new portion of UAAL and providing another mechanism to stabilize contribution rates. Under this approach, over time there will be a series of bases, one for each year’s gain or loss as well as for any other changes in UAAL. This provides useful information to stakeholders, as they can view the history of the sources of a plan’s UAAL in any year. The use of separate amortization bases should help balance the annual ups and downs in the UAAL. In practice, the number of bases will be limited by the length of the amortization period as eventually bases will be fully amortized, and so will no longer be part of the UAAL.

Fixed amortization periods identify a date certain by which each portion of the UAAL will be funded. This can be contrasted with open or rolling amortization, whereby the plan “resets” its amortization period every year. This is analogous to a homeowner who refinances his mortgage each year. Although both methods are common in current practice, fixed amortization periods have the advantage of providing stakeholders with a clearer understanding of the ultimate funding target (full funding) and the path to get there. It is the structure required for private sector pensions, and is increasingly common for public pension plans.

Effective with the June 30, 2013 valuation the Board has elected to use individual bases for each source of UAAL or surplus each year and to use fixed amortization periods rather than open or rolling periods. This is a change from past VRS practice but is consistent with industry best practices. Effective with the June 30, 2016 valuation the Board confirms the continued use of individual bases for each source of UAAL or surplus each year and the use of fixed amortization periods rather than open or rolling periods put in effect June 30, 2013 for all OPEB plans, with the exception of the LODA program, which, by statute, is currently not prefunded. For the purposes of accounting disclosures under GASB 43 and 45, the LODA program will continue to use an open period. In the event a change to the statutory contribution requirements of the LODA program necessitate a payment structure, individual bases for each source of UAAL or surplus each year and fixed amortization periods, rather than open or rolling periods, will be used by the LODA program at that time.

C. Amortization period

Amortization period is a determination of the appropriate period of time over which amortization should occur. The answer can depend on the source of the UAAL being amortized, as discussed below:

UAAL Due to Actuarial Gains/ Losses

Actuarial gains and losses arise when there is a difference between the actuary's estimates (assumptions) and the actual experience of the plan. They can result from demographic experience (e.g., the number of new retirees is higher or lower than expected), investment experience (e.g., returns that are higher or lower than expected), or other economic experience (e.g., payroll growth that is higher or lower than expected). In determining the appropriate period for amortizing gains and losses, plan sponsors should strike a balance between reducing contribution volatility (which would lead to longer amortization periods) and maintaining a closer relationship between contributions and routine changes in the UAAL (which would lead to shorter amortization periods). For many plans, amortization periods in the range of 15 to 20 years for gains and losses would assist plans in achieving a balance between these objectives.

UAAL Due to Changes in Actuarial Assumptions

Assumption changes will result in an increase or decrease in the UAAL. Unlike gains and losses, which reflect actual past experience, assumptions are modified when future expectations about plan experience change. This amounts to taking the effect of future expected gains or losses and building it into the cost today. For that reason, and because of the long-term nature of assumption changes, a plan could be justified in using a longer amortization period than that used for actuarial gains or losses, perhaps in the range of 15 to 25 years.

Amortization of UAAL Due to Plan Amendments

Because plan amendments are under the control of the plan sponsor, managing contribution volatility is generally not a consideration for plan amendments. This means that the primary rationale in selecting the period is to support intergenerational equity by matching the amortization period to the demographics of the participants receiving the benefit. This leads to shorter, demographically based amortization periods. For active participants, this could be the average future working lifetime of the active participants receiving the benefit improvement, while for retirees, this could be the average life expectancy of the retired participants receiving the benefit improvement. This approach would usually result in no longer than a 15-year amortization period for benefit improvements.

An equitable amortization policy should ensure that the UAAL will be paid off in a reasonable period of time. Long amortization periods can make paying down the UAAL appear more affordable, but, because interest charges accrue and compound on the unpaid UAAL, it is prudent to set amortization periods that are not excessively long. This is especially important where level

percent of pay amortization is used.

In an effort to balance the need to pay down the current unfunded liability while managing already increasing contribution rates, the Board elected to manage the paydown of any unfunded liabilities created prior to June 30, 2013 over a 30-year closed period. In an effort to better manage intergenerational equity and to build funding discipline into the VRS policy, the Board also decided that future unfunded liabilities would be best amortized over 20-year closed periods.

With long amortization periods, the UAAL may increase during the early years of amortization period, even though contributions are being made to amortize the UAAL. This phenomenon, known as “negative amortization”, occurs only with level percent of pay amortization. This happens because, under level percent of pay amortization, the lower early payments can actually be less than interest on the outstanding balance, so that the outstanding balance increases instead of decreases. For typical public plans, this happens whenever the average amortization period is longer than approximately 20 years.

While there is nothing inherently wrong with negative amortization in the context of a public plan, stakeholders should be aware of its consequences, especially for amortization periods substantially longer than 20 years. Negative amortization is a particular concern for plans using open, or rolling, amortization periods. As described above, plans that use open/rolling amortization methods “reset” to a new amortization period every year. By contrast, a plan using a closed amortization commits to paying down the UAAL over a fixed period.

Effective with the June 30, 2013 valuation the Board has elected to amortize the legacy unfunded liability as of June 30, 2013, over a closed 30-year period. New sources of unfunded liability will be explicitly amortized over closed 20-year periods. The amortization period for the deferred contributions from the 2010-2012 biennium will remain a 10-year closed period. These amortization periods reflect a shift to closed amortization periods and tiered successive 20-year closed periods for new sources of unfunded liability. This is a change from past VRS practice of using a 20-year rolling method. Effective with the June 30, 2016 valuation the Board confirms the continuation of the amortizations put in effect June 30, 2013 for all OPEB plans, with the exception of the LODA program, which, by statute, is currently not prefunded. For the purposes of accounting disclosures under GASB 43 and 45, the LODA program will continue to use an open 30- year period. In the event a change to the statutory contribution requirements of the LODA program necessitate an amortization period, the LODA program will, at that time, explicitly amortize new sources of unfunded liability over closed 20-year periods.

Effective November 20, 2019, the Board amends this policy to clarify that amortization periods of explicit bases may be shortened in an effort to pay off unfunded liabilities of either pensions or OPEBs earlier than originally scheduled.

Effective October 18, 2022, the Board amends this policy to set the amortization period for unfunded liabilities generated by plan amendments to be 10 years rather than 20 years.

Effective October 18, 2023, the Board amends this policy for pension and OPEB plans to allow for the legacy unfunded liability, which was originally amortized over a 30-year period in 2013,

and all subsequent amortization bases established between 2014 and 2023, which were initially amortized over 20 years, to be amortized over a new 20-year period. New layers will be established in future years according to the parameters of the funding policy. The reset would exclude unfunded liabilities being amortized over a shorter 10-year period associated with new employers or benefit enhancements elected by certain political subdivision employers.

Effective July 1, 2025, the Board amends this policy for statewide pension and OPEB plans that reach a funded status of over 100% to only begin recognizing a surplus credit in the derivation of the employer contribution amount once the plan reaches a funded status of 120%- on an AVA basis. The amortization of such overfunding, over 100%, will use a rolling 20-year period.

8. Actuarial Assumptions

Setting actuarial assumptions is critical to the funding of a plan. Forward-looking assumptions about plan demographics, wages, inflation, investment returns and more drive the measurement of liabilities and costs, and therefore affect funding. Unlike the selection of funding methods, which involves a fair degree of policy discretion, the selection of assumptions should be based solely on best estimates of actual future experience. While it may be tempting to set assumptions based on how they might affect current contribution requirements, such “results-based assumption setting” should be avoided. *It is the plan’s actual experience that ultimately determines the cost of the benefits, so the assumptions should try to anticipate actual experience.* Periodic reexamination of plan assumptions is an essential part of any plan’s actuarial processes. As a general rule, many plans conduct an experience study every three to five years, an interval that should help ensure that assumptions remain appropriate in the face of evolving conditions and experience. VRS reviews assumptions every four years as required under § 51.1-124.22(A)(4).

All assumptions should be consistent with Actuarial Standards of Practice and reflect professional judgment regarding future outcomes.

VRS plans to continue experience studies once every four years as required by § 51.1-124.22(A)(4) to determine whether changes in the actuarial assumptions are appropriate.

Appendix A contains a chart summarizing some of the current assumptions used for the various benefit plans managed by the VRS.

Appendix B is RBA 2013-07-18, which documents the approval of VRS funding policy assumptions.

Appendix C is RBA 2013-11-26, which documents the approval of revisions to the VRS funding policy assumptions for political subdivisions.

Appendix D is RBA 2016-06-15, which documents the approval of VRS funding policy methods and assumptions with regard to the OPEB plans.

Appendix E is RBA 2016-06-16, which documents the Board's approval of changes to actuarial methods for certain OPEB plans.

Appendix F is RBA 2017-04-9, which documents the approval of VRS funding policy assumptions.

Appendix G is RBA 2019-10-13, which documents approval of a discount rate of 6.75% for actuarial valuations effective with the June 30, 2019 valuations.

Appendix H is RBA 2019 -11-20, which documents the approval of the use of shortened amortization periods for unfunded liabilities and maintaining prior contribution rates to assist in paying unfunded liabilities.

Appendix I is RBA 2025-06- which documents approval of method to amortize surplus funding once plans reach 100% funded status.

9. Additional Considerations

Where the Funding Policy Statement as applied to a political subdivision would, in the Plan Actuary's opinion, not be expected to maintain the plan's solvency, the Board authorizes the VRS staff, working with the Plan Actuary, to determine alternative funding requirements that would maintain the plan's solvency while also meeting the other objectives as stated in the Board's funding policy.

1. **Additional Funding Contribution** - The Additional Funding Charge is the contribution rate needed, if necessary, to allow the local system to use the plan's assumed Investment Return Rate as its Single Equivalent Interest Rate (SEIR) under GASB Statement No. 67. The additional funding contribution rate, if needed, allows for the use of the 6.75% investment return as the single equivalent investment return assumption for purposes of the GASB 67/68 statements. To determine the SEIR, the Fiduciary Net Position (FNP) must be projected into the future for as long as there are anticipated benefits payable under the plan's provisions applicable to the members and beneficiaries of the system on the Measurement Date. If the FNP is not projected to be depleted at any point in the future, the long term expected rate of return on plan investments expected to be used to finance the benefit payments may be used as the SEIR. If the FNP is projected to be depleted, an Additional Funding Charge is developed to avoid depletion.
2. **Surcharge for "At Risk" Plans** – Political subdivision plans identified as potentially "at-risk" due to low funded levels may require an additional surcharge or shortened amortization periods to bring the funding level of the plan to a sustainable level as determined by the Plan Actuary. For employers with no active covered positions who still have liabilities associated with retirees or inactive members eligible for future VRS benefits, this would include ad hoc lump sum contributions to cover the liabilities associated with former members who are still due a benefit.
3. **Limitation on Benefit Enhancements Increasing Liability** - Benefit enhancements to a political subdivision pension plan that would have the effect of increasing the plan's liabilities by reason of increases in benefits, establishment of new benefits, changing the rate of benefit

accrual, or changing the rate at which benefits become non-forfeitable may take effect during any plan year if the political subdivision's current funded ratio for such plan year would be at least 75 percent after taking into account such amendment.

In order to increase benefits in circumstances where the funded ratio would be less than 75 percent after taking into account the amendment, the political subdivision would be required to make a lump sum contribution in the amount necessary to bring the funding level to 75 percent as of the effective date of the change, in addition to any increase in annual funding due to plan enhancements.

Any accrued liability generated by the plan amendment that is not covered by the lump sum contribution will be amortized over no more than 10 years.

4. Pension Plans for New Employers –

Any new employer must have a funded status of at least 75 percent for pension benefits.

Any past service that is granted by the employer or purchased at the time the employer joins VRS must be at least 75 percent funded at the join date with the remaining amount amortized over no more than 10 years.

5. Health Insurance Credit (HIC) Elections –

Any employer (new and existing VRS employers) that elects the HIC benefit is required to pay an initial contribution equal to the greater of two years of expected benefit payments or the amount required to reach at least 25 percent funded for its HIC plan, with the remainder of the unfunded liability amortized over no more than 10 years.

In addition, Any employer (new and existing employers) that wishes to enhance the health insurance credit by electing the extra \$1.00 of coverage per year of creditable service or expand coverage to additional non-covered members is required to meet the following requirements:

- If the funded status of the plan is below 50% prior to the change, the employer must make an initial contribution equal to the full increase in the plan's liability associated with enhancing the HIC benefit.
- If the funded status of the plan is greater than 50% but below 75% prior to the change, the employer must make an initial contribution equal to 50% of the increase in the plan's liability associated with enhancing the HIC benefit, with the remaining additional liability to be amortized over 10 years.
- If the funded status of the plan is greater than 75% prior to the change, the employer must make an initial contribution in the amount necessary to keep the funded status at the 75% threshold after the change, with any remaining additional liability to be amortized over 10 years.

10. Conclusion

In funding defined benefit pension plans and OPEBs, governments must satisfy a range of objectives. In addition to the fundamental objective of funding the long-term costs of promised benefits to plan participants, governments also work to:

1. Keep employer's contributions relatively stable from year to year

2. Allocate pension costs on an equitable basis
3. Manage pension risks
4. Pay off unfunded liabilities over reasonable time periods

This Funding Policy was developed to help decision-makers understand the tradeoffs involved in reaching these goals and to document the reasoning that underlies the Board's decisions.

Adopted October 17, 2013

Amended November 14, 2013, June 7, 2016, November 15, 2017, November 20, 2019, October 18, 2022, ~~and~~ February 8, 2024, [and June 18, 2025](#).

VRS Funding Policy Statement¹

1. Introduction

A plan funding policy determines how much should be contributed each year by employers and participants to provide for the secure funding of benefits in a systematic fashion.

The principal goal of a funding policy is to ensure that future contributions along with current plan assets are sufficient to provide for all benefits expected to be paid to members and their beneficiaries when due. The funding policy should seek to manage and control future contribution volatility to the extent reasonably possible, consistent with other policy goals. The actuarially determined contribution should be calculated in a manner that fully funds the long-term costs of promised benefits, while balancing the goals of 1) keeping contributions relatively stable and 2) equitably allocating the costs over the employees' period of active service.

The current funding policy used by the VRS Board sets contribution rates using the Entry Age Normal cost method, an investment return assumption of 6.75%, an inflation assumption of 2.5%, and a closed 20-year amortization period for unfunded liabilities (Legacy unfunded liabilities as of 6/30/13 are amortized over a closed 30-year amortization period.)

Article X, § 11 of the *Constitution of Virginia* provides that the Virginia Retirement System benefits shall be funded using methods which are consistent with generally accepted actuarial principles. Until 2012, the Annual Required Contribution (ARC) as described in the Governmental Accounting Standards Board's (GASB's) Statements No. 25 and No. 27 was a de facto funding policy for many public-sector retirement systems, including the Virginia Retirement System.

The Board sets contribution rates for all local employers under this policy. However, with respect to the plans for state employees and the teacher plan, while the rates developed under the Board's policy are the certified contribution rates, the Governor and the General Assembly determine the funding that they will provide through the state budget process toward the Board certified contribution rates for the State and Teachers and other statewide OPEB plans. Beginning in FY 2013, § 51.1-145.K1 of the Code of Virginia set out guidelines for the General Assembly to follow for the funding of the contribution rates certified by the VRS Board, phasing in from approximately 67% of Board-certified rate to 100% of the Board-certified rate over the next four biennia. These statutory guidelines do not apply to funding levels for Other Postemployment Benefits (OPEBs) administered by VRS.

¹ Adopted October 17, 2013; amended November 14, 2013, June 7, 2016, November 15, 2017, November 20, 2019, October 18, 2022, October 18, 2023, February 8, 2024, and June 18, 2025

In June 2012, GASB revised public pension accounting standards and has communicated an important message in the process: accounting standards are no longer funding standards. However, GASB did not address how employers should calculate the annual required contribution (ARC). To assist state and local government employers, several national groups developed policy guidelines for funding standards. This document is the result of an extensive review of the current funding policy, industry standards and best practices, and the development and approval of funding policy assumptions effective with the June 30, 2013 valuation. A copy of Request for Board Action 2013-07-18 adopting the funding policy assumptions is attached. This Funding Policy is intended to provide guidance to future Boards on how to set employer contribution rates and support the plan's primary goals of contribution and budgetary predictability, accumulation of required assets over time to provide for all benefits earned and achievement of intergenerational equity.

In June 2015, GASB adopted two new statements regarding OPEBs. GASB statement 74, *Financial Reporting for Postemployment Benefits Other than Pension Plans*, and GASB statement 75, *Accounting and Financial Reporting for Postemployment Benefits Other than Pensions*. These statements replace GASB 43 and GASB 45. As was the case with GASB 67 and 68, these new statements represent a significant change to the methods used to account for postemployment benefits and provide for a clear separation between accounting for and funding of OPEBs. The new standards require the adoption of a new funding policy for OPEB plans. The current VRS funding policy has been modified to accommodate funding requirements for the VRS OPEB plans.

The VRS OPEB plans include the Health Insurance Credit Program, Group Life Insurance Program, the Virginia Sickness and Disability Program (VSDP), the Virginia Local Disability Program (VLDP) and the Long Term Care benefits associated with the VSDP and VLDP. The Line of Duty Act Fund is also a defined benefit OPEB plan, although it is not a benefit exclusively for VRS members.²

² As of April 2016 all VRS OPEBs already incorporate the actuarial methods outlined in the Funding Policy, with the following exceptions:

- Health Insurance Credit Program for Political Subdivisions will incorporate a five-year asset smoothing method for funding valuations effective with the June 30, 2016 actuarial valuation.
- The Long Term Care valuation will incorporate the Entry-Age Normal cost method and five-year smoothing method for funding valuations effective with the June 30, 2016 actuarial valuation.
- Line of Duty Act Program (LODA) is currently not prefunded and as set forth in the *Code* shall be funded on a current disbursement basis or in other words is considered a "pay-as-you-go" plan. As such, the plan has no unfunded liabilities and uses market value of assets for valuation purposes. In the event that the General Assembly takes action to begin prefunding this program, the Board of Trustees would move to adopt the various funding provisions contained in this document including moving the program to a five-year asset smoothing method for funding valuations effective with any decision to prefund the LODA program.

These changes were approved by the Board of Trustees at its June 7, 2016 meeting, and were incorporated into this amended Funding Policy. Where a particular actuarial method was already in use, the Funding Policy notes that the Board confirms the actuarial methods for OPEBs.

The Funding Policy addresses the following general policy objectives:

- Ensure funding of plans is based on actuarially determined contributions;
- Build funding discipline into the policy to ensure promised benefits can be paid;
- Maintain intergenerational equity so the cost of employee benefits is paid by the generation of individuals who receive services;
- Make employer costs a consistent percentage of payroll; and
- Require clear reporting to show how and when plans will be adequately funded.

This document serves as the Funding Policy for VRS. It has been prepared by VRS in collaboration with the Board and the VRS Plan Actuary and is effective as of the June 30, 2013 valuation, and modified to accommodate the OPEB plans effective as of the June 30, 2016 valuation.

2. Authority

The Virginia Retirement System is administered in accordance with Title 51.1, chapters 1, 2, 2.1, 3 and 4 of the *Code of Virginia*. The contribution to be paid by members of VRS is fixed at a level that covers only part of the cost of accruing benefits. The balance of the cost is paid by employers within the Trust Fund (the “Fund”).

The OPEB plans are administered in accordance with Title 51.1, chapters 5, 11, 11.1, and 14 of the *Code of Virginia*. The cost associated with OPEBs is generally borne by the employer and benefits are paid from the various trust funds. An exception to this practice is the Group Life Insurance Program. The Board determines the amount each insured shall contribute for the cost of insurance and by statute this amount is capped at \$0.70 per month for each \$1,000 of annual salary. Each employer determines whether this cost will be paid by the member or funded by the employer. The balance of the cost is paid by employers within the Fund. The Group Life Insurance plan, however, is a cost-sharing plan so all employers are charged the same rate.

The Funding Policy focuses on the pace at which these liabilities are funded and, in so far as is practical, the measures to ensure that employers pay for their own liabilities.

The Funding Policy is authorized by a framework that includes:

- Article X, § 11 of the *Constitution of Virginia*
- Title 51.1 of the *Code of Virginia*

This is the framework within which the VRS Plan Actuary carries out valuations to set employer contribution rates and provide recommendations to the Board when other funding decisions are required. The Funding Policy applies to all employers participating in the Fund.

The methods and assumptions used in the VRS funding policy are periodically reviewed as part of the quadrennial experience study as required under § 51.1-124.22(A)(4). As such, the content of this document may be updated to reflect changes approved by the VRS Board of Trustees.

3. Contributions

The Funding Policy provides for periodic employer contributions set at actuarially determined rates in accordance with recognized actuarial principles (§51.1-145(A)). Originally based on parameters set out in GASB 25/27 and GASB 43/45, the contribution should include the employer's normal cost and provisions for amortizing any unfunded actuarial accrued liability (UAAL) in accordance with the requirements originally defined in GASB 25/27 and GASB 43/45.

Member and employer contributions for retirement are required by §§ 51.1-144 and -145 of the *Code of Virginia*. Chapters 5, 11, 11.1, and 14 of Title 51.1 of the *Code of Virginia* and the applicable provisions in each year's Appropriation Act relate to contribution requirements for OPEB plans administered by VRS.

Employer contributions are normally made up of two main elements³:

- a) the estimated cost of future benefits being accrued, referred to as the "normal cost"; and
- b) an adjustment for the funding position of accrued benefits relative to the Fund's actuarially adjusted assets, or the "amortization payment UAAL." If there is a surplus there may be a contribution reduction; if there is a deficit, there will be a contribution addition, with the amount of surplus or deficit being spread over a number of years.

Items a) and b) above are then combined and expressed as a percentage of covered payroll.

Employer contribution rates are set each biennium and are in effect for the entire biennium. Valuations in the "off" years are for informational purposes only. Generally, employers with well-funded pension plans consistently pay their annual required contribution in full.

Where this process as applied to a political subdivision would, in the Plan Actuary's opinion, not be expected to maintain the plan's solvency, the VRS staff, working with the Plan Actuary, may determine alternative funding requirements that would maintain the political subdivision's solvency while also meeting the other objectives of this Funding Policy Statement. For employers with no active members who still have retirees or inactive members eligible for future VRS benefits, this includes ad hoc payments that may be necessary to cover future benefits if employer assets are insufficient to cover future cash flow needs.

With respect to statewide plans, if unfunded liabilities exist in a plan, the Board may recommend alternative contribution rates in excess of the actuarially determined rates if opportunities exist to accelerate paydown of unfunded liabilities. Examples of alternative rates could potentially include approaches such as maintaining rates from the prior year if rates drop in subsequent rate setting or maintaining a higher level contribution rate until a certain funded status is achieved.

³ Contributions also include administrative expenses.

4. Funding Target

VRS operates the same target funding level for all ongoing employers of 100% of its accrued liabilities valued on an ongoing basis. This means that contribution rates are set with the intent of funding 100% of a member's benefits during a member's working lifetime. The Line of Duty Act Fund is an exception, as employer contributions are currently determined by the Board on a current disbursement basis per statute. As such, the target funding level for all ongoing employers for LODA is at or near 0% of its accrued liabilities.

Funded Status is defined as the ratio of the actuarial value of assets to the value placed on the benefits, or plan's liabilities, by the VRS Plan Actuary. The VRS Plan Actuary reports on the funded status of each plan in the system in each annual valuation.

5. Actuarial Cost Method

The actuarial cost method is the means by which the total present value of all future benefits for current active and retired participants is allocated to each year of service (i.e., the "normal cost" for each year) including past years (i.e., the "actuarial accrued liability"). There are several available actuarial cost methods, but most governmental plans use the entry age normal (EAN) cost method while a significant minority use the projected unit credit (PUC) method. In the past, VRS has used the EAN method for most of the plans it administers.

Although the EAN and PUC cost methods are both considered reasonable under actuarial standards of practice and GASB 25 and GASB 43 in most circumstances, it is important for plan stakeholders to understand the implications of either method. EAN tends to recognize actuarial liabilities sooner than PUC, and it also tends to result in a more stable normal cost pattern over time for pay-related benefits, even in the face of demographic shifts. The more stable normal cost pattern over time should help in reducing the risk of higher levels of future contributions.

Under the PUC method, the plan's normal cost is the present value of the benefits "earned" during the year, but based on projected pay levels at retirement. For an individual participant, the PUC normal costs increase each year because the present value increases as the participant gets a year closer to retirement. In contrast, under the EAN method, the normal cost is specifically determined to remain a level percentage of pay over each participant's career.

Because EAN normal cost rates are level for each participant, the normal cost pattern for the entire plan under EAN is more stable for pay-related benefits in the face of demographic shifts in the workforce. It is this normal cost stability that makes the EAN method the preferred funding method for pay-related benefits of public plans.

GASB has reaffirmed its decision to require governmental pension plans to base their financial statement reporting on the EAN method. For comparability, GASB has also decided to require governmental OPEB plans, which may not provide pay-related benefits, to base their financial statement reporting on the EAN method.

Effective with the June 30, 2013 valuation, the Board has adopted the Entry-Age Normal cost method in deriving plan liabilities. This is a continuation of the Board's existing cost method. Effective with the June 30, 2016 valuation, the Board has adopted the Entry-Age Normal cost method for all OPEB plans.

6. Asset Valuation Method

Because investment markets are volatile and because pension plans typically have long investment horizons, asset-smoothing techniques can be an effective tool to manage contribution volatility and provide a more consistent measure of plan funding over time. Asset-smoothing methods reduce the effect of short-term market volatility on contributions, while still tracking the overall movement of the market value of plan assets, by recognizing the effects of investment gains and losses over a period of years. This is also in keeping with § 51.1-145(A), which requires that contribution rates be determined in a manner so as to remain relatively level from year to year.

Determining the ideal asset-smoothing policy involves balancing the two goals of ensuring fairness across generations and controlling contribution volatility for plan sponsors. A very long smoothing period will greatly reduce contribution volatility, but this may mean the impact of recent investment experience is deferred to future generations. However, a very short smoothing period (or none at all) may result in contribution requirements that fluctuate dramatically from year to year.

Such volatility may also result from an asset-smoothing method that constrains how far the smoothed value differs from the market value by imposing a market value "corridor." A corridor is typically expressed as a ratio of the smoothed value of assets to the market value of assets. Actuarial standards of practice and related actuarial studies seek to identify asset-smoothing methods that achieve a reasonable balance between how long it takes to recognize investment experience (the smoothing period) and how much smoothing is allowed in the meantime (the corridor). The resulting smoothing periods are in the range of three to 10 years (with five the most common) and a corridor wide enough to allow the smoothing method to function except in the most extreme conditions.

While the smoothing period for governmental plans is not limited by federal laws or regulations, the Actuarial Standards Board has set out principles for asset smoothing in ASOP No. 44. Under these principles, when a smoothed asset valuation method is used, the actuary should select a method so that the smoothed asset values fall within a reasonable range of the corresponding market values and any differences between the actuarial value and market value of assets should be recognized within a reasonable period.

Effective with the June 30, 2013 valuation, the Board has adopted a five-year asset smoothing period, which also includes a corridor that will restrict the smoothed value from falling below 80% of the true market value or exceeding 120% of the true market value. This is a continuation of the Board's existing asset valuation method. Effective with the June 30, 2016 valuation, the Board has adopted the same asset smoothing period and corridors for the OPEB plans, with the exception of the LODA program, which, by statute, does not prefund benefits. In the event a change to the statutory contribution requirements

of the LODA program necessitate an asset valuation method, the same asset smoothing period and corridors should be applied to the LODA program at that time.

7. Amortization Method

Amortization of unfunded liabilities is a major component of the annual contribution. Amortization policies involve a balance between controlling contribution volatility and ensuring a fair allocation of costs among generations. The Plan Actuary uses the specific amortization periods adopted by the Board for all employers when developing a method over which to pay down any unfunded liabilities that may exist. The amortization period should allow adjustments to contributions to be made over periods that appropriately balance intergenerational equity against the goal of keeping contributions level as a percentage of payroll over time as required by § 51.1-145.

Amortization of the unfunded actuarial accrued liability (UAAL) determines how current and future UAAL will be paid off or “amortized,” and so includes how changes in benefits or actuarial assumptions that affect the actuarial accrued liability should be funded over time. Even more than with asset smoothing methods, amortization policies involve a balance between controlling contribution volatility and ensuring a fair allocation of costs among generations. Longer amortization periods help keep contributions stable, but excessively long periods may inappropriately shift costs to future generations. In seeking to achieve an appropriate balance between these two important policy goals, a comprehensive amortization policy will involve the following distinct elements:

- Payment basis
- Payment structure
- Amortization period

A. Payment Basis: Level Dollar vs. Level Percent of Pay

One of the first considerations is whether amortization payments will be set at a level dollar amount (similar to a home mortgage) or as a level percent of pay. The great majority of public pension plans use level-percent-of-pay amortization where the payments toward the UAAL increase each year at the same rate as is assumed for payroll growth. Compared with the level-dollar approach, payments start at a lower dollar amount under the level percent approach, but then increase in proportion to payroll. The level-dollar method is more conservative in that it funds the UAAL faster in the early years. However, the level-percent-of-pay approach is consistent with the pay-related structure of benefits under most public plans. Moreover, because the normal cost is also determined as a level percent of pay, level percent amortization provides a total cost that remains level as a percentage of pay. In contrast, level-dollar amortization of UAAL will produce a total cost that decreases as a percentage of pay over the amortization period. A plan should balance these considerations in choosing between level-percent and level-dollar amortization. Section 51.1-145(A) of the *Code of Virginia* provides in part that “[t]he total annual employer contribution for each employer, expressed as a percentage of the annual membership payroll, shall be determined in a manner so as to remain relatively level from year to year....”

Effective with the June 30, 2013 valuation the Board has elected to use the level percent of pay payment basis. This is consistent with historical VRS practice. Effective with the June 30, 2016 valuation the Board confirms the continued use of the level percent of pay payment basis put in effect June 30, 2013 for the OPEB plans when an actuarially determined contribution is calculated.

B. Payment Structure

Amortization policy must also consider how amortization payments should be structured. For example, a determination needs to be made as to whether the entire UAAL should be aggregated and amortized as a single amount, or whether the plan should track individual bases for each source of UAAL or surplus each year, and amortize these separately. Amortization periods can be fixed, open or “rolling” (with the amortization period restarted each year).

Although use of a single amortization base provides simplicity, use of separate amortization bases for each source of UAAL has the advantage of tracking separately each new portion of UAAL and providing another mechanism to stabilize contribution rates. Under this approach, over time there will be a series of bases, one for each year’s gain or loss as well as for any other changes in UAAL. This provides useful information to stakeholders, as they can view the history of the sources of a plan’s UAAL in any year. The use of separate amortization bases should help balance the annual ups and downs in the UAAL. In practice, the number of bases will be limited by the length of the amortization period as eventually bases will be fully amortized, and so will no longer be part of the UAAL.

Fixed amortization periods identify a date certain by which each portion of the UAAL will be funded. This can be contrasted with open or rolling amortization, whereby the plan “resets” its amortization period every year. This is analogous to a homeowner who refinances his mortgage each year. Although both methods are common in current practice, fixed amortization periods have the advantage of providing stakeholders with a clearer understanding of the ultimate funding target (full funding) and the path to get there. It is the structure required for private sector pensions, and is increasingly common for public pension plans.

Effective with the June 30, 2013 valuation the Board has elected to use individual bases for each source of UAAL or surplus each year and to use fixed amortization periods rather than open or rolling periods. This is a change from past VRS practice but is consistent with industry best practices. Effective with the June 30, 2016 valuation the Board confirms the continued use of individual bases for each source of UAAL or surplus each year and the use of fixed amortization periods rather than open or rolling periods put in effect June 30, 2013 for all OPEB plans, with the exception of the LODA program, which, by statute, is currently not prefunded. For the purposes of accounting disclosures under GASB 43 and 45, the LODA program will continue to use an open period. In the event a change to the statutory contribution requirements of the LODA program necessitate a payment structure, individual bases for each source of UAAL or surplus each year and fixed amortization periods, rather than open or rolling periods, will be used by the LODA program at that time.

C. Amortization period

Amortization period is a determination of the appropriate period of time over which amortization should occur. The answer can depend on the source of the UAAL being amortized, as discussed below:

UAAL Due to Actuarial Gains/ Losses

Actuarial gains and losses arise when there is a difference between the actuary's estimates (assumptions) and the actual experience of the plan. They can result from demographic experience (e.g., the number of new retirees is higher or lower than expected), investment experience (e.g., returns that are higher or lower than expected), or other economic experience (e.g., payroll growth that is higher or lower than expected). In determining the appropriate period for amortizing gains and losses, plan sponsors should strike a balance between reducing contribution volatility (which would lead to longer amortization periods) and maintaining a closer relationship between contributions and routine changes in the UAAL (which would lead to shorter amortization periods). For many plans, amortization periods in the range of 15 to 20 years for gains and losses would assist plans in achieving a balance between these objectives.

UAAL Due to Changes in Actuarial Assumptions

Assumption changes will result in an increase or decrease in the UAAL. Unlike gains and losses, which reflect actual past experience, assumptions are modified when future expectations about plan experience change. This amounts to taking the effect of future expected gains or losses and building it into the cost today. For that reason, and because of the long-term nature of assumption changes, a plan could be justified in using a longer amortization period than that used for actuarial gains or losses, perhaps in the range of 15 to 25 years.

Amortization of UAAL Due to Plan Amendments

Because plan amendments are under the control of the plan sponsor, managing contribution volatility is generally not a consideration for plan amendments. This means that the primary rationale in selecting the period is to support intergenerational equity by matching the amortization period to the demographics of the participants receiving the benefit. This leads to shorter, demographically based amortization periods. For active participants, this could be the average future working lifetime of the active participants receiving the benefit improvement, while for retirees, this could be the average life expectancy of the retired participants receiving the benefit improvement. This approach would usually result in no longer than a 15-year amortization period for benefit improvements.

An equitable amortization policy should ensure that the UAAL will be paid off in a reasonable period of time. Long amortization periods can make paying down the UAAL appear more affordable, but, because interest charges accrue and compound on the unpaid UAAL, it is prudent to set amortization periods that are not excessively long. This is especially important where level

percent of pay amortization is used.

In an effort to balance the need to pay down the current unfunded liability while managing already increasing contribution rates, the Board elected to manage the paydown of any unfunded liabilities created prior to June 30, 2013 over a 30-year closed period. In an effort to better manage intergenerational equity and to build funding discipline into the VRS policy, the Board also decided that future unfunded liabilities would be best amortized over 20-year closed periods.

With long amortization periods, the UAAL may increase during the early years of amortization period, even though contributions are being made to amortize the UAAL. This phenomenon, known as “negative amortization”, occurs only with level percent of pay amortization. This happens because, under level percent of pay amortization, the lower early payments can actually be less than interest on the outstanding balance, so that the outstanding balance increases instead of decreases. For typical public plans, this happens whenever the average amortization period is longer than approximately 20 years.

While there is nothing inherently wrong with negative amortization in the context of a public plan, stakeholders should be aware of its consequences, especially for amortization periods substantially longer than 20 years. Negative amortization is a particular concern for plans using open, or rolling, amortization periods. As described above, plans that use open/rolling amortization methods “reset” to a new amortization period every year. By contrast, a plan using a closed amortization commits to paying down the UAAL over a fixed period.

Effective with the June 30, 2013 valuation the Board has elected to amortize the legacy unfunded liability as of June 30, 2013, over a closed 30-year period. New sources of unfunded liability will be explicitly amortized over closed 20-year periods. The amortization period for the deferred contributions from the 2010-2012 biennium will remain a 10-year closed period. These amortization periods reflect a shift to closed amortization periods and tiered successive 20-year closed periods for new sources of unfunded liability. This is a change from past VRS practice of using a 20-year rolling method. Effective with the June 30, 2016 valuation the Board confirms the continuation of the amortizations put in effect June 30, 2013 for all OPEB plans, with the exception of the LODA program, which, by statute, is currently not prefunded. For the purposes of accounting disclosures under GASB 43 and 45, the LODA program will continue to use an open 30- year period. In the event a change to the statutory contribution requirements of the LODA program necessitate an amortization period, the LODA program will, at that time, explicitly amortize new sources of unfunded liability over closed 20-year periods.

Effective November 20, 2019, the Board amends this policy to clarify that amortization periods of explicit bases may be shortened in an effort to pay off unfunded liabilities of either pensions or OPEBs earlier than originally scheduled.

Effective October 18, 2022, the Board amends this policy to set the amortization period for unfunded liabilities generated by plan amendments to be 10 years rather than 20 years.

Effective October 18, 2023, the Board amends this policy for pension and OPEB plans to allow for the legacy unfunded liability, which was originally amortized over a 30-year period in 2013,

and all subsequent amortization bases established between 2014 and 2023, which were initially amortized over 20 years, to be amortized over a new 20-year period. New layers will be established in future years according to the parameters of the funding policy. The reset would exclude unfunded liabilities being amortized over a shorter 10-year period associated with new employers or benefit enhancements elected by certain political subdivision employers.

Effective July 1, 2025, the Board amends this policy for statewide pension and OPEB plans that reach a funded status of over 100% to only begin recognizing a surplus credit in the derivation of the employer contribution amount once the plan reaches a funded status of 120% on an AVA basis. The amortization of such overfunding, over 100%, will use a rolling 20-year period.

8. Actuarial Assumptions

Setting actuarial assumptions is critical to the funding of a plan. Forward-looking assumptions about plan demographics, wages, inflation, investment returns and more drive the measurement of liabilities and costs, and therefore affect funding. Unlike the selection of funding methods, which involves a fair degree of policy discretion, the selection of assumptions should be based solely on best estimates of actual future experience. While it may be tempting to set assumptions based on how they might affect current contribution requirements, such “results-based assumption setting” should be avoided. *It is the plan’s actual experience that ultimately determines the cost of the benefits, so the assumptions should try to anticipate actual experience.* Periodic reexamination of plan assumptions is an essential part of any plan’s actuarial processes. As a general rule, many plans conduct an experience study every three to five years, an interval that should help ensure that assumptions remain appropriate in the face of evolving conditions and experience. VRS reviews assumptions every four years as required under § 51.1-124.22(A)(4).

All assumptions should be consistent with Actuarial Standards of Practice and reflect professional judgment regarding future outcomes.

VRS plans to continue experience studies once every four years as required by § 51.1-124.22(A)(4) to determine whether changes in the actuarial assumptions are appropriate.

Appendix A contains a chart summarizing some of the current assumptions used for the various benefit plans managed by the VRS.

Appendix B is RBA 2013-07-18, which documents the approval of VRS funding policy assumptions.

Appendix C is RBA 2013-11-26, which documents the approval of revisions to the VRS funding policy assumptions for political subdivisions.

Appendix D is RBA 2016-06-15, which documents the approval of VRS funding policy methods and assumptions with regard to the OPEB plans.

Appendix E is RBA 2016-06-16, which documents the Board’s approval of changes to actuarial methods for certain OPEB plans.

Appendix F is RBA 2017-04-9, which documents the approval of VRS funding policy assumptions.

Appendix G is RBA 2019-10-13, which documents approval of a discount rate of 6.75% for actuarial valuations effective with the June 30, 2019 valuations.

Appendix H is RBA 2019 -11-20, which documents the approval of the use of shortened amortization periods for unfunded liabilities and maintaining prior contribution rates to assist in paying unfunded liabilities.

Appendix I is RBA 2025-06-, which documents approval of method to amortize surplus funding once plans reach 100% funded status.

9. Additional Considerations

Where the Funding Policy Statement as applied to a political subdivision would, in the Plan Actuary's opinion, not be expected to maintain the plan's solvency, the Board authorizes the VRS staff, working with the Plan Actuary, to determine alternative funding requirements that would maintain the plan's solvency while also meeting the other objectives as stated in the Board's funding policy.

1. **Additional Funding Contribution** - The Additional Funding Charge is the contribution rate needed, if necessary, to allow the local system to use the plan's assumed Investment Return Rate as its Single Equivalent Interest Rate (SEIR) under GASB Statement No. 67. The additional funding contribution rate, if needed, allows for the use of the 6.75% investment return as the single equivalent investment return assumption for purposes of the GASB 67/68 statements. To determine the SEIR, the Fiduciary Net Position (FNP) must be projected into the future for as long as there are anticipated benefits payable under the plan's provisions applicable to the members and beneficiaries of the system on the Measurement Date. If the FNP is not projected to be depleted at any point in the future, the long term expected rate of return on plan investments expected to be used to finance the benefit payments may be used as the SEIR. If the FNP is projected to be depleted, an Additional Funding Charge is developed to avoid depletion.
2. **Surcharge for "At Risk" Plans** – Political subdivision plans identified as potentially "at-risk" due to low funded levels may require an additional surcharge or shortened amortization periods to bring the funding level of the plan to a sustainable level as determined by the Plan Actuary. For employers with no active covered positions who still have liabilities associated with retirees or inactive members eligible for future VRS benefits, this would include ad hoc lump sum contributions to cover the liabilities associated with former members who are still due a benefit.
3. **Limitation on Benefit Enhancements Increasing Liability** - Benefit enhancements to a political subdivision pension plan that would have the effect of increasing the plan's liabilities by reason of increases in benefits, establishment of new benefits, changing the rate of benefit accrual, or changing the rate at which benefits become non-forfeitable may take effect during any plan year if the political subdivision's current funded ratio for such plan year would be at least 75 percent after taking into account such amendment.

In order to increase benefits in circumstances where the funded ratio would be less than 75 percent after taking into account the amendment, the political subdivision would be required to make a lump sum contribution in the amount necessary to bring the funding level to 75 percent as of the effective date of the change, in addition to any increase in annual funding due to plan enhancements.

Any accrued liability generated by the plan amendment that is not covered by the lump sum contribution will be amortized over no more than 10 years.

4. Pension Plans for New Employers –

Any new employer must have a funded status of at least 75 percent for pension benefits.

Any past service that is granted by the employer or purchased at the time the employer joins VRS must be at least 75 percent funded at the join date with the remaining amount amortized over no more than 10 years.

5. Health Insurance Credit (HIC) Elections –

Any employer (new and existing VRS employers) that elects the HIC benefit is required to pay an initial contribution equal to the greater of two years of expected benefit payments or the amount required to reach at least 25 percent funded for its HIC plan, with the remainder of the unfunded liability amortized over no more than 10 years.

In addition, Any employer (new and existing employers) that wishes to enhance the health insurance credit by electing the extra \$1.00 of coverage per year of creditable service or expand coverage to additional non-covered members is required to meet the following requirements:

- If the funded status of the plan is below 50% prior to the change, the employer must make an initial contribution equal to the full increase in the plan's liability associated with enhancing the HIC benefit.
- If the funded status of the plan is greater than 50% but below 75% prior to the change, the employer must make an initial contribution equal to 50% of the increase in the plan's liability associated with enhancing the HIC benefit, with the remaining additional liability to be amortized over 10 years.
- If the funded status of the plan is greater than 75% prior to the change, the employer must make an initial contribution in the amount necessary to keep the funded status at the 75% threshold after the change, with any remaining additional liability to be amortized over 10 years.

10. Conclusion

In funding defined benefit pension plans and OPEBs, governments must satisfy a range of objectives. In addition to the fundamental objective of funding the long-term costs of promised benefits to plan participants, governments also work to:

1. Keep employer's contributions relatively stable from year to year
2. Allocate pension costs on an equitable basis
3. Manage pension risks

4. Pay off unfunded liabilities over reasonable time periods

This Funding Policy was developed to help decision-makers understand the tradeoffs involved in reaching these goals and to document the reasoning that underlies the Board's decisions.

Adopted October 17, 2013

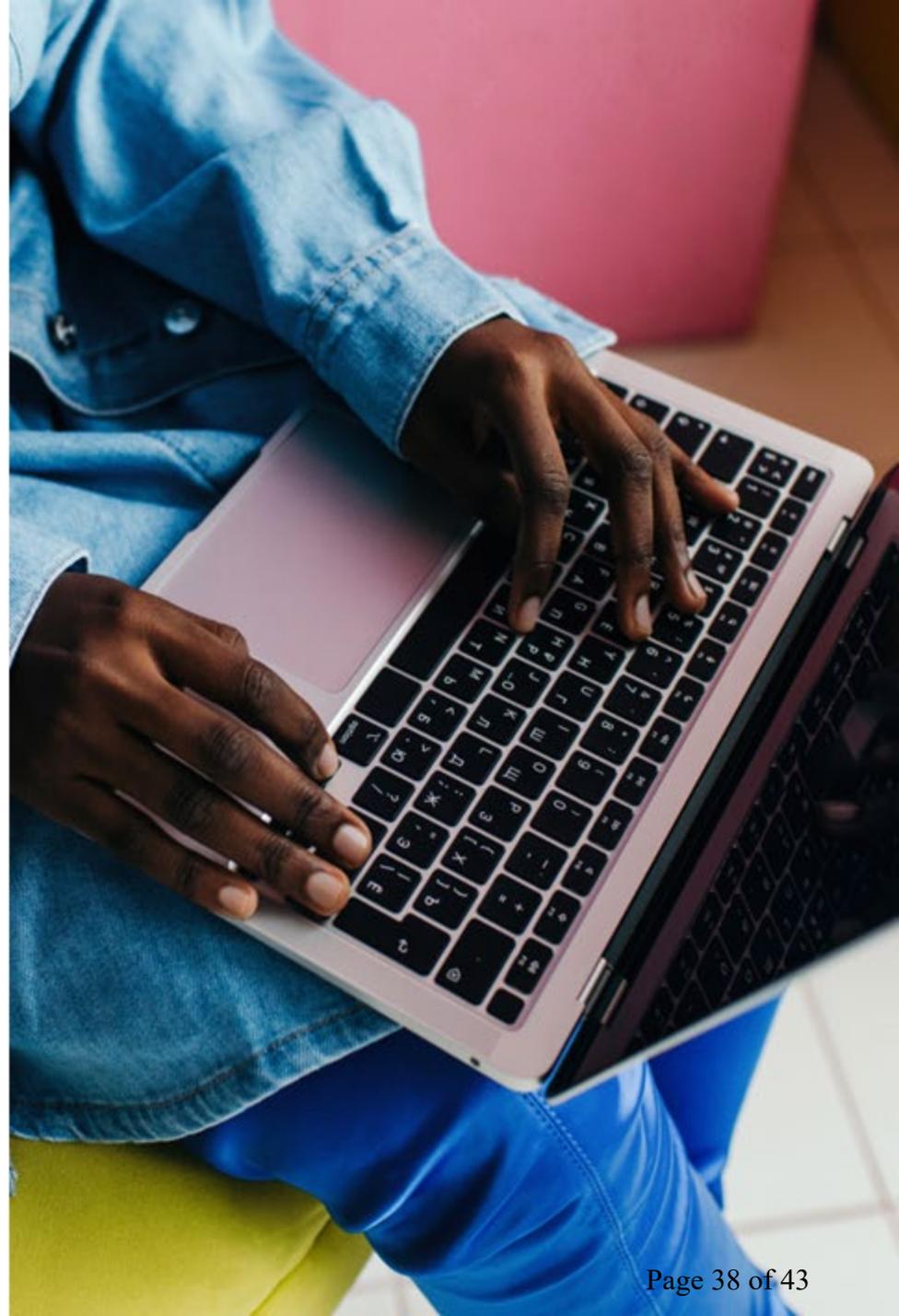
Amended November 14, 2013, June 7, 2016, November 15, 2017, November 20, 2019, October 18, 2022, February 8, 2024, and June 18, 2025.



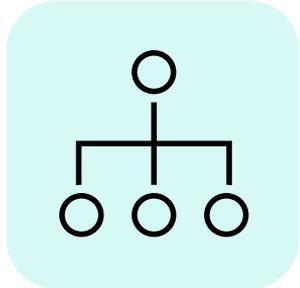
Factors Study – Early Retirement Reduction Factors (ERFs)

Agenda

- Factors Study
- What are ERFs?
- Early Retirements in VRS Plans
- Next Steps



Factors Study



- First phase was optional form factors which were implemented in August 2024:
 - Joint and Survivor
 - Partial Lump-Sum Option (PLOP)
 - Advanced Pension Option (APO)



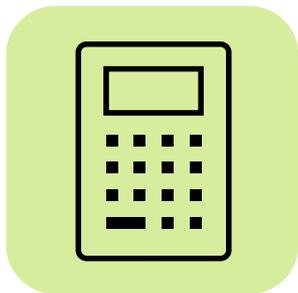
- Second phase is to review early retirement reduction factors

What Are Early Retirement Reduction Factors?



- Pension plans are generally designed to produce a benefit that starts at normal retirement age:
 - Plan 1 – Age 65 or any age after 50 if 30 years of service
 - Plan 2/Hybrid Retirement Plan – Social Security normal retirement age (SSNRA) or any age if age plus service equals 90
- However, VRS plans allow you to retire earlier than those ages if you meet certain criteria:
 - Plan 1 – Age 55 with five years of service or age 50 with 10 years of service
 - Plan 2/Hybrid – Age 60 with five years of service

What Are Early Retirement Reduction Factors?



- The *Code of Virginia* states that members who meet certain eligibilities may commence benefits prior to normal retirement.
- VRS applies factors to a member's benefit to offset the increased cost to the retirement plan of paying benefits for a longer period.
- This reduction in benefit is what is called an early retirement factor.
- The current reduction in benefits is calculated based on the length of time before the normal retirement age, the member's age and the amount of service credit.

Early Retirements by Benefit Tier

Retirements

General Retirees

Benefit Tier	Unreduced	Reduced	Total	% with ERF
Plan 1	124,382	71,418	195,800	36.5%
Plan 2	3,294	4,109	7,403	55.5%
Hybrid	977	961	1,938	49.6%
Total	128,653	76,488	205,141	37.3%

Hazardous Duty Retirees

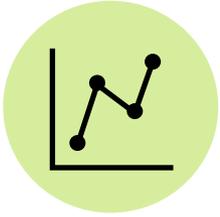
Benefit Tier	Unreduced	Reduced	Total	% with ERF
Plan 1	13,730	3,794	17,524	21.7%
Plan 2	340	236	576	41.0%
Total	14,070	4,030	18,100	22.3%

Total Retirees

Benefit Tier	Unreduced	Reduced	Total	% with ERF
Plan 1	138,112	75,212	213,324	35.3%
Plan 2	3,634	4,345	7,979	54.5%
Hybrid	977	961	1,938	49.6%
Total	142,723	80,518	223,241	36.1%

- Approximately 35% of Plan 1 members retired with a reduced benefit.
- Nearly 55% of Plan 2 members are retiring with a reduced benefit, while approximately half of hybrid plan retirees are retiring earlier than normal retirement age.
- Increase in early retirements with Plan 2 and hybrid plan likely due to increase in retirement eligibility age for these benefit tiers.

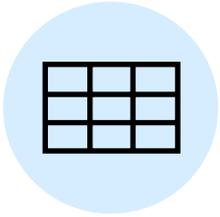
Next Steps



- Update early retirement analysis to include fiscal year 2025 data.



- Analyze factors by benefit tier.



- Compare VRS factors to other Public Sector plans.



- Develop proposal on whether update is needed on early retirement reduction factors.