# 2021 Legislative Summary

Virginia Retirement System

This summary provides an overview of bills passed during the 2021 session of the General Assembly that affect the Virginia Retirement System (VRS). For full details on each bill, enter the bill number in the search field on the Legislative Information System (LIS). On the bill's summary page, select the link to the PDF version.

## VRS-RELATED BILLS

**House Bill 2181**
**Senate Bill 1251**

### Makes VRS-Requested Technical Amendments

Technical amendments to provisions of the *Code of Virginia* relating to VRS include:

- Changing the required minimum distribution provisions to reflect recent changes in federal law.

- Conforming terminology related to disability retirement.

**House Bill 2312**
**Senate Bill 1406**

### Creates the Virginia Cannabis Control Authority

The Virginia Cannabis Control Authority will fall under the Secretary of Public Safety and Homeland Security.

- Employees of the authority will be VRS members. Some members will be eligible for VaLORS benefits.

- Special agents of the new authority are eligible for Line of Duty Act (LODA) benefits.

- The CEO and Special Assistant are appointees, with the option to join the Optional Retirement Plan for Political Appointees (ORPPA).

- Sections of the bill that impact VRS become effective July 1, 2021.

**House Bill 2322**
**Senate Bill 1469**

### Establishes Opioid Abatement Authority and Fund

VRS will manage and invest the Opioid Abatement Fund alongside the VRS Trust Fund.

# WORKERS' COMPENSATION BILLS

**House Bill 1818**
**Senate Bill 1275**

**Adds Hypertension and Heart Disease Presumptions for Eligible EMS Personnel**

Makes salaried or volunteer emergency medical services (EMS) personnel eligible for the hypertension and heart disease presumptions.

- Covers salaried or volunteer EMS personnel, as defined in §32.1-111.1, employed by any locality that has legally adopted a resolution declaring it will provide one or more presumptions under the subsection.

- The legislation is prospective only, effective July 1, 2021.

**House Bill 2207**
**Senate Bill 1375**

**Adds COVID-19 as Workers' Compensation Presumption**

COVID-19 will be considered a presumption for the following:

- Firefighters

- Emergency medical services personnel

- Law enforcement officers

- Correctional officers

- Regional jail officers

The presumption covers death or disability on or after July 1, 2020 (extending through December 31, 2021).

# OTHER LEGISLATION

**Senate Joint**
**Resolution 308**

**Study COVID-19's Impact on School Systems**

Directs the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission to study the impact of COVID-19 on Virginia's public schools, students and school employees, including, among other things, determining the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on staffing levels, including the impact of teacher and school employee retirements and resignations on delivery of instruction and the ability of local school boards to fully staff their needs. The study will also examine employment levels and local budgets.

# STATE BUDGET

**Item 277**

**Repayment of Deferred Contributions**

Provides $100 million to VRS in fiscal year 2021 to reduce unfunded liabilities of the teacher retirement plan and state health insurance credit:

- $61.3 million will pay off the balance of deferred contributions in the teacher plan a year earlier than expected.
- $38.7 million will increase funding levels of the health insurance credit program for state employees.

**Item 492 H**

**Require Annual Report on LODA Eligibility Determination**

Requires VRS and the Virginia Department of Human Resource Management to provide an annual report to the governor and General Assembly that includes statistics and demographic details related to LODA eligibility determinations.