

**SOUTH CAROLINA STATE UNIVERSITY
PERSONNEL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL**

SECTION: Employee Services and Benefits	Section: V
	Subject: A.4
SUBJECT: Retirement - Creditable Service	Effective: 06/05/09
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THE LANGUAGE USED IN THIS DOCUMENT DOES NOT CREATE AN EMPLOYMENT CONTRACT BETWEEN THE EMPLOYEE AND SOUTH CAROLINA STATE UNIVERSITY. THIS DOCUMENT DOES NOT CREATE ANY CONTRACTUAL RIGHTS OR ENTITLEMENTS. THE UNIVERSITY RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REVISE THE CONTENT OF THIS DOCUMENT, IN WHOLE OR IN PART. NO PROMISES OR ASSURANCES, WHETHER WRITTEN OR ORAL, WHICH ARE CONTRARY TO OR INCONSISTENT WITH THE TERMS OF THIS PARAGRAPH CREATE ANY CONTRACT OF EMPLOYMENT.

CREDITABLE SERVICE

The South Carolina Retirement System (SCRS) and the South Carolina Police Officers Retirement System (PORS) allow members to establish certain types of service credit, as described below.

A. Military Service

An employee may establish up to six years of service credit for any period of military service for which he or she does not already have service credit. This includes service in the United States Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, Coast Guard, Select Reserves, and Army or Air National Guard. The cost is 16% of current earnable compensation or career highest fiscal year earnable compensation, whichever is greater, for each year purchased. If an employee has established State ORP service in SCRS, the career highest salary includes his or her salary in either State ORP or SCRS. The employee's discharge from service must be under conditions other than dishonorable. Under guidelines set forth by the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA), a member may either arrange in advance with his or her employer to continue contributing to his or her account while on active duty military leave, or make contributions upon return to covered employment during a period not to exceed three times the length of military service or five years, whichever is less. Military service credit may not overlap earned service (service for which regular contributions were paid to the system) or other purchased service.

B. Previously Withdrawn Service

A member who left employment and received a refund of member contributions plus interest may re-establish this service upon returning to active membership. The member must repay the amount withdrawn plus interest to the date the member's request is received. Previously withdrawn earned service that is re-established in SCRS through the service purchase process is considered earned service for the determination of the minimum service requirement for benefit eligibility. Earnings associated with re-established withdrawn earned service will be considered for possible inclusion in the calculation of a member's average final compensation and any subsequent service purchase costs.

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C. Public Service

An employee may establish service credit for any period of paid public service for which he or she does not already have service credit in another defined benefit plan. This is service as an employee of the government of the United States, a state, or political subdivision of the United States. The cost is 16% of current earnable compensation or career highest fiscal year earnable compensation, whichever is greater, for each year purchased. If an employee has established State Optional Retirement Program (ORP) service in SCRS, the career highest salary includes his or her salary in either State ORP or SCRS. An employee may not purchase service for a period of public service for which he or she may receive a retirement annuity from another defined benefit retirement plan.

D. Leave of Absence

Active contributing members on an employer-approved leave of absence who return to covered employment within four years may purchase service credit for the employer-approved leave period for which they do not already have service credit, up to a maximum of two years per leave of absence. The leave of absence must be with an employer covered by the Retirement Systems. The cost is 16% of current earnable compensation or career highest fiscal year earnable compensation, whichever is greater, for each year purchased. If an employee has established State ORP service in SCRS, the career highest salary includes his or her salary in either State ORP or SCRS.

E. Correlated System

A member who transfers from the South Carolina Retirement System or the General Assembly Retirement System to the Police Officers Retirement System maintains his or her retirement service credit within each system. In the event of a transfer, the Retirement System should be notified immediately. A member of the Police Officers Retirement System is eligible to transfer retirement service from the South Carolina Retirement System by paying 5% of current salary for each year transferred.

F. Non-Qualified Service

Active contributing members who have five or more years of earned service credit may establish up to five years of non-qualified service. The cost is 35% of current earnable compensation or career highest fiscal year earnable compensation, whichever is greater, for each year purchased. If an employee has established State ORP service in SCRS, the career highest salary includes his or her salary in either State ORP or SCRS.

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G. Educational Service

An employee may establish service credit for any period of paid classroom teaching consisting of grades kindergarten through 12 in a public, private, or sectarian school for which her or she does not already have service credit in another defined benefit plan. The cost is 16% of current earnable compensation or career highest fiscal year earnable compensation, whichever is greater, for each year purchased. If the employee has established State ORP service in SCRS, the career highest salary includes his or her salary in either State ORP or SCRS. An employee may not purchase service for a period of educational service for which he or she may receive a retirement annuity from another defined benefit retirement plan.

Contributions While on Approved Leave Without Pay

Employees requesting leave without pay should indicate their preference to continue contributions during their leave so that permission may be obtained from the South Carolina Retirement System and contributions may be calculated. Contributions are based on the salary rate immediately prior to going on leave, as follows:

A. Sick Leave

A member may establish a maximum of 90 calendar days for one illness, within one year of the date of return to employment. Employees who expect to remain on leave without pay for illness for more than 90 days should consider filing for disability retirement (see Section V, Subject A.3, "Disability Retirement"). Contributions are based on salary immediately prior to leave.

B. Maternity Leave

Contributions should be made quarterly (maximum of six months).

C. Educational Leave

The request for this leave must be made through the employer prior to educational leave and a copy of the request forwarded to the Retirement System. The employer must agree that the leave will enhance the value of the member to the employer and report contributions through normal quarterly reports throughout the leave period. Contributions are based on salary just prior to the leave.

D. Sabbatical Leave

Half-Pay-Contributions should be made quarterly to receive full service credit.

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E. Personal Leave

Leaves without pay for personal reasons may not be established for service credit under the Retirement Act.

Failure to make additional contributions as described above will affect the following:

- A. The Pre-retirement death benefit amount should death occur during the leave of absence.
- B. Service credit totals.
- C. Retirement benefit amounts if leave without pay occurs within the years that would have been the twelve highest consecutive quarters (normally the last three years).