

MEMORANDUM

TO: All Retirement Boards

FROM: Joseph E. Connarton, Executive Director

RE: Mandatory Retirement Board Member Training-1st Quarter 2015

DATE: December 18, 2014

As you know, Chapter 32 mandates that retirement board members complete training during each year of service on the retirement board. Failure to meet this mandatory requirement will prohibit the member from serving beyond the conclusion of the term for which the training requirement was not met.

Retirement board members are reminded of the requirement to meet the statutory education mandate. As we enter the fourth year of this program it must be noted that, unfortunately, several retirement board members have become ineligible for service on retirement boards due to failure to fulfill the education mandate.

It should be noted that in awarding the number of credits for individual courses the Commission does not necessarily base that number on the length of the program but also considers the nature of the topic involved.

Please note, affidavits will be accepted as proof of attendance for online courses (see below AG, IG, Ethics Commission, NCPC and GFOA).

Pre - Approval

The Commission is willing to approve educational credits for a variety of events sponsored by "...local, state, regional and national organizations recognized by the Commission as having expertise in retirement issues of importance to retirement board members or other entities..." This provision of the statute has been interpreted to encompass particular programs offered by such entities. For example, an ethics class or open meeting law class offered as part of a broader conference may be eligible for educational credit. However, approval for such credit must take place well in advance of the date of the event. This will enable the Commission to analyze the program and to provide a general notice to retirement board members to maximize participation.



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Non-PERAC; Non-MACRS Events

PERAC will award credit for attendance at the following educational events sponsored by entities other than the Commission and MACRS:

The Commission will grant credits for the following:

1. NCPERS (TEDS) – 3 Credits;
2. NCPERS (PATS) – 3 Credits;
3. NCTR Trustee Workshop – 3 Credits;
4. International Foundation of Employee Benefit Plans (IFB) New Trustee Institute/Advanced Trustees Institute – 3 Credits;
5. PRIM Investors' Conference – 3 Credits;
6. Ethics Training MA Town Clerks Association – 3 Credits;
7. Open Meeting Law – MA Association of School Committees – 3 Credits;
8. City/Town Sponsored Conflict of Interest Training – 3 Credits;
9. City/Town Sponsored Open Meeting Training – 3 Credits;
10. National Pension Education Association – 3 Credits;
11. NCPERS Legislative Conference (DC) – 3 Credits

State Ethics Commission Seminars (Three Credits):

The Commission will grant three (3) credits to retirement board members who complete a Public Education Seminar on the Conflict of Interest Law conducted by the State Ethics Commission. As noted above, these sessions are sometimes held in conjunction with meetings of certain organizations. Credit will be granted upon receipt by the Commission of a copy of the Certificate of Attendance issued to the retirement board member by the State Ethics Commission.

The State Ethics Commission will be conducting educational seminars throughout 2015 at its offices in Boston at One Ashburton Place, Room 619. At this writing the schedule for those 2015 sessions has not been posted. Board members can access the schedule on the State Ethics Commission website.

Seating at these sessions is limited. Please contact **617-371-9500** to enroll.

Also, attending these sessions via webinar is now an option.

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January, February and March Educational Events

The list below contains the educational offerings to be presented directly by PERAC in the first quarter of 2015. It is suggested that retirement board members pre-register, however, “walk-ins” are always welcome.

Retirement Board Administrators should also consider attending the PERAC Annual Statement presentations.

PERAC’s Annual Statement – Electronic Filing (Three Credits)

1. Wednesday, January 14, 2015 at 10:00 a.m. at the PERAC Office, 5 Middlesex Avenue, 3rd Floor, Somerville, MA (Please e-mail Rose Morrison at RAMorrison@per.state.ma.us to make reservations)
2. Wednesday, January 21, 2015 at 10:00 a.m. at the Springfield Retirement Board, 70 Tapley Street, Springfield, MA (Please e-mail Rose Morrison at RAMorrison@per.state.ma.us to make reservations)
3. Wednesday, January 28, 2015 at 10:00 a.m. at the Middlesex County Retirement Board, 25 Linnell Circle, Billerica, MA (Please e-mail Rose Morrison at RAMorrison@per.state.ma.us to make reservations)

Actuarial Hodgepodge (Three Credits)

1. Wednesday, February 11, 2015 at 10:00 a.m. at the Taunton Public Library, 12 Pleasant Street, Taunton, MA (Please e-mail Rose Morrison at RAMorrison@per.state.ma.us to make reservations)
2. Wednesday, February 18, 2015 at 10:00 a.m. at the PERAC Office, 5 Middlesex Avenue, 3rd Floor, Somerville, MA (Please e-mail Rose Morrison at RAMorrison@per.state.ma.us to make reservations)
3. Wednesday, February 25, 2015 at 10:00 a.m. at the PERAC Office, 5 Middlesex Avenue, 3rd Floor, Somerville, MA (Please e-mail Rose Morrison at RAMorrison@per.state.ma.us to make reservations)

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Buonomo and Other Cases of Interest – (Three Credits)

1. Wednesday, March 11, 2015 at 10:00 a.m. at Westfield City Hall, Room 201 (Please e-mail Rose Morrison at RAMorrison@per.state.ma.us to make reservations)
2. Wednesday, March 18, 2015 at 10:00 a.m. at the PERAC Office, 5 Middlesex Avenue, 3rd Floor, Somerville, MA (Please e-mail Rose Morrison at RAMorrison@per.state.ma.us to make reservations)
3. Wednesday, March 25, 2015 at 10:00 a.m. at the Dan Toomey Room, First Floor, Danvers Town Hall, 1 Sylvan Street, Danvers, MA - Please use the Municipal Parking Lot across from Town Hall (Please e-mail Rose Morrison at RAMorrison@per.state.ma.us to make reservations)

ON-LINE TRAINING

State Ethics Commission On-Line Conflict of Interest Law Training (Three Credits)

In order to access the program retirement board members should go to the Ethics Commission Web Page at www.mass.gov/ethics/ and then click on the link “Conflict of Interest Online Training Programs”. Following transfer to that page scroll down and click the link to “Municipal Employee Online Training Program”.

Office of the Inspector General – Bidding Basics (Three Credits)

The Office of the Inspector General (OIG) has developed an introductory on-line course that covers the legal requirements for the procurement of contracts by local government bodies for supplies and services under MGL c. 30B. Although that statute does not apply to “a contract for retirement board services” recently enacted law sets forth similar requirements for retirement boards to follow when seeking certain services. In addition, retirement board members, under their fiduciary duty to act as a prudent expert would act, should employ best practices in this area.

Bidding Basics takes two to three hours to complete. It has been designed to be completed through PACE, the Commonwealth’s Web-based Learning Management System, or at your stand-alone computer using a Compact Disc (CD).

PACE should be accessible to any entity with an Internet connection. Upon registering with the Office of the Inspector General, you will be issued a PACE Login ID and Password so that you may access PACE for free. For further information about Bidding Basics, access <http://www.mass.gov/ig/mcppo/seminars-and-courses/bidding-bascis.html>. In the right-hand column of that page you may access a link to the Bidding Basics FAQs and a link to the Bidding

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Basics Online Registration Form, or you may obtain the form directly by selecting <http://www.mass.gov/ig/publications/forms/bb-online-regform.doc>

Office of the Attorney General – Open Meeting Law (Three Credits)

The Office of the Attorney General (AG) offers an online web training seminar on the Open Meeting Law. That program is accessible at <http://www.youtube.com/user/MassAttorneyGeneral>. It can also be accessed through the AG's Web Page by clicking on "Government Resources" and then clicking on "Open Meeting Law" and on that page clicking on "Web Training".

National Crime Prevention Council – “Taking Action: An Advocate’s Guide to Assisting Victims of Financial Fraud”; “Investment Fraud Prevention Strategies”; “The Psychology of a Scam”; “Targeting Investment Fraud”; “Understanding Financial Fraud Victimology, Risk Factors, and Psychological Impact” (Three Credits)

The National Crime Prevention Council has initiated a Webinar Series focused on Investment Fraud Prevention. Retirement Board members may access the site by going to www.ncpc.org/ and clicking on "Programs". On that page click on "Investment Fraud Prevention Program" in the green box on the left. This will bring you to the page entitled Investment Fraud Prevention Program. On that page click on "Webinar Series" in the green box.

This will bring you to the presentations listed above. In order to complete the program and receive credits the retirement board member must watch the presentation "Taking Action: An Advocate's Guide to Assisting Victims of Financial Fraud" download and review the presentations pertaining to "Investment Fraud Prevention Strategies", "The Psychology of a Scam", "Targeting Investment Fraud" and "Understanding Financial Fraud Victimology, Risk Factors, and Psychological Impact".

GFOA Training Sessions - “What Employers Need to Know About the New Pension Accounting” (Three Credits); “How to Account for Investments” (Three Credits); “Internal Controls: New and Improved” (Three Credits)

The Government Finance Officers Association is offering the following training sessions in the first quarter of 2015. The cost for a member is \$85 and for a non-member the cost is \$160. In order to register go to the GFOA Home Page. Under Products and Services click "Search for Training". Scroll down to the Webinar and register online (on the top of the page are general registration instructions).

- (1) How to Account for Investments – 2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. – January 8, 2015
- (2) Internal Controls: New and Improved – 2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. – February 19, 2015

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- (3) What Employers Need to Know About the New Pension Accounting – 2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. March 26, 2015

Retirement board members can confirm participation in the offerings by the Inspector General, Ethics Commission, Attorney General, NCPC and GFOA by filing an affidavit with the Commission or, in the event a certificate of completion is issued by the organization, submitting a copy of that certification to PERAC. After completing the course fill out the Affidavit available at http://www.mass.gov/perac/training/Training_Affidavit.pdf and fax or mail to PERAC, attention Tom O'Donnell.

Other Webinars

The Commission has approved education credit for participating in Webinars. In 2015, we will entertain requests for credit in relation to relevant Webinars, again, provided that such a request is made well in advance of the session.

Thank You

The Commission would be remiss if we did not thank all the rank and file members of the retirement boards who, in spite of other pressing duties, are making a good faith effort to fulfill their duties and responsibilities.