



# MSRB

## *Retiree eNews Bulletin*

### *APRIL 2022*

#### **MSRB Operations Update**

Members of the State Employees' Retirement System may drop off completed retirement applications, forms, and other documents at two locations: (1) at the MSRB's Boston office at One Winter Street, Downtown Crossing; (2) at the MSRB's Springfield office 436 Dwight Street, Room 109A.

Drop-off hours at both offices are Monday through Friday from 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM, except on state holidays. Please click here to view the [MSRB Member In-Person Visit Protocols & Requirements](#).

Telephone hours are 8 AM to 5 PM Monday through Friday, except on State Holidays. (617) 367-7770. If prompted, please leave a voice message and staff will return your call as soon as possible. The MSRB is working toward resuming in-person member visits to our Boston office. Please visit the MSRB website for updates.

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#### **April is National Financial Literacy Month**

April is National Financial Literacy Month. Since December 2020, the Treasury's Office of Economic Empowerment (OEE) has been offering a Financial Wellness

#### **GIC Annual Health Benefits Open Enrollment Period Ending on May 4, 2022**

The Group Insurance Commission's (GIC) Annual Enrollment period began on April 6 and will end on May 4, 2022. During this time, you can review your health, dental and life insurance benefit options and compare plan offerings. The Benefit Decision Guides are available to view on the GIC website at <https://www.mass.gov/lists/gic-benefit-decision-guides>.

Any changes you make, should you make any, will become effective on July 1, 2022. It's important to review your current health and dental benefits and select a new plan if you feel that is appropriate.

If you have questions about your GIC health and other insurance benefits or premiums, please contact them directly at 617-727-2310 and select option # 2 or complete their online [Contact the GIC](#) request form. Thank you!

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#### **Take the Financial Wellness Pledge for a Chance to Win a Dunkin' Gift Card!**

program for all Massachusetts state employees and retirees.

The program is powered by Enrich and offers access to various personalized articles, courses, and topics tailored to the needs of the member. To get started, you can [click on this link](#) and type "Massachusetts" as your state.

This month, if you sign up and "Take the Financial Literacy Month Pledge," you will be entered into a drawing for a chance to win a gift card. For more information on how you can take the pledge, be sure to visit: [www.mass.gov/finwell](http://www.mass.gov/finwell).

If you have additional questions, please call the Office of Economic Empowerment at (617) 367-6900 or by email at [empowerment@tre.state.ma.us](mailto:empowerment@tre.state.ma.us).

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## COVID-19 Over-the-Counter (OTC) Tests

As of Monday, April 4, 2022, [Medicare announced](#) that it would cover up to 8 over-the-counter COVID-19 tests each month, at no cost to the individual. This benefit applies to individuals who have Medicare Part B.

Individuals won't have to pay as long as they go to an eligible pharmacy or healthcare provider. The Medicare website provides a [partial list of pharmacies](#) participating in this program.

Medicare also has stated that it will cover tests that are provided by laboratories, pharmacies, doctors, hospitals, and when a doctor or other authorized health care professional places an order for the test.

[For more information, click here.](#)

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## Turning Age 65 and Medicare Enrollment with GIC Health

The Office of Economic Empowerment (OEE) is holding an April pledge for state employees and retirees to check in on their financial well-being. Any state employee or retiree who takes the Financial Wellness pledge will be entered into a drawing to receive a \$25 Dunkin' gift card. [Click here to take the pledge!](#)

Financial Wellness for Massachusetts State Employees and Retirees moved to a new financial education portal created by Enrich. This platform offers helpful courses, articles, videos, tools, and other resources to help you stay on top of your personal finances. Click [here](#) to create your free account!

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## PRIM Update as of March 2022

The Pension Reserves Investment Management Board (PRIM) manages the assets of the Massachusetts State Employees' Retirement System ("MSERS") along with the assets of more than 90 other Massachusetts public employee retirement systems. PRIM is chaired by Treasurer Deborah B. Goldberg, who also chairs the State Retirement Board.

At the end of March 2022, PRIM's total fund value stood at more than \$101 billion, of which \$37 billion are assets of the MSERS and \$179 million represented assets of the former Massachusetts Turnpike Authority Employees Retirement System.

For more information, visit PRIM's website <https://www.mapension.com/>.

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## Medicare Enrollment / Disenrollment - Equitable Relief

[In a recent posting](#) on the Social Security Administration's (SSA) website, it was

## Coverage

Did you know, the GIC's website provides information to help members understand if and when to enroll in Medicare Part A and Part B if you have GIC health coverage? They also have a video on the subject. Visit: [Turning age 65 and Medicare enrollment with GIC health coverage | Mass.gov](#).

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## Social Security In-Person Services

[In a recent press release](#) from Kilolo Kijakazi, the Acting Commissioner of the Social Security Administration (SSA), it was announced that local Social Security offices would have their in-person services restored as of April 7, 2022.

Individuals may still use the [Social Security Website](#) or phone number to reach out to a member of their staff.

The SSA also reminds everyone that Social Security offices "tend to be the busiest first thing in the morning, early in the week, and during the early part of the month."

If you have any questions, you can call Social Security at 1-800-772-1213.

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## Social Security Number Safety: Do Not Email Your Entire Social Security Number to Anyone

The Retirement Board has received inquiries and emails where members are adding their full Social Security numbers or other personally identifiable information to their message. We want to remind you that such information is susceptible to being stolen when transferred over the Internet. We strongly encourage you not to include it when emailing the MSRB.

announced that the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services is providing relief to individuals who were not able to submit premium-Part A or Part B enrollment or disenrollment requests.

In the posting, they recognize that there have been technical issues with the SSA's 800-number. Due to these issues, they have announced that anyone who was unable to enroll or disenroll will be granted additional time through December 30, 2022.

If you have any questions, please call 1-800-772-1213 or use the [SSA's Office Locator](#) to find an office near you.

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## Asian American and Pacific Islanders Commission

The Massachusetts State Treasury is comprised of multiple departments and agencies that serve the public. One such agency is the Asian American and Pacific Islanders Commission (AAPIC).

The AAPIC is a permanent body dedicated to advocacy on behalf of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders throughout Massachusetts. The Commission's goal is to recognize and highlight the vital contributions of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders to the social, cultural, economic, and political life of the Commonwealth; to identify and address the needs and challenges facing residents of Asian ancestry; and to promote the well-being of this dynamic and diverse community, thereby advancing the interests of all persons who call Massachusetts home.

One of the many things that the AAPIC does is host events that discuss relevant topics related to the Asian American and Pacific Islander community. The AAPIC will be hosting their 14th Annual Unity Dinner on May 6, 2022, at 6:00 PM. To

Exposing such information puts you at risk of identity theft and scams. The MSRB will never need your full Social Security number through email.

Instead, you can use your MSRB Member ID number, which can be found on most correspondence from the MSRB. In today's technological climate, it is more important than ever to keep your identity protected online.

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### **Have you, or are you planning to move?**

If so, be sure to notify the Board of your address change! Retirees who already have summer and winter addresses on file with the Board can call us to request the address update. Otherwise, you'll need to notify the Board in writing. You can download our Change of Address form [here!](#)

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Is there something you would like us to communicate in an upcoming **Retiree eNews Bulletin**? If so, let us know!

Please email your request or comments to [MSRBCommunications@tre.state.ma.us](mailto:MSRBCommunications@tre.state.ma.us).

We look forward to hearing from you!

learn more about the dinner, you can [click here](#).

For more general information, visit the AAC's website:

<https://www.aacommission.org/>.

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## **Contact us:**

### **Boston Office:**

Downtown Crossing  
One Winter Street, 8th Floor  
Boston, MA 02108

### **Springfield Office:**

436 Dwight Street, #109A  
Springfield, MA 01103

Tel: 617-367-7770

**Note: MSRB phones are answered Monday-Friday 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m., except on state holidays.**

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Past issues of our newsletter publications can be found on our [website](#).

**Quick links:** Visit our website:

[www.mass.gov/retirement](http://www.mass.gov/retirement).

Like us on Facebook:

[www.facebook.com/mass.state.retirement](https://www.facebook.com/mass.state.retirement).

Follow us on Twitter @MassStateRet:

<https://twitter.com/massstateret>.

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