


Membership and enrollment: eligibility

Retirement Benefits Training
Fiscal year 2025



Serving those who serve South Carolina

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Who is eligible?

- SCRS is available to employees of:
 - State agencies;
 - Public school districts;
 - Public higher education institutions;
 - Participating charter schools; and
 - Participating optional employers, such as local subdivisions of government.
- State ORP is available to employees of:
 - State agencies;
 - Public school districts;
 - Public higher education institutions; and
 - Participating charter schools.

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SCRS, State ORP mandatory membership exceptions

- For eligible positions, membership is a required condition of employment unless employee is:
 - A school bus driver;
 - Earning less than \$100 per month;
 - In a non-permanent position or works as a day laborer;
 - One of certain hospital workers (see S.C. Code 9-1-580);
 - A part-time elected official earning less than \$9,000 per year; or
 - Elected to the S.C. General Assembly during or after November 2012.
- Membership exceptions apply only if the employee is not already an existing member.
- Employee must make a timely election to decline membership or will default into SCRS membership.

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PORS eligibility

- Police officers, defined as those who:
 - Preserve public order;
 - Protect life and property; and
 - Detect crimes in the state.
- Firefighters, defined as those who prevent and control property destruction by fire.
 - Employer must have optional firefighter coverage.
- Peace officers, defined as those responsible for custody or control of inmates at:
 - S.C. Department of Corrections;
 - S.C. Department of Juvenile Justice; or
 - S.C. Department of Mental Health.
- Magistrates.
- Coroners, deputy coroners in a full-time, permanent position.
- Probate judges may choose SCRS or PORS.

Employee must:

- Earn at least \$2,000 annually; and
- Devote at least 1,600 hours per year to position.

Probate judges, magistrates exempt from these requirements.

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Types of workers ineligible to join SCRS, State ORP, PORS

- Non-employees.
 - Independent contractors.
- Students employed by the school they are attending.
- People compensated solely by per diem reimbursements.
- Retired members of SCRS or PORS may not participate as active members in SCRS, PORS or State ORP.

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SCRS, PORS membership classes

<p>Class Two</p> <p>Earned service began prior to July 1, 2012</p>	<p>Class Three</p> <p>Earned service began on or after July 1, 2012</p>
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Membership class affects:

- Service retirement eligibility;
- Average final compensation calculation; and
- Credit for unused leave at retirement.

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Correlated systems

- SCRS and PORS are correlated systems.
 - Complementary relationship as defined by statute.
- If member has service credit in both systems, service credit is combined for purpose of determining eligibility for benefits, but not for calculating the amount of benefits.
 - See the Covered Employer Procedures Manual for more information.

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