

# Student Employee Retirement Choices



## YOUR DECISION

**As a student employee, you have an immediate decision to make<sup>1</sup>.**

Employees of The Ohio State University do not pay into Social Security. Instead, you participate in a retirement program through Ohio Public Employees Retirement System (OPERS), unless you are eligible to and request to opt out of participation by completing the OPERS *Request for Optional Exemption as a Student* form. This is an **irrevocable** decision for the entire period that you are continuously employed and working as an eligible student employee at Ohio State. Your decision must be made no later than **30 days** after your hire date. You should carefully consider your options and take the necessary action outlined in this document.

When considering your decision to opt out of participation, you should review the plan options through OPERS and consider your long-term financial goals. OPERS offers three retirement plan options for participants to choose from:

- Traditional Pension Plan
- Member-Directed Plan
- Combined Plan

Learn more at [opers.org](http://opers.org).

<sup>1</sup> Newly hired or newly eligible Ohio State student

## Factors you should know:

- Your decision to opt out of retirement must be made within **30 days** of your hire date. It is an irrevocable decision while you are continuously employed at Ohio State. Carefully review your OPERS options. You must have a 12-month break in service with Ohio State to make a new retirement election.
- If you opt for exemption, you must continue to be enrolled in the minimum number of credit hours (see sidebar). **All instructional and general fees must be paid on time.** If at any time, you do not meet the enrollment criteria, OPERS contributions will be withheld from your pay. If you later meet the enrollment criteria again, you will automatically be returned to an exempt status from OPERS contributions. You may apply for a refund of the contributions that are withheld after you terminate from all public employment (visit [opers.org](http://opers.org)).
- It is important that you understand the consequences of your exemption decision. Currently, the retirement systems offer the opportunity to purchase exempted service credit at a later time. You should be aware that this purchase could be quite costly. Consult a financial or personal advisor for guidance.

## Student exemption criteria

For an exemption to be in effect, a student must have an approved exemption form and meet all criteria stated below.

	Minimum course credit hours needed to be exempt from OPERS
Undergraduate students	6
GAA, GRA, or GTA students	4
Post-candidacy doctoral graduate students	2
Trainees and Fellows	Not eligible to participate in the retirement plan
Non-Ohio State students	Not eligible for exemption

## Student retirement website

[hr.osu.edu/benefits//student-employee/](http://hr.osu.edu/benefits//student-employee/)

# Your choice and action steps



## If you want to participate in OPERS:

- Contributions will automatically be deducted from your pay and sent to OPERS. Do not complete the exemption form.
- You will be mailed a packet from OPERS describing its three plan options, or go to [opers.org](https://opers.org) to learn more. Complete the OPERS retirement election form within 180 days from your hire date to select from plan options.

## If you DO NOT want to participate in the OPERS retirement plan:

- Complete the OPERS *Request for Optional Exemption as a Student* form; sign and return it to the Office of Human Resources within **30 days** of your hire date. Exemption forms received after 30 days of hire/eligibility will not be accepted.
- Rehired or transferred student employees with less than a 12-month break in service with Ohio State are not eligible to complete an OPERS *Request for Optional Exemption as a Student* form. You must have a 12-month break from employment with Ohio State before a new election may be chosen.

**Note:** This does not apply if your previous position was not eligible for exemption, such as fellowships or trainees.

**Note:** Your correctly completed exemption form must be received by the payroll cutoff date in order to ensure a retirement deduction is not taken from your check. If the payroll cutoff date is missed, a contribution will be withheld. This deduction will be refunded to you if all exemption criteria are met. See the OPERS Exemption Submission Deadline Schedule to know when your exemption form will take effect.

## Attention GTAs:

If you have a previously established open account with the State Teachers Retirement System (STRS), contact OHR immediately to discuss your retirement options. As a GTA with a previously established STRS account, you will be eligible to contribute to STRS while in your GTA role instead of contributing to OPERS. If you wish to participate in STRS, please provide proof of your open account in order to enroll and complete the *GTA STRS Retirement Election* form. If you decide to exempt from STRS, please complete the *STRS Exemption from Contributions for Student Employees* form and an *OPERS Request for Optional Exemption as a Student* form (in this document) in the event you change from your GTA role to any other student employee role. If you do not have an open STRS account, you may contribute to OPERS. Forms are available online at [hr.osu.edu/policies-forms](https://hr.osu.edu/policies-forms).

## Required paperwork

ALL student employees must complete a statement that acknowledges earnings from Ohio State are not covered under Social Security. Complete the *Statement Concerning Your Employment in a Job Not Covered by Social Security* form and return it to the Office of Human Resources. This must be completed each time you are hired.

## Items to remember when completing your paperwork

- All students must complete the *Statement Concerning Your Employment in a Job Not Covered by Social Security* form.
- If choosing to opt out of the retirement plan, an OPERS *Request for Optional Exemption as a Student* form must be signed within 30 days of hire date ([hr.osu.edu/policies-forms](https://hr.osu.edu/policies-forms)).
- Forms must be complete and accurate. Forms submitted incorrectly may cause an unwanted retirement deduction to occur.

## Other considerations

Student employees may participate in voluntary, employee-only, pre-tax Supplemental Retirement Accounts (SRA). This includes the 403(b) and 457(b) retirement plans.

## Resources

- Supplemental Retirement Accounts (SRA) information and list of providers ([hr.osu.edu/benefits/retirement/sra](https://hr.osu.edu/benefits/retirement/sra))

# Your choice and action steps (continued)



## QUESTIONS?

**Office of Human Resources  
Customer Service Center  
614-292-1050**

1590 North High Street, Suite 300  
Columbus, OH 43201-2190  
1-800-678-6010

[HR@osu.edu](mailto:HR@osu.edu)

**Ohio Public Employees Retirement System (OPERS)**

1-800-222-PERS (7377)

[opers.org](http://opers.org)

**State Teachers Retirement System of Ohio (STRS)**

1-888-227-STRS (7877)

[www.strsoh.org](http://www.strsoh.org)

## REQUIRED PAPERWORK

Find the following required forms in the next section:

- **OPERS Request for Optional Exemption as a Student**  
Complete this form if you are choosing to opt out of OPERS.
- **Form SSA – Statement Concerning Your Employment in a Job Not Covered by Social Security**  
All employees must complete this form.

# Instructions for OPERS Request for Optional Exemption as a Student Form



**The form must be filled out in its entirety with no mistakes. Form will not be processed if incorrectly completed.**

Please complete the form using legible printed letters in blue or black ink.

## Step 1 – Personal Information

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### **Social Security Number**

Fill in with your Social Security number exactly as it appears on your Social Security card. If you have been issued a temporary Social Security number and do not have your permanent number, please fill in with your temporary number. If you do not know your temporary number, include your employee ID number on the top of the form.

You must apply for a permanent Social Security number right away. Please refer to the Social Security website at [ssa.gov/online/ss-5.pdf](https://ssa.gov/online/ss-5.pdf) for an application and instructions. Once you have your permanent Social Security card, you must fill out a change of record form with the university. The change of record form and instructions are online at [controller.osu.edu/forms/payroll/ChangeRecord.pdf](https://controller.osu.edu/forms/payroll/ChangeRecord.pdf).

**Employee ID Number** – Fill in with OSU employee / student ID number – the 8 or 9 digit number found on your Buck ID

**Phone Number** – Fill in with a daytime phone number where you can be reached

**First Name, Last Name** – Your full legal name

**Email Address** – Use your OSU email address

**Name of School** – Use The Ohio State University – may already be filled in

**Signature of Employee** – This line is for your legal signature (not printed) – it must be in blue or black ink and dated (this date must be within 30 days of the start date)

## Step 2 – Employment Authorization

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To be completed by the Office of Human Resources

## Final Step

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The completed OPERS *Request for Optional Exemption as a Student* form must be signed within 30 days of your student employment. The form can be returned to your department Human Resources Professional or directly to the Office of Human Resources.

Retirement deductions will be taken from your pay until the OPERS exemption form is received and processed by the Office of Human Resources and all required exemption criteria are met. Forms must be returned to the Office of Human Resources by the deadline date listed on the OPERS Exemption Submission Deadline Schedule (see sidebar at right). Forms not received by this date will not be processed until the next pay period. Exemption forms received 30 days after hire/rehire date will not be processed. If you have any questions, contact the Office of Human Resources or see your department Human Resources Professional.



This form must be submitted to OPERS within the first month (30 days) after a student's employment. It must be approved by OPERS and returned to the employer. This exemption is only available to a student employee working for the public school, college or university in which the student is enrolled and attending. This exemption remains valid as long as the student continues to be employed by and attending (except during scheduled breaks in classes) the school which certifies this form. If the student continues to work during an extended break (i.e. summer or other term) and is not enrolled in classes, the student must begin making contributions to OPERS on the student's earnable salary. If the student resigns from working for the school certifying this form and begins attending and working for the same or another public school, college or university in Ohio, the student must file a new exemption. If the student does not meet these requirements, the student must become a member of OPERS. If the student later becomes a member of OPERS, the student may be eligible to purchase this exempt service (Ohio Revised Code Section 145.28).

**This form will not be accepted and/or processed if:**

- The form is not signed by the student or the student signature is altered (whited out, crossed out, written over)
- The form is not signed by the employer contact with signature authority
- The signature date in Step 1 is altered (whited out, crossed out, written over) or not within 30 days of the employment date
- The employment date in Step 2 is altered (whited out, crossed out, written over) or not within 30 days of the signature date
- Social Security number or Employee ID is not provided
- Student signature is in electronic format. Student signature must be handwritten
- The information on the form is inaccurate or if the information is submitted inaccurately

Please print legibly keeping input within the form entry box (one character per box) or bullet.

Fill in entry boxes like this: 

A	B	C		1	2	3
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**If you need additional help:**

If you have questions, visit [www.OPERS.org](http://www.OPERS.org) or contact us at 1-800-222-7377.

**NOTE: Please review the benefits of membership in the Ohio Public Employees Retirement System. Understand exemption is optional and must be completed by the student, of their own free will. Information regarding the benefits of membership can be found at [www.OPERS.org](http://www.OPERS.org) or call 1-800-222-7377 to speak with a member services representative.**

## STEP 1:

### Personal Information and Student Acknowledgment

The information requested in this step is required and must be completed accurately and without alterations. If you do not have a Social Security number (SSN), contact your payroll officer to obtain a temporary SSN or Employee ID number. Either a SSN or Employee ID number is required.

You must sign this form within 30 days of your employment date.

## STEP 2:

### Employer Authorization

An employer contact with signature authority must sign and date the form and indicate the employment date. The employment date must be completed accurately and without alterations.



# REQUEST FOR: OPTIONAL EXEMPTION AS A STUDENT

Ohio Public Employees Retirement System  
277 East Town Street, Columbus, Ohio 43215-4642

1-800-222-PERS (7377)  
www.opers.org

## STEP 1: Personal Information and Student (to be completed by student)

Social Security Number

□□□□-□□□□-□□□□□□

Daytime Phone Number

□□□□□□-□□□□□□-□□□□□□□□

Employee ID Number \_\_\_\_\_

First Name

□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□

Last Name

□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□

E-mail Address

□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□

Name of School, College or University

T H E O H I O S T A T E U N I V E R S I T Y

I have reviewed this form and I choose an optional exemption from membership in OPERS as a student working at the public school, college or university where I attend. I understand I must become a member of OPERS if my employment does not meet the proper requirements. I have made this election within 30 days of my employment date.

Today's Date

Month Day Year

□□□□/□□□□/□□□□□□

Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Do not print or type name

## STEP 2: Employer Authorization (to be completed by employer contact with signature authority)

I MARY ELLIS \_\_\_\_\_ certify this employee is a student  
Employer contact with signature authority

enrolled and attending this school. I understand if this request is approved by OPERS, this form will be stamped "APPROVED" and returned to this school. After the school receives the approved exemption, provided the student meets all required criteria, no deductions will be taken from the student's salary. Membership shall be established if this exemption is not approved or if employment does not meet the requirements of Ohio Revised Code Section 145.03.

Employee Employment Date

□□□□/□□□□/□□□□□□

Today's Date

Month Day Year

□□□□/□□□□/□□□□□□

Employer Contact Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Do not print or type name

DO NOT WRITE BELOW THIS LINE - FOR OPERS OFFICE USE ONLY

Date Rec'd Stamp

"APPROVED" Stamp

# Statement Concerning Your Employment in a Job Not Covered by Social Security

## SECTION 1: PERSONAL INFORMATION (all fields required)

Employee's Full Name: First	M.I.	Last	OSU Employee ID# (required)
OSU Email Address	Daytime Phone Number	Social Security Number	Hire/Rehire Date

**Employer Name:** THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY #31-6025986

- Classification:**  Staff – OPERS Employer ID#: 164108  
 Faculty – STRS Employer ID#: 9301  
 Student Employee/Graduate Associates, Fellows and Trainees

Your earnings from this job are not covered under Social Security. When you retire, or if you become disabled, you may receive a pension based on earnings from this job. If you do, and you are also entitled to a benefit from Social Security based on either your own work or the work of your husband or wife, or former husband or wife, your pension may affect the amount of the Social Security benefit you receive. Your Medicare benefits, however, will not be affected. Under the Social Security law, there are two ways your Social Security benefit amount may be affected.

## SECTION 2: WINDFALL ELIMINATION PROVISION

Under the Windfall Elimination Provision, your Social Security retirement or disability benefit is figured using a modified formula when you also are entitled to a pension from a job in which you did not pay Social Security tax. As a result, you will receive a lower Social Security benefit than if you were not entitled to a pension from this job. For example, if you are age 62 in 2013, the maximum monthly reduction in your Social Security benefit as a result of this provision is \$395.50. This amount is updated annually. This provision reduces, but does not totally eliminate, your Social Security benefit. For additional information, please refer to Social Security Publication, "Windfall Elimination Provision" online at [socialsecurity.gov/online/ssa-1945.pdf](http://socialsecurity.gov/online/ssa-1945.pdf).

## SECTION 3: GOVERNMENT PENSION OFFSET PROVISION

Under the Government Pension Offset Provision, any Social Security spouse or widow(er) benefit to which you become entitled will be offset if you also receive a Federal, State or local government pension based on work in which you did not pay Social Security tax. The offset reduces the amount of your Social Security spouse or widow(er) benefit by two-thirds of the amount of your pension.

For example, if you get a monthly pension of \$600 based on earnings that are not covered under Social Security, two-thirds of that amount, \$400, is used to offset your Social Security spouse or widow(er) benefit. If you are eligible for a \$500 widow(er) benefit, you will receive \$100 per month from Social Security (\$500 – \$400 = \$100). Even if your pension is high enough to totally offset your spouse or widow(er) Social Security benefit, you are still eligible for Medicare at age 65. For additional information, please refer to Social Security Publication, "Government Pension Offset."

## SECTION 4: FOR MORE INFORMATION

Social Security publications and additional information, including information about exceptions to each provision, are available at [socialsecurity.gov](http://socialsecurity.gov). You also may call toll free **800-772-1213**, or for the deaf or hard of hearing call the TTY number **800-325-0778** or contact your local Social Security office.

**I certify that I have received Form SSA-1945 that contains information about the possible effects of the Windfall Elimination Provision and the Government Pension Offset Provision on my potential future Social Security benefits.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Employee

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Keep a copy of this form for your personal records.**

For additional information contact the Office of Human Resources Customer Service Center at:  
**614-292-1050, 800-678-6010, Fax: 614-292-6235, [service@hr.osu.edu](mailto:service@hr.osu.edu) or [hr.osu.edu](http://hr.osu.edu).**

**Return completed form to:** The Ohio State University, Office of Human Resources,  
Retirement Services/Student, Suite 300, 1590 North High Street, Columbus, OH 43201-2190.

New legislation [Section 419(c) of Public Law 108-203, the Social Security Protection Act of 2004] requires state and local government employers to provide a statement to employees hired January 1, 2005, or later in a job not covered under Social Security. The statement explains how a pension from that job could affect future Social Security benefits to which they may become entitled.

Form SSA-1945, **Statement Concerning Your Employment in a Job Not Covered by Social Security**, is the document that employers should use to meet the requirements of the law. The SSA-1945 explains the potential effects of two provisions in the Social Security law for workers who also receive a pension based on their work in a job not covered by Social Security. The Windfall Elimination Provision can affect the amount of a worker's Social Security retirement or disability benefit. The Government Pension Offset Provision can affect a Social Security benefit received as a spouse or an ex-spouse.

**Employers must:**

- Give the statement to the employee prior to the start of employment;
- Get the employee's signature on the form; and
- Submit a copy of the signed form to the pension paying agency.

Social Security will not be setting any additional guidelines for the use of this form.

Copies of the SSA-1945 are available online at the Social Security website, [www.socialsecurity.gov/form1945](http://www.socialsecurity.gov/form1945). Paper copies can be requested via email, [oplmsoswm.rqct.orders@ssa.gov](mailto:oplmsoswm.rqct.orders@ssa.gov) or fax, **410-965-2037**. The request must include the name, complete address and telephone number of the employer. Forms will not be sent to a post office box. Also, if appropriate, include the name of the person to whom the forms are to be delivered. The forms are available in packages of 25. Please refer to Inventory Control Number (ICN) 276950 when ordering.