

2003 Legislative Changes

No major benefit changes were enacted by the General Assembly. However, several significant pieces of legislation were enacted by the Rhode Island General Assembly. Here is a summary of the relevant legislation:

Public Law 03-245 - An Act Relating to Cities and Towns - Retirement of Municipal Employees

Retirement on Service Allowance

This act allows pension credit from a military retirement system to count as credit in the MERS system. This bill is the result of litigation against the Employees' Retirement System of Rhode Island. In the case AUGUST ALMEIDA, et al. VS RETIREMENT BOARD OF THE EMPLOYEES RETIREMENT SYSTEM, et al (C.A. NO. 98-383-L), Judge Lagueux found that Rhode Island General Law 36-10-9(5) was pre-empted by the Uniform Services Employment and Re-employment Rights Act. Therefore, this legislation was required in order to make Rhode Island laws comply with federal law.

Public Law 03-155 - An Act Relating to Education

Substitute Teaching and Employment after Retirement

This act added "mentor principal or mentor assistant principal" to allowable vacant positions that may be filled by retired teachers collecting a retirement benefit for up to 90 days in a school year.

Public Law 03-376 — An Act Relating to Making Appropriations for the Support of the State for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2004

Article 25 Relating to Retirement System Administration

Payment of administrative expense of the retirement board and maintaining the retirement system - Restricted receipts account

This act allows transfer of 17.5 basis points (0.175%), where 100 basis points equals 1% of the average total investments before lending activities as reported in the annual report of the Auditor General for the next preceding five fiscal years, to the restricted receipts account for expenses of the retirement board, costs of maintaining the retirement system and the costs of administering the retirement system. This act is two-fold and applies to both the Employees' Retirement System of Rhode Island and the Municipal' Employees Retirement System.