



# **RSA DAY 2026**

## **Benefits Presentation**

***Kelly Knoll, Member Education Counselor***

# Topics of the Day

- **Introduction to IMRF**
- **Understanding Your Benefits**
- **How Your Pension is Calculated**
- **Voluntary Additional Contributions**
- **Member Access Account**





**I**llinois  
**M**unicipal  
**R**etirement  
**F**und

## A defined benefit pension fund for employees of local government

- Pension benefits
- Disability benefits
- Death benefits



# Created by the Illinois General Assembly

## Governed by the Illinois Pension Code

- Began operating in 1941
- In response to economic conditions (Great Depression)
- Social Security was not available to public employees
- Started with 5 employers and \$5,000 in assets





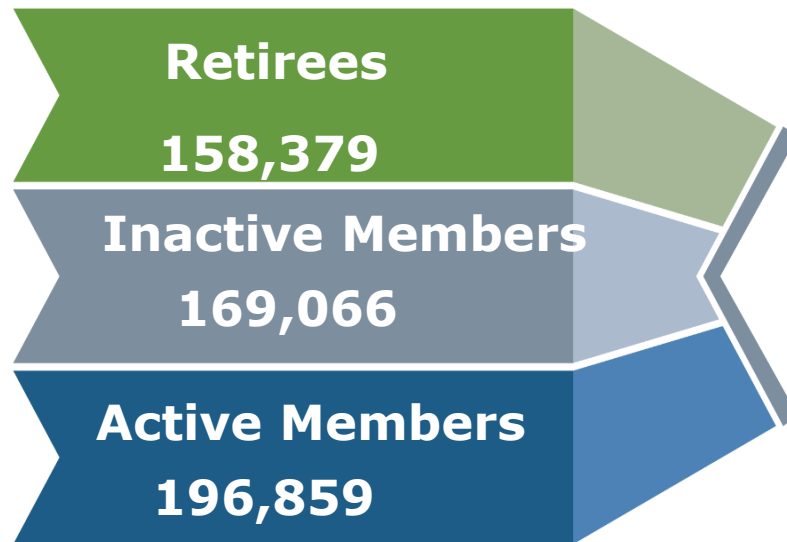
*Locally Funded, Financially Sound.*

- **About 3,062 units of government**
- **Each employer funds retirement costs of its own employees**
- **Full funding goal**
- **Legally enforceable benefits**





# IMRF's Membership



**524,304**

**TOTAL IMRF CUSTOMERS**



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### EMPLOYER DEMOGRAPHICS



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# Pension Dollar

**The IMRF Pension Dollar**  
Pensions are a shared responsibility.

Every dollar paid to IMRF retirees comes from three sources:

**67¢**

IMRF Investment  
Earnings

**22¢**

IMRF  
Employers

**11¢**

IMRF  
Members

*IMRF does not receive any funding from the state of Illinois*



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# Regular Member Contributions

*Regular*  
*4.5%*

*Mandated by IL*  
*State statute*

- **Member contributions are tax-deferred**
- **Established by the Illinois Pension Code**



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# Enrollment in IMRF

- Enrollment is based on number of hours expected to be worked during a 12-month period.
- Each employer has a specific hourly standard.

**600**

*HOUR STANDARD*

**OR**

**1,000**

*HOUR STANDARD*



# Understanding Your Benefits

- Disability
- Death
- Retirement



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# IMRF Disability Protection

**You're covered for IMRF disability 24/7 once you have 12 consecutive months of service**

- Income and service protection
- Protects your retirement and death benefits
- Includes pregnancy
- 30-day waiting period, earnings from employer must stop, workers' comp and Social Security disability offsets



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# Active Member Death Benefit Payments

## Less than 1 year of service

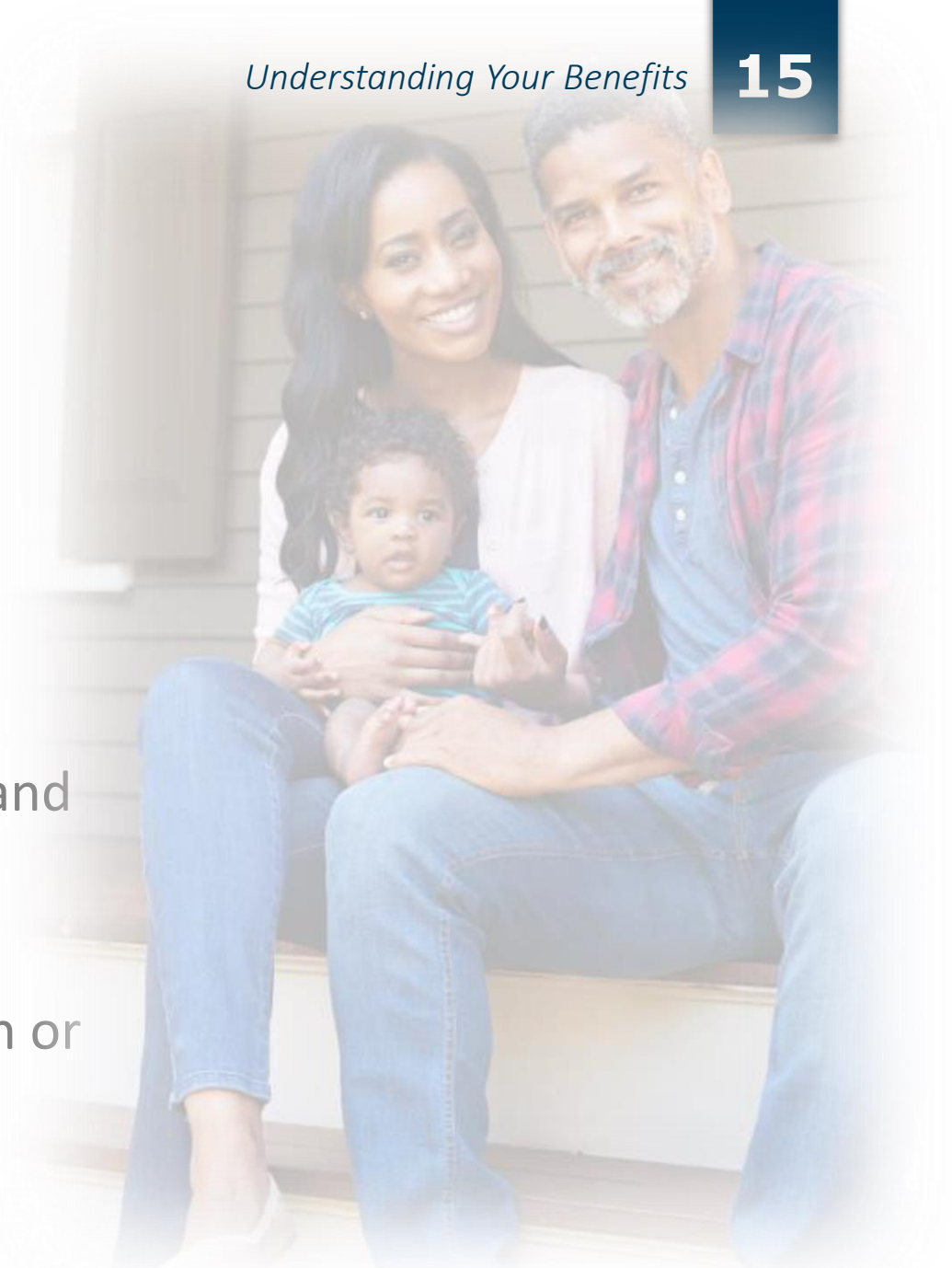
- Return member contributions
- Job-related death—also includes 1 year of earnings

## More than 1 year of service and Active

- 1 year's earnings + member contributions and interest or beneficiary annuity

## Vested and Active

- Eligible spouse can choose survivor pension or lump sum



# What is Your IMRF Pension Amount Based On?



**Final Rate of Earnings (FRE)**



**Years & Months of Service**



**Age at Retirement**





***Member participation began  
prior to January 1, 2011***

***Member participation began  
on or after January 1, 2011***



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# Regular Plan Benefits

## Eligibility

- 8 years service
- Age 55 (earliest age),  
Age 60 (unreduced)

## Reduction if under age 60 or less than 35 years of service

- .25% per month
- Reduction is permanent
- Smallest reduction is applied

AGE	REDUCTION	YEARS OF SERVICE
60	0%	35
59	3%	34
58	6%	33
57	9%	32
56	12%	31
55	15%	30





# Regular Plan Benefits

## Eligibility

- 10 years service
- Age 67 (unreduced), Age 62 (earliest age)

## Reduction if under age 67 or less than 35 years of service

- 0.5% per month
- Reduction is permanent
- Smallest reduction is applied if member has at least 30 years of service credit, but less than 35

AGE	REDUCTION	YEARS OF SERVICE
67	0%	35
66	6%	34
65	12%	33
64	18%	32
63	24%	31
62	30%	30





# How Do You Earn Service Credit?

- **Working for an IMRF employer**
  - full-time
  - part-time
- **Being on IMRF disability**
- **Seasonal position**
- **Unused/unpaid sick time converted to service credit**
  - cannot be used to vest
- **Purchasing service credit**

- Military Service
- SLEP Conversion
- Reinstatement
- Retroactive
- Omitted
- Benefit Protection Leave
- Prior
- Out of State



# Earn Service Credit through Reciprocity

Have you worked for an employer with another Illinois pension system?

- Cook County Employees
- Cook County Forest Preserve
- General Assembly
- Judges
- Laborers' Annuity & Benefit Fund of Chicago
- Chicago Teachers'
- Chicago Park Employees'
- Municipal Employees of Chicago
- Metropolitan Water Reclamation
- State Employees'
- State Teachers'
- State Universities



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# Earnings

- **Reported monthly, and they include:**
  - Regular wages
  - Overtime and vacation pay
  - Back pay and sick pay
  - Bonuses and awards
  - 403(b), 457 Plan do not reduce contributions to IMRF
- **Reportable up to 1 month after your participation terminates**
- **Wage cap**
  - Tier 1 –\$360,000 in 2026 if enrolled after January 1, 1996, Tier 2 - \$129,192



# Unused/Unpaid Sick Time

- Based on your employer's sick time policy, upon termination

<b>1-20</b>	<b>1 month</b>
<b>21-40</b>	<b>2 months</b>
<b>41-60</b>	<b>3 months</b>
<b>61-80</b>	<b>4 months</b>
<b>81-100</b>	<b>5 months</b>
<b>101-120</b>	<b>6 months</b>

<b>121-140</b>	<b>7 months</b>
<b>141-160</b>	<b>8 months</b>
<b>161-180</b>	<b>9 months</b>
<b>181-200</b>	<b>10 months</b>
<b>201-220</b>	<b>11 months</b>
<b>221-240</b>	<b>12 months</b>

## Did You Know?

- Full days are applied
- Pension effective date needs to be within 60 days of the IMRF termination date
- Final employer only, unless retiring from certain educational employers
- Cannot be used to vest



# How Your Pension is Calculated



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## Final Rate of Earnings



*Average of your highest consecutive*  
**\*48 months**



*Average of your highest consecutive*  
**\*96 months**

*\* Over the last 10 years of earnings*



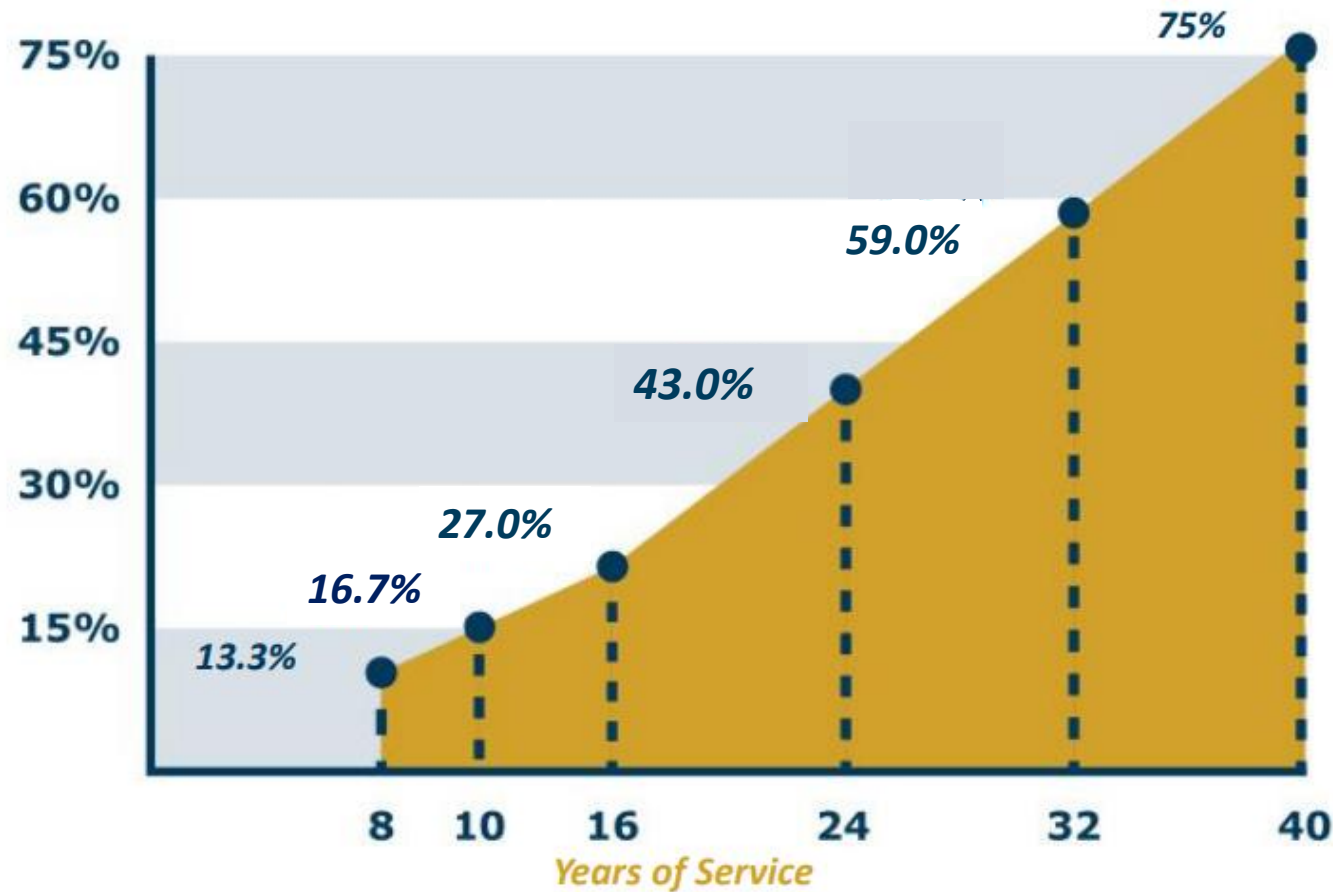
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# Service Determines How Much of Your FRE is Replaced

Each year and month of service is used in the calculation of your pension.



# Service and FRE % Comparison



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# Voluntary Additional Contributions



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# Is the Voluntary Additional Contribution (VAC) Plan Right for You?

## Optional Contributions

- Up to 10% of IMRF earnings
- These contributions are after-tax
- Currently earn interest at the rate of 7.25%
- Credited annually based on previous January 1 balance
- IMRF Form Election to Make or Change Voluntary Additional Contributions



<b>Voluntary Additional Contribution Interest Example</b>	
<b>Year 1 January 1 Opening Balance</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>
VA Contributions made during Year 1	\$400.00
Interest credited on Year 1 December 31 based upon January 1 opening balance of \$0 x 7.25%	\$0.00
<b>Year 2 January 1 Opening Balance</b>	<b>\$400.00</b>
VA Contributions made during Year 2	\$500.00
Interest credited on Year 2 December 31, based upon January 1 opening balance of \$400 x 7.25%	\$29.00
<b>Year 3 January 1 Opening Balance</b>	<b>\$929.00</b>
VA contributions made during Year 3	\$600.00
Interest credited on Year 3 December 31, based upon January 1 opening balance of \$929 x 7.25%	\$67.35
<b>Year 4 January 1 Opening Balance</b>	<b>\$1,596.35</b>



# Voluntary Additional Contribution Example

**VAC SALARY CONTRIBUTION COMPARISON**

Both members **started contributing to VAC at age 40** and earned **\$48,500** with 2% raises each year before retiring at age 67.

<p>Total Benefit</p> <p><b>\$49,486</b></p> <p>or</p> <p><b>\$369</b> monthly*</p> <p>Interest</p> <p><b>\$31,517</b></p> <p>His Contributions</p> <p><b>\$17,970</b></p> <p><i>*gross for life with increases according to your Tier</i></p>	<p><b>1%</b></p> 	<p>Total Benefit</p> <p><b>\$247,433</b></p> <p>or</p> <p><b>\$1,844</b> monthly*</p> <p>Interest</p> <p><b>\$157,583</b></p> <p>Her Contributions</p> <p><b>\$89,849</b></p> <p><i>*gross for life with increases according to your Tier</i></p>	<p><b>5%</b></p> 
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# VAC Options

**You can withdraw your contributions anytime.**

- If taken before retirement you can only withdraw your contributions, none of the interest accrued.
- No partial refunds while working

**If you contribute to VAC program, here are your options when you retire...**

- **Lifetime monthly annuity payments**
  - Requires minimum of \$4,500 balance at retirement
- **Lump sum payment (if selected)**
  - There will be a tax liability on the “taxable” portion unless that portion is rolled over.
- **Rollover to a qualified retirement account**



# Taking an IMRF Refund

If you stop working for your IMRF employer, you can have 100% of your IMRF contributions returned to you.

- Rollover to other plans
- Paid directly to you
- Taxes and additional tax if under 59-1/2
- Or leave your contributions in IMRF
- Many other IMRF employers

Available in



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# IMRF's Member Access Accounts



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# Many Resources Available Online



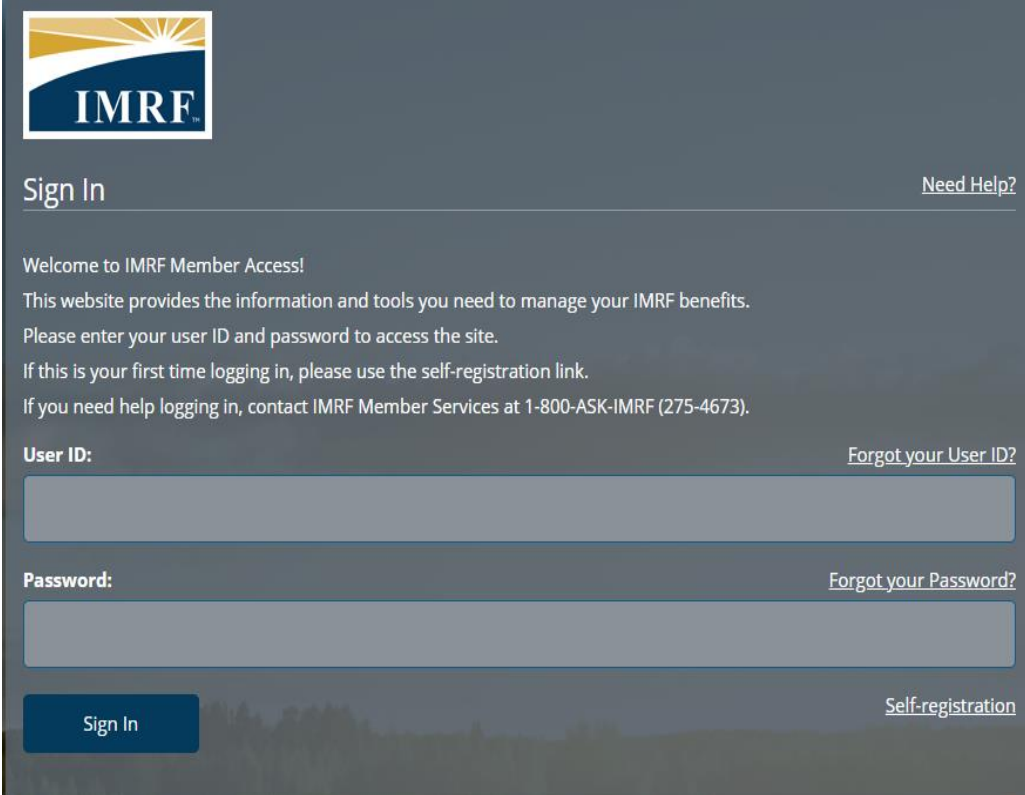
**MEMBER**  
**ACCESS**

## *A great tool for employees!*

- Pension Estimator
- Retirement & Disability Applications
- Service Information
- Personal Benefit Review Registration
- Beneficiary Changes
- Address, Phone and Email Updates

# Member Access Registration

- Member Access webpage – personal email address on file required to register
- Member Access Learning Center –resources to navigate the new website & a self-registration walkthrough video: [Member Access Learning Center \(imrf.org\)](#)



The screenshot shows the IMRF Member Access login page. At the top left is the IMRF logo, which features a stylized sun rising over a blue wave. Below the logo is the text "IMRF". To the right of the logo is the text "Sign In" and a link "Need Help?". Below this is a welcome message: "Welcome to IMRF Member Access! This website provides the information and tools you need to manage your IMRF benefits. Please enter your user ID and password to access the site. If this is your first time logging in, please use the self-registration link. If you need help logging in, contact IMRF Member Services at 1-800-ASK-IMRF (275-4673)." Below the welcome message are two input fields: "User ID:" and "Password:". To the right of the "User ID:" field is a link "Forgot your User ID?". To the right of the "Password:" field is a link "Forgot your Password?". Below the input fields is a "Sign In" button. To the right of the button is a link "Self-registration".



# Member Access Instructions

Text Size: **A A** | Home | Contact Us | Search:

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**Applying for Benefits?**  
Please allow 8 weeks for your benefits to be processed.  
Learn more about what to expect during the benefit application process.  
[CLICK HERE](#)

**IMRF Recent News**

**JANUARY 14, 2026**  
Request for Proposals  
IMRF requests proposals from open-ended diversified core and core plus infrastructure equity funds.  
[LEARN MORE](#)

**JANUARY 5, 2026**  
Highlights of the December 2025 Board Meeting  
Board certifies election results, approves Lavered Amortization Policy, and

**Register for Webinars**

**DECEMBER 1, 2025**  
Authorized Agent Webinars  
Learn about your role as an IMRF Authorized Agent.  
[LEARN MORE](#)

**DECEMBER 1, 2025**  
Employer Access Workshops  
Get assistance with Employer Access.  
[LEARN MORE](#)

**Quick Links**

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[EMPLOYER ACCESS LEARNING CENTER](#)

[MEMBER ACCESS LEARNING CENTER](#)



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**Member Access Learning Center**  
for Active IMRF Members

Welcome to the Member Access Learning Center!

You can find the latest updates from IMRF, answers to frequently asked questions, and "how to" guides on navigating your Member Access account.

Get the latest updates about IMRF from Executive Director Brian Collins in the video below.

**Member Resources**

- Member Access Learning Center
- Member Access Management
- Pension Profile
- Online Tools
- Planning
- Documents
- Appointments and Workshops
- Member Access FAQs

**OPERATIONAL UPDATE**

03:32

# What We've Covered Today

- Introduction to IMRF
- Understanding Your Benefits
- How is Your Pension Calculated?
- Voluntary Additional Contributions
- Member Access Account



# Thank you for joining me!

Any other questions?

Member Services Contact Center

7:30am – 5:30pm, Monday – Friday

1-800-ASK-IMRF (275-4673)

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



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# We value your feedback



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**Please scan the QR code to complete a short survey to help us improve future workshops and webinars.**

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*Thank you for your time and participation.*

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