

Who is Eligible to Receive a COLA in 2020?

Members of fifty-four municipal (MERS) pension plans will receive a cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) in 2020.

All members of these 54 plans who retired *before June 30, 2012* and were previously receiving or eligible for a COLA will receive a COLA beginning the month following their retirement date in 2020. [Click here](#) for a list of MERS plans providing a COLA in 2020.

General MERS members of these MERS plans who retired *after June 30, 2012* will be eligible to receive a COLA three years after their retirement date or at their [Social Security Normal Retirement Age](#), whichever is later.

Police and Fire MERS members of these plans who retired *between July 1, 2012 and June 30, 2015* will be eligible to receive a COLA three years after their retirement date or when they reach age 55, whichever is later.

Police and Fire MERS members of these plans who retired *after June 30, 2015* will be eligible to receive a COLA three years after their retirement date or when they reach age 50, whichever is later.

Teachers' Survivor Benefits: Current eligible beneficiaries of the Teachers' Survivor Benefit receive the same COLA granted to members of Social Security. The increase, which begins in January 2020, is 1.6% as announced by the Social Security Administration in [October 2019](#).

How is the COLA calculated?

Eligible retirees of the 54 MERS plans will see an increase of 1.56% on the first \$27,184 of their annual pension benefit for calendar year 2020.

The Teachers' Survivor Benefits plan COLA is determined by the [Social Security Administration](#).

How is it determined which plans get COLAs and which plans do not?

Municipal plans that are part of MERS, and have adopted a COLA provision, provide a 2020 COLA when the actuary determines the individual plan is at least 80% funded as of June 30, 2019.

Plans that have chosen not to offer a COLA and plans that are not 80% funded do not provide a COLA to members.

Recipients of the Teachers' Survivor Benefit (TSB) will receive a COLA as determined by the Social Security Administration. **NOTE:** There may be years that the Social Security Administration does not grant a COLA.

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This information is prepared exclusively for use by members of the Employees' Retirement System of Rhode Island. It is not intended as a substitute for the Rhode Island General Laws (R.I.G.L.) nor will its interpretation prevail should a conflict arise between the contents of this summary and R.I.G.L. s. Rules governing retirement are subject to change periodically either by statute of the Rhode Island Legislature or by regulation of ERSRI