

**6.505 Election to participate -- Amendment of benefits and rights -- Contribution -- Effect on membership in other retirement plans -- Repurchase of Kentucky Employees Retirement System credit lost by refund.**

- (1) (a) Each legislator in office on July 1, 1980, may within thirty (30) days after that date, and any legislator thereafter taking office may within thirty (30) days after the date thereof, elect to make monthly contributions to the Legislators' Retirement Plan, in an amount equal to five percent (5%) of his monthly creditable compensation, as defined in KRS 61.510(13), or the amount specified by paragraph (d) of this subsection. The election shall be effective to establish membership in the plan as of July 1, 1980, or as of the date from which the thirty (30) day period is measured, as the case may be. Provided, however, that any legislator who was in office on July 1, 1980, and who is in office at the time he makes the election may, after the expiration of the thirty (30) day period and until May 1, 1982, make the election, in which event he shall pay to the Legislators' Retirement Plan, for the months between July 1, 1980, and the date of his election such sum as, when added to any member's contribution by him that is transferred from another retirement system under KRS 6.535, will equal the member's contribution required by this section. If the member makes his election after February 1, 1981, he shall in addition pay to the plan interest on the foregoing sum, at six percent (6%) per annum, calculated as if the sum consisted of equal monthly payments, one (1) of which was due at the end of each month between July 1, 1980, and the date the election was made. The election shall be addressed to and filed with the secretary of the Finance and Administration Cabinet and shall constitute an authorization to the secretary to thereafter cause to be deducted from the member's monthly creditable compensation an amount equal to five percent (5%) thereof, as a voluntarily elected contribution by the member towards the funding of the Legislators' Retirement Plan.
- (b)
  1. For a member who begins participating in the Legislators' Retirement Plan prior to January 1, 2014, the election shall operate to create an inviolable contract between such member and the Commonwealth, guaranteeing to and vesting in the member the rights and benefits provided for under KRS 6.515 to 6.530, except that the General Assembly reserves the right to amend, reduce, or suspend any legislative changes to the provisions of KRS 6.500 to 6.577 that become effective on or after July 1, 2018.
  2.
    - a. For members who begin participating in the Legislators' Retirement Plan on or after January 1, 2014, the General Assembly reserves the right to amend, suspend, or reduce the benefits and rights provided under KRS 6.500 to 6.577 if, in its judgment, the welfare of the Commonwealth so demands, except that the amount of benefits the member has accrued at the time of amendment, suspension, or reduction shall not be affected.
    - b. For purposes of this subparagraph, the amount of benefits the

member has accrued at the time of amendment, suspension, or reduction shall be limited to the accumulated account balance the member has accrued at the time of amendment, suspension, or reduction.

- c. The provisions of this subsection shall not be construed to limit the General Assembly's authority to change any other benefit or right specified by KRS 6.500 to 6.577, for members who begin participating in the Legislators' Retirement Plan on or after January 1, 2014, except the benefits specified by subparagraph 2.b. of this paragraph.
  3. The provisions of this paragraph shall not be construed to limit the General Assembly's authority to amend, reduce, or suspend the benefits and rights of members of the Legislators' Retirement Plan as provided by KRS 6.500 to 6.577 that the General Assembly had the authority to amend, reduce, or suspend, prior to July 1, 2013.
- (c) An election once made under this section either to participate or not to participate in the Legislators' Retirement Plan, shall be considered to apply to all future service as a legislator except as provided by KRS 21.374 or 21.385(3), whether in the same or a different office as a legislator, and whether or not it is in successive terms.
- (d) Notwithstanding the provisions of this subsection:
1. A legislator who becomes a member of the Legislators' Retirement Plan on or after September 1, 2008, but prior to January 1, 2014, shall make monthly contributions to the Legislators' Retirement Plan in an amount equal to six percent (6%) of his monthly creditable compensation, as defined in KRS 61.510(13);
  2. A legislator who becomes a member of the Legislators' Retirement Plan on or after January 1, 2014, shall make monthly contributions to the Legislators' Retirement Plan in an amount equal to six percent (6%) of his or her monthly creditable compensation, as defined in KRS 61.510(13), of which:
    - a. Five percent (5%) of his or her monthly creditable compensation, as defined in KRS 61.510(13), shall be used to provide funding for benefits provided under KRS 21.402; and
    - b. One percent (1%) of his or her monthly creditable compensation, as defined in KRS 61.510(13), shall be used exclusively to help fund retiree health benefits as provided by KRS 6.577 and shall not be refunded to the member if the member withdraws his or her accumulated account balance as provided by KRS 21.460. The amounts deducted under this subdivision shall be credited to an account established pursuant to 26 U.S.C. sec. 401(h), within the fund established by KRS 6.530.
- (2) A legislator entitled to elect membership in the retirement system who failed to

elect membership within thirty (30) days after taking office may elect membership not later than August 31, 2005. An election, upon being made pursuant to this section, shall operate to create an inviolable contract between the member entitled to elect membership under this subsection and the Commonwealth, guaranteeing to and vesting in the member the rights and benefits provided for under the terms and conditions of KRS 6.500 to 6.577, except that the General Assembly reserves the right to amend, reduce, or suspend any legislative changes to the provisions of KRS 6.500 to 6.577 that become effective on or after July 1, 2018.

- (3) When any legislator makes a delayed election of membership in the Legislators' Retirement Plan under subsection (2) of this section, his active membership in the Kentucky Employees Retirement System shall terminate, as of the date his membership in the Legislators' Retirement Plan becomes effective, and any credit in the Kentucky Employees Retirement System, earned for service as a legislator, which he then has or which he subsequently regains while being an active member of the Legislators' Retirement Plan, shall be transferred to and counted as service credit in the Legislators' Retirement Plan, and shall no longer constitute credit in the Kentucky Employees Retirement System, except for the purpose of validating any other credit in that system if the member pays the difference, if any, between the amount transferred from the Kentucky Employees Retirement System and the actuarial value of the transferred service. However, any credit he then has in the Kentucky Employees Retirement System, earned for service in any capacity other than a legislator, shall not be affected. No person may attain credit in more than one (1) of the retirement plans or systems mentioned in this section for the same period of service. When credit is transferred from the Kentucky Employees Retirement System to the Legislators' Retirement Plan, the Kentucky Employees Retirement System shall transfer to the Legislators' Retirement Fund an amount equal to the employee's and employer's contributions attributable to that credit, together with interest on the contributions from the date made to the date of transfer at the actuarially assumed interest rate of the Kentucky Employees Retirement System in effect at the time the contributions were made, compounded annually at that same interest rate.
- (4) The state shall, solely for the purpose of compliance with Section 414(h) of the United States Internal Revenue Code, pick up the employee contributions required by this section for all compensation earned after August 1, 1982, and the contributions so picked up shall be treated as employer contributions in determining tax treatment under the United States Internal Revenue Code and KRS 141.010. The picked-up employee contribution shall satisfy all obligations to the retirement system satisfied prior to August 1, 1982, by the employee contribution, and the picked-up employee contribution shall be in lieu of an employee contribution. The state shall pay these picked-up employee contributions from the same source of funds which is used to pay earnings to the employee. The employee shall have no option to receive the contributed amounts directly instead of having them paid by the employer to the system. Employee contributions picked up after August 1, 1982, shall be treated for all purposes of KRS 6.500 to 6.535 in the same manner and to the same extent as employer contributions made prior to August 1, 1982.

- (5) When any legislator elects membership in the Legislators' Retirement Plan in accordance with this section, his active membership in the Kentucky Employees Retirement System, State Police Retirement System, County Employees Retirement System, or Teachers' Retirement System shall terminate, as of the date his membership in the Legislators' Retirement Plan becomes effective, and any credit in such other system or systems, earned for service as a legislator, which he then has or which he subsequently regains while being an active member of the Legislators' Retirement Plan, shall be transferred to and counted as service credit in the Legislators' Retirement Plan, and shall no longer constitute credit in such other retirement system except for the purpose of validating any other credit in that system. However, any credit he then has in such other retirement system, earned for service in any capacity other than a legislator, shall not be affected. No person may attain credit in more than one (1) of the retirement plans or systems mentioned in this section, for the same period of service.
- (6) A member of the Legislators' Retirement Plan who would be entitled, under KRS 61.552, to repurchase credit in the Kentucky Employees Retirement System, for previous service as a legislator, which credit had been lost by refund of contributions, may pay the amount required by KRS 61.552 directly to the Legislators' Retirement Plan and thereby obtain credit in that plan for such service, rather than making payment to the Kentucky Employees Retirement System for credit which would be transferred to the Legislators' Retirement Plan. In such event, the Kentucky Employees Retirement System shall transfer to the Legislators' Retirement Plan an amount equal to the employer's contributions that originally were made to the Kentucky Employees Retirement System for the regained service credit, with interest as provided in KRS 6.535. Six (6) months' current service shall be required in the Legislators' Retirement Plan in order for the repurchased credit to remain in force, the same as provided in KRS 61.552. Service purchased under this subsection on or after January 1, 2014, shall not be used to determine the member's participation date in the Legislators' Retirement Plan.

**Effective:** July 14, 2018

**History:** Amended 2018 Ky. Acts ch. 107, sec. 1, effective July 14, 2018; ch. 171, sec. 63, effective April 14, 2018; and ch. 207, sec. 63, effective April 27, 2018. -- Amended 2014 Ky. Acts ch. 71, sec. 3, effective July 15, 2014. -- Amended 2013 Ky. Acts ch. 120, sec. 13, effective July 1, 2013. -- Amended 2008 (1st Extra. Sess.) Ky. Acts ch. 1, sec. 3, effective June 27, 2008. -- Amended 2005 Ky. Acts ch. 86, sec. 2, effective June 20, 2005. -- Amended 1990 Ky. Acts ch. 476, Pt. VII D, sec. 640, effective April 11, 1990. -- Amended 1984 Ky. Acts ch. 111, sec. 10, effective July 13, 1984. -- Amended 1982 Ky. Acts ch. 166, sec. 6, effective July 15, 1982; and ch. 458, sec. 4, effective April 15, 1982. -- Created 1980 Ky. Acts ch. 407, sec. 13, effective July 1, 1980.

**Legislative Research Commission Note (7/14/2018).** This statute was amended by 2018 Ky. Acts chs. 107, 171, and 207, which do not appear to be in conflict and have been codified together.