Date of Hearing: June 24, 2026

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT AND RETIREMENT
Tina S. McKinnor, Chair
SB 1444 (Committee on Labor, Public Employment and Retirement) – As Amended April 23, 2026

SENATE VOTE: 36-0

SUBJECT: Employment

The committee is informed that this bill was heard and passed by the Assembly Committee on Insurance (17-0) on June 17, 2026. As such, this writing only discusses matters that are germane to the jurisdiction of this committee. Please refer to that committee's analysis for a discussion of matters germane to its jurisdiction.

SUMMARY: Extends the timeframe under which a California Public Employees' Retirement System (CalPERS) member can modify their post-retirement option beneficiary designation from 30 to 60 days after the making of the first payment, *among other provisions that are not within the jurisdiction of this committee.*

EXISTING LAW:

1) Establishes the Public Employees' Retirement Law, administered by CalPERS, to effect economy and efficiency in the public service by providing a means whereby employees who become superannuated or otherwise incapacitated may, without hardship or prejudice, be replaced by more capable employees, and to that end provide a retirement system consisting of retirement compensation and death benefits. (Sections 20000 et seq., Gov. Code.)

2) Establishes that public pension or retirement boards have sole and exclusive fiduciary responsibility over the assets of the system; sole and exclusive responsibility to administer the system in a manner that will assure prompt delivery of benefits and related services to participants and their beneficiaries, and among other things, must discharge their duties with the respect to the system with care, skill, prudence, and diligence under the circumstances then prevailing that a prudent person acting in a like capacity and familiar with these matters would use in the conduct of an enterprise of a like character and like aims. (Section 17, art. XVI, Cal. Const.)

3) Authorizes a CalPERS member to elect from among several optional settlements for the purpose of structuring the member's retirement allowance, and requires a member to make an election, revocation, or change of election within 30 calendar days after the making of the first payment on account of any retirement allowance or, in the event of a change of retirement status after retirement, within 30 calendar days after making the first payment on account of that change in retirement status. (Section 21472, Gov. Code.)

FISCAL EFFECT: This bill was passed by the Senate Committee on Appropriations pursuant to Senate Rule 28.8.

COMMENTS:

Background

A CalPERS member may provide a lifetime allowance to a designated beneficiary upon the member's death by selecting an optional settlement, i.e., contract, for a reduction to their unmodified pension allowance. Under current law, the member may make a change to their option beneficiary prior to receiving their first pension check, which occurs approximately 30 days after their retirement date.

This Bill

Among other things, this bill provides CalPERS members an *additional* 30 days to modify their option beneficiary to ensure they have fully considered the lifelong consequence to their pension benefit before their selection becomes irrevocable.

To the extent that a member receives their first retirement allowance payment and thereafter, decides to modify their original election within 60 calendar days after they retire, the member may receive two retirement allowance payments during that period. Depending on the member's modification, subsequent retirement allowance payments to the member may require an actuarial adjustment (reduction or increase) for a period of time to actuarially account for, and reflect, changes resulting from their modification.

Comment by the Assembly Committee on Labor and Employment

Due to schedule constraints prior to legislative deadlines to timely consider this bill where it could not be referred to, and heard by, the Assembly Committee on Labor and Employment that also has jurisdiction over certain provisions, the following information below was received from that committee:

> "In addition to non-substantive, technical amendments to the Labor Code, this bill updates the methods by which notice may be served on parties to an action on a wage claim. The bill provides that notice of both the hearing and the issuance of an order, decision or award may be served by any manner that the parties agree to accept service, including electronic service. The bill would further require that a party represented by an attorney provide the Labor Commissioner with the attorney's electronic address and agree to accept the notice by electronic service. These changes will help ensure that notice of each key step in the wage claim process is timely served on all parties."

Author's Statement

"This omnibus bill makes statutory updates to improve efficiency, clarity, and modernization across several state programs."

Comments by Supporters

The Association of California State Supervisors states, "[this bill] will ensure that CalPERS members have ample time to make an informed decision regarding the long-term impact of their selection."

The California State Retirees offer substantially similar statements in support of this bill.

Comments by Opponents

None on file.

Prior or Related Legislation

Chapter 199, Statutes of 2016 (Assembly Bill 2404, Cooley) eliminated and combined several of the optional retirement benefit settlements available to CalPERS members; Judges' Retirement System (JRS) members, and JRS II members who retire on or after January 1, 2018, in order to simplify members' retirement choices and administration of these retirement systems.

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:

Support

Association of California State Supervisors
California Professional Firefighters
California State Retirees

Opposition

None on file.

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