



Commonwealth of Massachusetts
MIDDLESEX COUNTY RETIREMENT SYSTEM
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September 2024

TO: All Active Members

RE: Important information on Veterans' Buybacks

This notice is for all active members of the Middlesex County Retirement System ("MCRS") who qualify as a "Veteran" under the definition set forth in the retirement plan, M.G.L. c. 32, § 1. If you wish to purchase credit for your prior military service and have not entered into an agreement with MCRS to do so, *or*, if you have entered an agreement, but have not commenced payments, please read this notice carefully as there have been significant changes to the Veterans' Buybacks law.

The HERO Act

On August 8, 2024, Chapter 178 of the Acts of 2024, commonly referred to as "The HERO Act," was enacted into law by the Legislature and Governor Healey. The law removes the prior 180-day statutory deadline for purchasing military service and replaces it with a deadline of within one year of vesting in the retirement system, which is effectively 11 years of creditable service. The new law also provides a one-time, one-year grace period for active member Veterans who missed the opportunity to purchase their military service prior to the enactment of the HERO Act.

It is important to note that the purchase requirements have not changed:

- You may purchase up to four years of your qualifying military service.
- The cost is 10% of your salary when you first established membership in a retirement system for each year of military service you wish to purchase. If you took a refund of your contributions and later returned to public service, the cost is 10% of your salary when you last reestablished membership.
- MCRS allows payment for the military service purchase to be made with a one-time payment or by an installment plan not exceeding 4 years.

Next Steps

I. If you are a Veteran who has **completed** your military service purchase, or you are a Veteran **currently making payments under an existing installment plan** with MCRS, no action is necessary.

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II. If you are a Veteran who **HAS NOT** entered into an agreement with MCRS, and you have completed **MORE** than 11 years of creditable service, **you have until August 8, 2025 to do so.** Contact MCRS to take action.

III. If you are a Veteran who **HAS NOT** entered into an agreement with MCRS, and you have completed **LESS** than 11 years of creditable service, you have until the **LATER** of the two following dates to do so: prior to completion of your 11th year of creditable service, **OR**, August 8, 2025. Contact MCRS to take action.

IV. If you are a Veteran who **HAS** entered into an agreement with MCRS, but **HAS NOT MADE PAYMENTS** against the invoice you received, you have until the **LATER** of the two following dates to do so: prior to completion of your 11th year of creditable service, **OR**, August 8, 2025. Contact MCRS to take action.

If you have any questions regarding this notice or wish to purchase your military service, please email our office at mrs@middlesexretirement.org. The application is also available on our website at www.middlesexretirement/resources.org.

Thank you.