

Military Service Credit



Office of the New York State Comptroller
Thomas P. DiNapoli



NYSLRS

New York State and Local Retirement System

A Message from Comptroller Thomas P. DiNapoli



If you are a veteran, or are currently serving in any of the branches of the United States military, you have our sincere appreciation. We at NYSLRS, along with all New Yorkers, owe you a debt of gratitude for your service to our country.

As a past or present member of the military, you should know that you may be eligible to receive additional service credit toward your retirement benefit for your military service.

This brochure can help you determine if you are eligible to purchase or receive any additional credit for your military service. Please read it carefully and contact us with any questions you might have.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tom DiNapoli". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the beginning.

Thomas P. DiNapoli
State Comptroller

Eligibility

If you were honorably discharged from service in the United States Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps or Coast Guard, or as a commissioned officer in the United States Public Health Service, you may be eligible to receive credit for your military service.

Chapter 41 of the Laws of 2016 was signed into law on May 31, 2016. It enables eligible NYSLRS members to buy up to three years of active military service toward their retirement, regardless of when or where they served, and removed the requirement that military service occur during specific periods of hostilities. Veterans must have been honorably discharged, have at least five years of credited service in the Retirement System, have not received credit for this service in any other public retirement system in New York State, and apply for and purchase military service credit prior to retirement.

In addition, there are other laws that allow the crediting of military service toward retirement benefits. Once we receive your request for military service credit, we will determine which section is applicable and if you qualify. You can review the eligibility requirements under the different statutes by visiting our Military Service Credit page at www.osc.state.ny.us/retire/members/military-service-credit.php.

Buying Military Service Credit

In most cases, there is a cost to receive retirement service credit for time served in the military. You must submit your request and purchase your military service credit before your retirement date.

In most cases, buying additional service credit will increase your retirement benefit. However, if you are close to the maximum service credit allowed for your retirement plan, the additional service credit may not benefit you.

How to Estimate Your Pension

Most members can estimate their retirement benefit with and without military service credit by visiting our website at www.osc.state.ny.us/retire/index.php and clicking on the Project Your Pension Benefits (Calculator) link under “Planning.”

In the box for total years of service, enter your estimated service credit at retirement with and without the military service. This may help you decide whether purchasing military credit is a good choice for you.

If you are in one of the groups below, you currently cannot estimate your retirement benefit using our benefit calculator. You can contact our Call Center for assistance in determining whether purchasing credit for your military service would be beneficial:

- ERS Tier 5 and 6 members in the Article 15 retirement plan;
- Certain ERS members in special 20- or 25-year retirement plans; and
- PFRS members who joined on or after July 1, 2009.

How to Get Military Service Credit

To learn if you qualify, or to request credit for your military service, send a letter and a copy of your Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty form (DD-214) for all periods of active service to:

NYSLRS
Military Service Unit
110 State Street
Albany, NY 12244-0001

Fax: 518-486-6405 or 518-402-7799

Once we receive your request, we will advise you of your eligibility and the cost, if any, to purchase this credit. If there is a cost, you may use any of the following methods to pay for it:

1. Through payroll deductions — The length of time to purchase your military credit cannot exceed the total credit you are purchasing. For example, if you are buying one year of military credit, payment must be completed within a year.
2. Send us a single lump sum payment.
3. Authorize a trustee-to-trustee transfer. We can accept transfers only from certain types of plans. Details will be provided in our letter notifying you of the cost.

Obtaining Your Military Records

If you do not have your DD-214 and you were discharged from the U.S. Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps or Coast Guard, you may request a copy by visiting the National Archives' website at www.archives.gov/veterans/military-service-records/index.html to submit a Request Pertaining to Military Records (SF-180).

You can also write the Archives at:

National Personnel Records Center
1 Archives Drive
St. Louis, MO 63138

Fax: 314-801-9195

Veterans who have been separated from active service, but have Reserve status, should contact the Reserve component of the appropriate branch of service.

Recently discharged National Guard members, in most cases, will not be able to get their military records from the NPRC until six months after discharge because of required processing. Veterans currently in the National Guard should contact the Adjutant General's Office of New York State.

Where to Get More Information

For more information regarding military service credit, visit our Military Service Credit page at: **www.osc.state.ny.us/retire/members/military-service-credit.php**.

You can also contact our Call Center toll-free at 1-866-805-0990, or 518-474-7736 in the Albany, New York area, or email us, using our secure form, through our Contact Us page at **www.osc.state.ny.us/retire/contact_us/index.php**.

VO1723

Printed 8/16

Content Last Revised 8/16

© 2016 New York State and Local Retirement System

Printed on recycled paper



This publication provides a general summary of membership benefits, rights and responsibilities, and is not a substitute for any New York State or federal law. For specific information about your benefits, please contact us.