

Retiree Medical Automatic Premium Deduction

Frequently Asked Questions

The Seattle Housing Authority (SHA) is offering retirees enrolled under the City Retiree Medical plan the option of having their monthly medical premiums deducted from their Washington State Retirement Pension. This change will provide you the opportunity to have your premiums paid automatically; thereby, eliminating the need for you to submit a check each month and ensuring your coverage will continue without worry. The following questions about the automatic deduction may help clarify any concerns you may have:

What is the reason for SHA offering the automatic premium deduction to retirees?

SHA continues to streamline and improve our processes so we can better serve our customers. This process has several advantages for you, as follows:

- **Convenience** – no need for you to make a trip to the bank and/or post office to send your monthly payment.
- **Peace of mind** – you no longer have to worry about your payment being missed or delayed due travel, unavailability or severe weather conditions.
- **Saves you money** – no need to spend money for postage, purchasing a money order or paying your bank to make a stop payment if your check gets lost in the mail.

- **Security**- you no longer have to worry whether your check is received or was lost.

How do I sign up for the automatic deduction for my health benefits premium?

Retirees need to sign the attached Retiree Authorization Deduction form and submit it to Seattle Housing Authority by April 2. Your first deduction will begin on your April 30th pension check, for your May coverage. If you do not submit the form by April 2, please contact Maria Sahagun at (206) 615-3328 to check the next critical date.

Will there be an additional fee for the retiree in setting up the automatic deduction?

No, this has no cost to the retiree. In fact, it will save you money in spending postage, checks, etc.

How will I know when there is a rate change?

Seattle Housing Authority will notify you when there is a rate change. SHA will also notify DRS to update your deductions.

What if I find a less expense insurance plan? How do I terminate my automatic deduction and/or coverage?

You will need to notify SHA in writing that you want to terminate your benefits coverage and automatic premium deduction from your pension check under Washington State. If SHA receives your request by the 15th of the month (before the month of coverage), DRS will be able to stop your deduction at the end of the month. If your request is received after the 15th of the month, SHA will reimburse you for the premium deduction.

Please be sure to send you termination letter the month before you want your coverage to be terminated.

Do I notify DRS if I have a question on my benefit coverage?

DRS will not be able to answer benefit questions; you need to contact your insurance provider directly regarding the details of your benefits.

Do I need to provide my checking/savings account number to DRS?

No, this has no effect on your savings or checking account. DRS only need your signed authorization to deduct the payment from your monthly Washington State pension.

What if I noticed that there is a discrepancy in my monthly premium deduction?

Notify Maria Sahagun at the Seattle Housing Authority at (206) 615-3328 immediately if you see a discrepancy, or if you have questions regarding your premium deduction.

The health premium seems to increase each year, what happens if I no longer have enough money to deduct the health benefits premium from my Washington State pension?

If your pension does not cover your monthly health premium deduction, DRS will notify Seattle Housing Authority that you are no longer able to deduct your health premiums. SHA will then inform you that you will need to start sending a monthly check to pay your benefit coverage.

Do I still have the option to continue sending my monthly payment to SHA?

Yes, current retiree participants who retired prior to **May 1, 2012** will continue to have the option of sending their payment each month. It will be mandatory participation for employees who retire after May 1, 2012 and who have enrolled under one of the City Retiree medical plans. Please note that retirees must have enough pension funds to pay for their health premiums.

Note: Retirees who elect to continue sending their monthly premiums, must have their payment received by SHA no later than the 15th of each month for the following month's coverage (for example: for April coverage, payment is due March 15). If payment is not received after the 30-day grace period may result on termination of coverage. Also, we will no longer accept payments for multiple months.

Who do I contact if I want to set up the Retiree automatic premium deduction?

You can contact Maria Sahagun at (206) 615-3328 to request a form.