



Providing Benefits for Life

January 6, 2026

Dear PERS Employer:

The Public Employees' Retirement System of Mississippi (PERS) is holding an election for the state employee representative position on the PERS Board of Trustees for the term that runs from July 1, 2026, to June 30, 2032.

Please share this letter with your employees and direct them to [www.pers.ms.gov](http://www.pers.ms.gov), where interested employees may download the Board of Trustees Candidate Nomination and Petition. Candidates must be state employees and active PERS members with at least 10 years of creditable service.

**Election Schedule: State Employee Representative Term** (*July 1, 2026, through June 30, 2032*)

February 6, 2026	Deadline for receipt of nominations and petitions by PERS (5 p.m.)
February 25, 2026	PERS Board certifies ballot at regularly scheduled meeting
March 10, 2026	PERS mails ballots
April 14, 2026	Deadline for receipt of ballots by PERS (5 p.m.)
April 22, 2026	PERS Board certifies election results at regularly scheduled meeting

**Runoff Schedule:** (*If necessary*)

May 12, 2026	PERS mails ballots for runoff
June 16, 2026	Deadline for receipt of ballots by PERS (5 p.m.)
June 24, 2026	PERS Board certifies election results at regularly scheduled meeting

For further details about the election process, see PERS Board Regulation 17, *Election of Members of the Board* ([www.pers.ms.gov](http://www.pers.ms.gov)). For questions, contact PERS Compliance Counsel Davetta Lee at 601-359-9516, 800-444-7377 ext. 9516, or [dlee@pers.ms.gov](mailto:dlee@pers.ms.gov).

Sincerely,

H. Ray Higgins, Jr.  
Executive Director

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Board of Trustees:

Bill Benson  
County Employees,  
Chair

George Dale  
Retirees,  
Vice Chair

Kelly Breland  
State Employees

Kimberly Hanna  
Municipal Employees

Chris Graham  
Gubernatorial  
Appointee

Randy D. McCoy  
Retirees

David McRae  
State Treasurer

Brian Rutledge  
Institutions of Higher  
Learning Employees

Jay Smith  
Public Schools  
Community/Jr. Colleges

Terrance Yarbrough  
State Employees



## Board of Trustees Candidate Information

**State Employee Representative Election** | July 1, 2026, - June 30, 2032, Term

### Welcome

Thank you for your interest in serving on the Public Employees' Retirement System of Mississippi (PERS) Board of Trustees. We hope the enclosed information helps you learn more about the PERS Board of Trustees and the process for becoming a board member.

### Board Overview

PERS is among the largest financial institutions in the state of Mississippi and provides retirement benefits for all eligible state and public education employees, officers of the Mississippi Highway Patrol, elected members of the State Legislature, the President of the Senate, and other eligible public employees whose employers have elected to participate.

Plans administered include the Public Employees' Retirement System (PERS), which was established by legislation in 1952; the Mississippi Highway Safety Patrol Retirement System (MHSPRS), established in 1958; Mississippi Deferred Compensation Plan & Trust (MDC), established in 1973; the Supplemental Legislative Retirement Plan (SLRP), established in 1989; and the Municipal Retirement Systems (MRS), which came under the System's administration in 1987, and the Optional Retirement Plan for the Institutions of Higher Learning (ORP), which was established in 1990.

The 10-member PERS Board of Trustees is responsible for establishing policies governing general administration and proper operation of the plans administered. The Board includes the

State Treasurer, a gubernatorial appointee who is an active member of PERS, two PERS retirees, two state employees, and one representative each of public schools and community/junior colleges, Institutions of Higher Learning, counties, and municipalities. Other than the Treasurer and the gubernatorial appointee, board members are elected to staggered six-year terms by the members of the constituent group they represent.

All assets of the plans administered are held in trust for the exclusive purpose of providing benefit payments and paying administrative expenses. Board members have a fiduciary duty to manage, invest, and expand these funds in the manner provided by law.

Board members serve on six committees as assigned by the board chair. These committees are Administrative, Audit, Claims, Defined Contribution, Investment, and Legislative.

### Candidate Qualifications

To qualify as a candidate for the PERS Board of Trustees, you must be a current member of the constituent group for which the election is being held and an active member of PERS with at least 10 years of creditable service. You also must submit to PERS a completed *Board of Trustees Candidate Nomination* and *Petition* (see last two pages of this document) by the deadline listed in the cover letter sent to your employer. If you do not have a copy of the cover letter, you can find it posted at [www.pers.ms.gov](http://www.pers.ms.gov) during the election

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process. The front of the nomination provides you the opportunity to share biographical information and provides you instruction on submitting your Candidate Statement. The back of the nomination includes a petition on which you must gather 25 or more signatures from other members in your constituent group to qualify you for the election. The validity of each signature will be verified by PERS before you are considered for candidacy.

Once you have completed the nomination front and back, mail or deliver the sheet and any additional attachments to the Public Employees' Retirement System, c/o Executive Director, 429 Mississippi Street, Jackson, MS 39201. **Neither faxed nor e-mailed petitions will be accepted.** If, after review of your nomination, you are found to meet all requirements for candidacy, you will be notified before the mailing of the ballots. (See cover letter for date.)

## Election Rules

1. Votes cast after the deadline will not be counted.
2. If no candidate receives a majority of the eligible votes cast, the two candidates who receive the most votes will compete in a runoff election.

The runoff election will be handled in the same manner as the primary election. PERS will notify you as to the results of any election in which you are a candidate.

## Service Requirements

Board members must be willing to commit the necessary time required to meet Board obligations. Attendance at board meetings is expected, and members are encouraged to attend all committee meetings. For each board meeting, members typically spend 8 to 15 hours preparing for

and attending board and committee meetings.

In addition, board members are expected to participate in ongoing education and training.

The Board meets for two full days each April, June, August, October, and December, as scheduled the previous year. Other meetings may be called by the board chair from time to time. Teleconference meetings are held when needed.

The Investment Committee meets the day preceding the regularly scheduled board meeting. Other committees generally meet the morning of the regularly scheduled board meeting and may be scheduled more often at the discretion of the committee chair. When an outstanding appeal exists, hearings before the Claims Committee are scheduled to meet the fourth Tuesday of each month in which there is not a regularly scheduled board meeting.

## Compensation

Board members receive \$300 per month as compensation. Necessary travel expenses to attend board meetings are reimbursed for board members residing outside the Jackson metropolitan area.

## For More Information

For details about PERS, the plans it administers, and membership, financial, and investment data, visit [www.pers.ms.gov](http://www.pers.ms.gov).

For details about the election process, refer to PERS Board Regulation 17, *Election of Members of the Board*, at [www.pers.ms.gov/Content/Documents/Regulations/Reg17.pdf](http://www.pers.ms.gov/Content/Documents/Regulations/Reg17.pdf).

If you have any additional questions, please contact PERS Compliance Counsel Davetta Lee at 601-359-9516 or [dlee@pers.ms.gov](mailto:dlee@pers.ms.gov).



# Board of Trustees Candidate Nomination

**State Employee Representative Election** | July 1, 2026, - June 30, 2032, Term

Mail or deliver form, with signed petition, and any attachments to PERS c/o Executive Director by the deadline listed on your employer's cover letter (available at [www.pers.ms.gov](http://www.pers.ms.gov) during election process). See bottom of form for contact information.

## 1 Candidate Nomination and Information – Please type.

This form and petition are to formally nominate the below-listed individual as a candidate for election to a six-year term on the Public Employees' Retirement System of Mississippi (PERS) Board of Trustees.

First Name: \_\_\_\_\_ MI: \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Preferred Title: \_\_\_\_\_ Gender: ☐ M ☐ F Social Security No. (last four digits only): \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ ☐ Cellular ☐ Home ☐ Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ ☐ Cellular ☐ Home ☐ Work

Birth Date mm/dd/ccyy: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

## 2 Candidate Biography – Please type, and avoid using any abbreviations. Should you qualify as a candidate, the information you provide below will be included on the ballots, which will be mailed to eligible voters. Please note that the biographical portion of the ballot is limited to 25 words; therefore, the information you provide may be edited, if necessary, to include only 25 words.

Current Employer: \_\_\_\_\_ Current Job Title: \_\_\_\_\_

College: \_\_\_\_\_ Field: \_\_\_\_\_ ☐ Bachelor's ☐ Master's ☐ Doctorate ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

College: \_\_\_\_\_ Field: \_\_\_\_\_ ☐ Bachelor's ☐ Master's ☐ Doctorate ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

Relevant Experience, Awards, Licenses, and Memberships:

## 3 Candidate Statement – Please type a Candidate Statement of no more than 500 characters (approximately 100 words) to be included with your biographical information on the ballot should you qualify as a candidate. Your statement should address why voters should elect you to the Board. If your statement is typed on a separate sheet of paper, attach it to your form. Your statement must accompany your completed form and petition when submitting your nomination. **Note:** PERS does not edit Candidate Statements; therefore, any misspellings or grammatical errors will not be corrected after the statement is submitted to PERS. Statements longer than permitted will be cut to 500 characters (approximately 100 words).

## 4 Candidate Authorization – Please sign the section below by hand in blue or black ink.

I hereby certify that I am an active member of Public Employees' Retirement System of Mississippi (PERS) with at least 10 years of creditable service and, therefore, am eligible to hold the position of representative on the PERS Board of Trustees. Should I qualify as a candidate for the PERS Board of Trustees, I authorize PERS to include the information I have provided in the Candidate Biography section and to publish my Candidate Statement as part of the PERS Board of Trustees Ballot.

Candidate Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date mm/dd/ccyy: \_\_\_\_\_

## 5 Employer Acknowledgment of Commitment to Service – Please have your employer sign the section below by hand in blue or black ink. The below employer acknowledgement is not required for candidacy but is recommended to ensure the requirements for PERS Board service are met.

I acknowledge the above-listed candidate is an employee of the agency for which I serve as the appointing authority or agency head, and he or she has notified me of his or her intention to seek the position as a representative to the PERS Board of Trustees. My agency authorizes his or her candidacy with the understanding that, if elected, he or she may require time away from his or her regular work duties and/or responsibilities.


Agency Head Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date mm/dd/ccyy: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_



## Petition

**State Employee Representative Election** | July 1, 2026, - June 30, 2032, Term

*This petition is only valid if certified by signatures and accompanying Social Security numbers of at least 25 members from the same constituent group as the potential candidate.  Attach an additional page, if necessary. The validity of each signature will be verified by PERS before you are considered for candidacy.*

We, the undersigned, certify that we are members of PERS-covered plans and are eligible to participate in this election.

We hereby nominate \_\_\_\_\_ as a candidate for our representative on the PERS Board of Trustees.

Signature of Employee	Printed Full Legal Name of Employee	Social Security No. of Employee (last four digits only)
1. _____	_____	_____
2. _____	_____	_____
3. _____	_____	_____
4. _____	_____	_____
5. _____	_____	_____
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29. _____	_____	_____
30. _____	_____	_____

Detach and complete front and back