

2021 Kansas Statutes

74-4927. Plan of death and long-term disability benefits; employer contributions, limitation; optional death benefit plan; naming of beneficiaries. (1) The board may establish a plan of death and long-term disability benefits to be paid to the members of the retirement system as provided by this section. The long-term disability benefit shall be payable in accordance with the terms of such plan as established by the board, except that for any member who is disabled prior to the effective date of this act, the annual disability benefit amount shall be an amount equal to 66²/₃% of the member's annual rate of compensation on the date such disability commenced. Such plan shall provide that:

(A) The right to receive such long-term disability benefit shall cease: (i) For a member who becomes eligible for such benefit before attaining age 60, upon the date that such member attains age 65 or the date of such member's retirement, whichever first occurs; and (ii) for a member who becomes eligible for such benefit at or after attaining age 60, the date that such member has received such benefit for a period of five years, or upon the date of such member's retirement, whichever first occurs.

(B) Long-term disability benefit payments shall be in lieu of any accidental total disability benefit that a member may be eligible to receive under K.S.A. 74-4916(3), and amendments thereto. The member must make an initial application for social security disability benefits and, if denied such benefits, the member must pursue and exhaust all administrative remedies of the social security administration that include, but are not limited to, reconsideration and hearings. Such plan may provide that any amount that a member receives as a social security benefit or a disability benefit or compensation from any source by reason of any employment including, but not limited to, workers compensation benefits may be deducted from the amount of long-term disability benefit payments under such plan. However, in no event shall the amount of long-term disability benefit payments under such plan be reduced by any amounts a member receives as a supplemental disability benefit or compensation from any source by reason of the member's employment, provided such supplemental disability benefit or compensation is based solely upon the portion of the member's monthly compensation that exceeds the maximum monthly compensation taken into account under such plan. As used in this paragraph, "maximum monthly compensation" means the dollar amount that results from dividing the maximum monthly disability benefit payable under such plan by the percentage of compensation that is used to calculate disability benefit payments under such plan. During the period in which such member is pursuing such administrative remedies prior to a final decision of the social security administration, social security disability benefits may be estimated and may be deducted from the amount of long-term disability benefit payments under such plan. If the social security benefit, workers compensation benefit, other income or wages or other disability benefit by reason of employment other than a supplemental benefit based solely on compensation in excess of the maximum monthly compensation taken into account under such plan, or any part thereof, is paid in a lump-sum, the amount of the reduction shall be calculated on a monthly basis over the period of time for which the lump-sum is given. As used in this section, "workers compensation benefits" means the total award of disability benefit payments under the workers compensation act notwithstanding any payment of attorney fees from such benefits as provided in the workers compensation act.

(C) The plan may include other provisions relating to: Qualifications for benefits; schedules and graduation of benefits; limitations of eligibility for benefits by reason of termination of employment or membership; conversion privileges; limitations of eligibility for benefits by reason of leaves of absence, military service or other interruptions in

service; limitations on the condition of long-term disability benefit payment by reason of improved health; requirements for medical examinations or reports; or any other reasonable provisions as established by rule and regulation of uniform application adopted by the board.

(D) Any visually impaired person who is in training at and employed by a sheltered workshop for the blind operated by the secretary for children and families and who would otherwise be eligible for the long-term disability benefit as described in this section shall not be eligible to receive such benefit due to visual impairment as such impairment shall be determined to be a preexisting condition.

(2) (A) In the event that a member becomes eligible for a long-term disability benefit under the plan authorized by this section such member shall be given participating service credit for the entire period of such disability. Such member's final average salary shall be computed in accordance with K.S.A. 74-4902(17), and amendments thereto, except that the years of participating service used in such computation shall be the years of salaried participating service.

(B) In the event that a member eligible for a long-term disability benefit under the plan authorized by this section shall be disabled for a period of five years or more immediately preceding retirement, such member's final average salary shall be adjusted upon retirement by the actuarial salary assumption rates in existence during such period of disability. Effective July 1, 1998, such member's final average salary shall be adjusted upon retirement by an amount equal to the lesser of: (i) The percentage increase in the consumer price index for all urban consumers as published by the bureau of labor statistics of the United States department of labor minus 1%; or (ii) four percent per annum, measured from the member's last day on the payroll to the month that is two months prior to the month of retirement, for each year of disability after July 1, 1998.

(C) In the event that a member eligible for a long-term disability benefit under the plan authorized by this section shall be disabled for a period of five years or more immediately preceding death, such member's current annual rate shall be adjusted by the actuarial salary assumption rates in existence during such period of disability. Effective July 1, 1998, such member's current annual rate shall be adjusted upon death by an amount equal to the lesser of: (i) The percentage increase in the consumer price index for all urban consumers published by the bureau of labor statistics of the United States department of labor minus 1%; or (ii) 4% per annum, measured from the member's last day on the payroll to the month that is two months prior to the month of death, for each year of disability after July 1, 1998.

(3) (A) To carry out the legislative intent to provide, within the funds made available therefor, the broadest possible coverage for members who are in active employment or involuntarily absent from such active employment, the plan of death and long-term disability benefits shall be subject to adjustment from time to time by the board within the limitations of this section. The plan may include terms and provisions that are consistent with the terms and provisions of group life and long-term disability policies usually issued to those employers who employ a large number of employees. The board shall have the authority to establish and adjust from time to time the procedures for financing and administering the plan of death and long-term disability benefits authorized by this section. Either the insured death benefit or the insured disability benefit or both such benefits may be financed directly by the system or by one or more insurance companies authorized and licensed to transact group life and group accident and health insurance in this state.

(B) The board may contract with one or more insurance companies, which are authorized and licensed to transact group life and group accident and health insurance in Kansas, to underwrite or to administer or to both underwrite and administer either the insured death benefit or the long-term disability benefit or both such benefits. Each such contract with an

insurance company under this subsection shall be entered into on the basis of competitive bids solicited and administered by the board. Such competitive bids shall be based on specifications prepared by the board.

(i) In the event the board purchases one or more policies of group insurance from such company or companies to provide either the insured death benefit or the long-term disability benefit or both such benefits, the board shall have the authority to subsequently cancel one or more of such policies and, notwithstanding any other provision of law, to release each company that issued any such canceled policy from any liability for future benefits under any such policy and to have the reserves established by such company under any such canceled policy returned to the system for deposit in the group insurance reserve of the fund.

(ii) In addition, the board shall have the authority to cancel any policy or policies of group life and long-term disability insurance in existence on the effective date of this act and, notwithstanding any other provision of law, to release each company that issued any such canceled policy from any liability for future benefits under any such policy and to have the reserves established by such company under any such canceled policy returned to the system for deposit in the group insurance reserve of the fund. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, no premium tax shall be due or payable by any such company or companies on any such policy or policies purchased by the board nor shall any brokerage fees or commissions be paid thereon.

(4) (A) There is hereby created in the state treasury the group insurance reserve fund. Investment income of the fund shall be added or credited to the fund as provided by law. The cost of the plan of death and long-term disability benefits shall be paid from the group insurance reserve fund, which shall be administered by the board. Each participating employer shall appropriate and pay to the system in such manner as the board shall prescribe in addition to the employee and employer retirement contributions an amount equal to 1.0% of the amount of compensation on which the members' contributions to the Kansas public employees retirement system are based for deposit in the group insurance reserve fund. Notwithstanding the provisions of this subsection, no participating employer other than the state of Kansas shall appropriate and pay to the system any amount provided for by this subsection for deposit in the group insurance reserve fund for the period commencing on July 1, 2021, and ending on June 30, 2022. Notwithstanding the provisions of this subsection, the state of Kansas shall not appropriate and pay to the system any amount provided for by this subsection for deposit in the group insurance reserve fund for the period commencing on July 1, 2020, and ending on June 30, 2021.

(B) The director of the budget and the governor shall include in the budget and in the budget request for appropriations for personal services a sum to pay the state's contribution to the group insurance reserve fund as provided by this section and shall present the same to the legislature for allowances and appropriation.

(C) The provisions of K.S.A. 74-4920(4), and amendments thereto, shall apply for the purpose of providing the funds to make the contributions to be deposited to the group insurance reserve fund.

(D) Any dividend or retrospective rate credit allowed by an insurance company or companies shall be credited to the group insurance reserve fund and the board may take such amounts into consideration in determining the amounts of the benefits under the plan authorized by this section.

(5) The death benefit provided under the plan of death and long-term disability benefits authorized by this section shall be known and referred to as insured death benefit. The long-term disability benefit provided under the plan of death and long-term disability benefits authorized by this section shall be known and referred to as long-term disability

benefit.

(6) The board is hereby authorized to establish an optional death benefit plan for employees and spouses and dependents of employees. Except as provided in subsection (7), such optional death benefit plan shall be made available to all employees who are covered or may hereafter become covered by the plan of death and long-term disability benefits authorized by this section. The cost of the optional death benefit plan shall be paid by the applicant either by means of a system of payroll deductions or direct payment to the board. The board shall have the authority and discretion to establish such terms, conditions, specifications and coverages as it may deem to be in the best interest of the state of Kansas and its employees that should include term death benefits for the person's period of active state employment regardless of age, but in no case, shall the maximum allowable coverage be less than \$200,000. The cost of the optional death benefit plan shall not be established on such a basis as to unreasonably discriminate against any particular age group. The board shall have full administrative responsibility, discretion and authority to establish and continue such optional death benefit plan and the director of accounts and reports of the department of administration shall when requested by the board and from funds appropriated or available for such purpose establish a system to make periodic deductions from state payrolls to cover the cost of the optional death benefit plan coverage under the provisions of this subsection and shall remit all deductions together with appropriate accounting reports to the system. There is hereby created in the state treasury the optional death benefit plan reserve fund. Investment income of the fund shall be added or credited to the fund as provided by law. All funds received by the board, whether in the form of direct payments, payroll deductions or otherwise, shall be accounted for separately from all other funds of the retirement system and shall be paid into the optional death benefit plan reserve fund, from which the board is authorized to make the appropriate payments and to pay the ongoing costs of administration of such optional death benefit plan as may be incurred in carrying out the provisions of this subsection.

(7) Any employer other than the state of Kansas that is currently a participating employer of the Kansas public employees retirement system or is in the process of affiliating with the Kansas public employees retirement system may also elect to affiliate for the purposes of subsection (6). All such employers shall make application for affiliation with such system, to be effective on January 1 or July 1 next following application.

(8) For purposes of the death benefit provided under the plan of death and long-term disability benefits authorized by this section and the optional death benefit plan authorized by subsection (6), commencing on the effective date of this act, in the case of medical or financial hardship of the member as determined by the executive director, or otherwise commencing January 1, 2005, the member may name a beneficiary or beneficiaries other than the beneficiary or beneficiaries named by the member to receive other benefits as provided by the provisions of K.S.A. 74-4901 et seq., and amendments thereto.

History: L. 1965, ch. 446, § 8; L. 1973, ch. 323, § 1; L. 1975, ch. 408, § 2; L. 1978, ch. 321, § 1; L. 1980, ch. 239, § 1; L. 1981, ch. 315, § 2; L. 1982, ch. 319, § 29; L. 1984, ch. 289, § 11; L. 1985, ch. 254, § 14; L. 1986, ch. 294, § 7; L. 1987, ch. 299, § 23; L. 1989, ch. 232, § 12; L. 1990, ch. 282, § 12; L. 1993, ch. 289, § 4; L. 1994, ch. 293, § 17; L. 1998, ch. 64, § 53; L. 1998, ch. 201, § 29; L. 2000, ch. 112, § 5; L. 2000, ch. 152, § 16; L. 2001, ch. 209, § 23; L. 2002, ch. 116, § 4; L. 2003, ch. 155, § 8; L. 2004, ch. 182, § 5; L. 2005, ch. 196, § 10; L. 2006, ch. 168, § 5; L. 2009, ch. 4, § 1; L. 2010, ch. 158, § 1; L. 2012, ch. 171, § 26; L. 2013, ch. 57, § 1; L. 2014, ch. 115, § 303; L. 2016, ch. 76, § 7; L. 2021, ch. 75, § 3; July 1.