



STATE OF WISCONSIN
Department of Employee Trust Funds
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ORGANIZATION AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF BOARDS

There are five Boards of Trustees associated with the Wisconsin Department of Employee Trust Funds. The Boards set policy and review the overall administration of the benefit programs provided for state and local government employees.

The five Boards are:

- Employee Trust Funds Board
- Teachers Retirement Board
- Wisconsin Retirement Board
- Group Insurance Board
- Deferred Compensation Board

Employee Trust Funds Board

The thirteen-member Employee Trust Funds (ETF) Board has oversight responsibility for the Department. The ETF Board meets quarterly in Madison. Board members represent state and local government employers and employees, retired participants, and the public. Membership is set by state law and includes:

- Four representatives of the Teachers Retirement (TR) Board, elected by the TR Board
- Four representatives of the Wisconsin Retirement (WR) Board, elected by the WR Board
- Two representatives appointed by the Governor
- One elected annuitant representative
- One elected educational support personnel representative
- The director of the State Office of Employment Relations (appointed by the Governor)

Each member is a trustee of the trust funds.

The duties of the members of the ETF Board are found in Ch. 40.03, Wis. Stats., and include the following:

1. Authorize and terminate benefit payments
2. Ensure the Wisconsin Retirement System (WRS) complies with Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Code
3. Approve actuarial tables used to compute benefits
4. Appoint the ETF Secretary
5. Select necessary legal, medical, or other independent contractors
6. Select and retain an actuary or actuarial firm

7. Approve employer and employee contribution rates and actuarial assumptions as determined by the actuary
8. Compel witnesses to attend meetings and testify on any matter concerning the fund
9. Determine the length of prior service from information available
10. Accept gifts, grants, or bequests of property to the fund
11. Contract for insurance plans for death and disability benefits through the Group Insurance Board
12. Accept and hear timely appeals of determinations of the Department
13. Require employers to distribute materials necessary for the administration of the fund
14. Delegate powers as desirable or necessary
15. Approve or reject administrative rules proposed by the Department Secretary
16. Allow separate retirement plans to send funds to the Department for investment in the Core or Variable Retirement Trust Funds
17. Transfer funds to provide group insurance

Advisory Boards (Teachers Retirement Board and Wisconsin Retirement Board)

Two Boards advise the ETF Board on retirement system matters specific to the groups they represent, including reviewing administrative rules and hearing legal appeals regarding retirement disability determinations: the Teachers Retirement (TR) Board and the Wisconsin Retirement (WR) Board.

Responsibilities of the TR and WR Boards are:

1. Appoint four members to the ETF Board
2. Study and recommend alternate administrative policies and rules that will enhance achievement of objectives of the benefit plans
3. Appoint one member to the State of Wisconsin Investment Board
4. Approve or reject all administrative rules that relate to teachers (TR Board) or non-teacher members (WR Board) of the WRS
5. Authorize and terminate disability benefits to teachers (TR Board) or non-teachers (WR Board)
6. Hear appeals of disability determinations made by the Department for teachers (TR Board) or non-teachers (WR Board)

Teachers Retirement Board

The TR Board has 13 members including:

- Six public school teachers
- One teacher from the vocational, technical, and adult education system
- One public school administrator
- Two university teachers
- One school board member
- One teacher annuitant
- One teacher from the Milwaukee Public School District

Retirement merger legislation of 1981 created the TR Board. This Board replaced the previous and separate State Teachers Retirement Board and the Milwaukee Teachers Retirement Board. The legislation required four of the TR Board positions to be appointed by the Governor, while the nine remaining positions must be filled by election.

Wisconsin Retirement Board

The WR Board has nine members, eight of whom are appointed by the Governor. Membership includes representatives from Wisconsin municipalities including the following:

- City executive
- Finance officer
- City employee
- Member of a town or county government
- County clerk
- County employee

The Governor also appoints a state employee and a public member to the WR Board. The Commissioner of Insurance or his or her designee occupies the ninth position.

Group Insurance Board

The Group Insurance Board (GIB) has eleven members. Six members are appointed by the Governor. The remaining positions are ex-officio members occupied by the following officials or their designees: Governor, Attorney General, Secretary of the Department of Administration, Director of the Office of State Employment Relations, and the Commissioner of Insurance.

This Board sets policy and oversees administration of the group health, life insurance, and income continuation insurance plans for state employees and retirees and the group health and life insurance plans for local employers who choose to offer them. The Board also can provide other insurance plans, if employees pay the entire premium.

Group Insurance Board – Strategic Planning Workgroup

The Group Insurance Board – Strategic Planning Workgroup (GIB-SPW) consists of members from the Group Insurance Board. The GIB-SPW does not have a set number of members. It is a non-voting workgroup that serves as an advisory to the Group Insurance Board.

The GIB-SPW was created to engage in discussion and in-depth analysis on potential plan changes and present recommendations to the Group Insurance Board.

Deferred Compensation Board

The Deferred Compensation (DC) Board consists of five members who serve staggered four-year terms. Each member is appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate. The statutes do not specify criteria for the five appointments.

The DC Board was created by 1989 Wisconsin Act 31 and carries out the following duties:

1. Select and contract with deferred compensation plan providers for investment and record keeping
2. Develop deferred compensation plan policies, procedures, and rules that govern provider participation in the program
3. Hear participant appeals of program determinations

Deferred Compensation Investment Committee

The Deferred Compensation Investment Committee (DCIC) consists of two Board members selected by the Deferred Compensation Board.

The DCIC is advisory only and was created in 1990 to provide investment expertise in the evaluation of investment options offered by the Board.

(Revised: January 2014)