

Quick Info

2011 Rates

Core

Effective Rate	+4.8%
Annuity Adjustment	-1.2%

Variable

Effective Rate	+16%
Annuity Adjustment	+11%

Review your annual *Statement of Benefits* to see how these rates affect your account balances.



Sign up for E-Mail Updates

Stay informed about important Wisconsin Retirement System benefit news by signing up for *ETF E-Mail Updates*. Use this service to receive e-mail alerts any time our Internet site is updated with important news and information. Registration is fast, easy and free. Look for the red envelope icon on our site at <http://etf.wi.gov>.

Keep Your Address Current

It is very important to notify the Department of Employee Trust Funds (ETF) whenever your address changes. If you do not keep it current with ETF, communications from us may be delayed or not arrive at all. To update your address with ETF, complete a new *Name/Address Change* form. Find it on our Internet site at <http://etf.wi.gov> or call our Self-Service line toll free at 1-877-383-1888 or (608) 266-2323.

New Name, Same Informative Newsletter for Inactive Members

The Department of Employee Trust Funds (ETF) and the State of Wisconsin Investment Board (SWIB) are pleased to present this special edition of *WRS News* for Inactive members. It replaces the *Trust Fund News* for Inactive members, which you received with your annual *Statement of Benefits* last year. In this newsletter we include news and information that

will help you learn more about the connection between your Wisconsin Retirement System (WRS) benefits and SWIB, the agency that invests the assets of the WRS. The new name is the result of conversations with many WRS members who told us that WRS is a more identifiable term than *Trust Fund*. We hope you find the new focus on benefits and investments informative and helpful.

ETF Expanding Service and Outreach Statewide

Last fall the Department of Employee Trust Funds (ETF) announced the creation of nine service delivery "districts," which allow ETF to offer group appointments and large public presentations more often and in more convenient and accessible locations for Wisconsin Retirement System (WRS) members and employers. This is a major change in WRS education and outreach efforts.

Improving customer service in all parts of the state is an important goal, particularly in underserved areas. For example, from January to the end of June 2011, ETF specialists are set to conduct meetings and presentations in 37 cities around the state. For details on group appointments and presentations in



your area, refer to the **schedule and the interactive map** on our Internet site, both of which can be accessed through the "Benefits Presentations" link under the Members menu at <http://etf.wi.gov>. To make a group appointment, call ETF toll free at 1-877-533-5020 ext. 65717. Reservations are required.

Newsmakers Interview Focus: WRS Unique Design and Strength

Department of Employee Trust Funds (ETF) Secretary David Stella and Keith Bozarth, executive director of the State of Wisconsin Investment Board (SWIB), were featured guests in an episode of *Newsmakers*, a production of WisconsinEye, a public affairs network. The interview-style program focused on a variety of key topics relevant to the Wisconsin Retirement System (WRS), including:

- The relationship between ETF and SWIB and how these two separate agencies work together to provide benefits to more than 560,000 members.
- Challenges faced by each agency, including the effects of 2008's historic market meltdown and the ripple effect it had on WRS members and employers.
- How the system's funding discipline, "risk-sharing" design, cost-effective benefit administration and asset management work together to create a fully-funded public pension benefit program.
- Challenges that lie ahead for each agency.
- How the unique design of the WRS has helped it earn top rankings for its fiscal health.

For a link to the 39-minute program, *Newsmakers: Public Employee Pension System*, visit SWIB's homepage at www.swib.state.wi.us or visit ETF's site at <http://etf.wi.gov>.

ETF Site Best Source of Information

The Department of Employee Trust Funds (ETF) is committed to providing timely service to our members. However, the demand for even our most basic services has exceeded capacity (see related article, at right). Consequently, our Internet site, <http://etf.wi.gov>, is the best place to start if you need immediate and accurate information about the following:

- how long it will take to get a retirement estimate, a separation payment, even a group or an individual retirement appointment.
- the budget repair bill and what WRS members are asking about.
- what to know and do if you want to retire on short notice.
- any ETF public benefit presentations scheduled for your area.

Don't forget to visit our Video Library to learn about our benefit programs. If you are considering retirement, watch *Road to Retirement*, which covers all of the things you would hear in a meeting with our staff. Go to <http://etf.wi.gov/webcasts.htm>.

Noteworthy

Retirement Estimate Requests, Applications Increase Dramatically

The workload associated with two separate steps in the retirement decision-making process for Wisconsin Retirement System (WRS) members has spiked over the past two years. For example:

- The number of retirement estimates requested grew by 11% and 10% in 2009 and 2010, respectively.
- For the first nine weeks of 2011, the number of retirement **benefit estimates requested** increased nearly 96% and retirement **applications** received increased nearly 50% over the same period in 2010.

What's the difference between a retirement estimate and the retirement application? The estimate is just that — an estimate of your retirement benefit, showing payment options. When ready to "make it official," you complete and send the application to ETF.

We expect the WRS retiree population to continue climbing over the next two decades. In the short term, the demand for our services has exploded. **In general, when you get within a year of retirement, you may contact us for an official estimate.** In the meantime, we have many great resources on our website to help you make informed decisions. Find them on <http://etf.wi.gov>.