

# MONTANA PUBLIC EMPLOYEE RETIREMENT ADMINISTRATION



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April xx, 2016

Retiree <First Name> <Last Name>  
<Retiree Address>  
<City> <State> < Zip Code>

Subject: Release of retirement benefit information

Dear <First Name of Retiree>:

A public records request has been made by the Helena Independent Record and Lee Newspapers State Bureau for information about individuals, like you, who have retired from any retirement system administered by the Montana Public Employee Retirement Administration (MPERA) and the Teachers' Retirement System (TRS). The request includes the retiree's name, employer, retirement system, years of service, year of retirement, and the amount of the retirement benefit paid in January of 2013, 2014, 2015 and 2016.

Several years ago a similar request was made by Montana Watchdog. The Teachers' Retirement System asked the Attorney General for an opinion on whether the public's right to know exceeded the retiree's right of privacy with respect to the requested information. The Attorney General reached the following conclusion:

"Retirees of the Teachers' Retirement System of the State of Montana do not have individual rights of privacy in the amounts of their retirement benefits that clearly exceed the public's right to know."

An Attorney General's opinion has the force of law until overturned by a legislative or judicial action.

The Board and staff of MPERA believe it is our responsibility to inform you of this request. Details of the method, format and subsequent cost of making this information available to the media are being negotiated.

Sincerely,

Sheena Wilson, MPERA Board Chair

Dore Schwinden, MPERA Executive Director