

Descriptive Transcript for *Public Official Eligibility*

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<p>Welcome everybody. My name is Desi. I'm an outreach and education specialist at PERA, and today I'm going to be walking through our Public Official Eligibility program.</p> <p>In Minnesota, public officials have various PERA membership options, including the Public Employees Defined Contribution Plan, AKA the DCP. The DCP is the main plan option for public officials, and eligibility depends on various factors, including the official's position type, and if it's in their first 30 days in office. And it's up to the employers to determine eligibility for these public officials.</p> <p>Today's program will cover this topic in detail, and we will explain how to determine which plan your public officials are eligible for, and we will guide you on enrollment.</p>	<p>Welcome slide with a header that says "Public Official Eligibility", and a note saying "PERA prohibits recording and distribution of this presentation".</p>
<p>Today's presentation is going to run about 30 minutes, and this is the agenda. First, we will introduce and discuss the four types of public official positions.</p> <p>We will then briefly cover the Public Employees DCP, so what it is, how it works, and how it's different from PERA's pension plans.</p> <p>We will discuss how to determine which plans your public official is eligible for and how to enroll these individuals.</p> <p>We will walk through the membership election forms together, and then I'll close</p>	

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<p>out by sharing some helpful resources with you.</p>	
<p>In this first section we're going to introduce and discuss the four different categories of public official positions.</p>	
<p>Your public official's position type is important to know and understand because their PERA coverage options depend on their position type.</p> <p>The two main considerations are whether the public official's position is governing or non-governing, and whether it's elected or appointed. These are two questions you'll need to ask about your public official to determine what their plan options are.</p>	
<p>To figure out if the position is governing or non-governing, you need to ask the question, does the public official have a vote on the governing body? In other words, does the public official voting rights on how the community conducts its business.</p> <p>If the answer is yes, then that public official would be classified as a governing body official. If the answer is no, then that official would be classified as non-governing.</p>	
<p>Next, you have to determine whether the public official's position is classified as elected or as appointed. And appointed is just a fancy word for <i>hired</i>.</p> <p>When considering whether a position is considered elected or appointed, we look at what is usual that position. If the position is usually an elected position, then the public official would be considered elected. If the position is usually an appointed position, then that official would be considered appointed.</p> <p>For example, if a public official was appointed to fill an elected position's vacancy, pair</p>	

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<p>would consider that an elected position even though that individual was appointed to it.</p> <p>You also have to keep in mind that sometimes the position changes from elected to appointed in a governmental subdivision. For example, a township may have regularly held elections for the clerk position in the past, but the clerk position is later transitioned to an appointed position. In that case, the clerk position would now be classified as appointed going forward.</p>	
<p>Since we must consider whether a position is appointed or elected and governing or non-governing, that gives us four categories of public official positions: elected governing, appointed governing, elected non-governing, and appointed non-governing.</p> <p>So let's take a closer look at each of these categories along with examples for each.</p>	
<p>First we'll talk about elected governing body positions.</p> <p>Elected governing officials are elected by the public at large or they may be appointed to finish another official's term. Additionally, they serve as the primary policymakers for local government.</p> <p>Some examples of elected governing officials would include the city council, county commissioners, township supervisors, school board, and special district boards.</p>	
<p>Appointed governing body officials are in positions that are usually not elected, so they are not voted into the positions by the general public. Instead, these individuals are appointed or hired to a board or commission of a governmental unit. And they do have a vote within the board or commission which they were appointed to.</p>	

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<p>A few examples would be individuals who are appointed to a joint powers board, planning commission, or parks board.</p>	
<p>Elected non-governing public officials include those who are elected by the public at large or who are appointed to an elected position's vacancy. And of course, they do not have a vote in how the community conducts its business.</p> <p>Positions may include county auditor, a treasurer, a quarter, attorney or coroner, a city or township clerk, or a city or township treasurer.</p> <p>Now while these are examples of who could be in an elected non-governing position, keep in mind that some of these positions may be classified as appointed at your governmental subdivision.</p>	
<p>Now on to the fourth and final category, appointed non-governing officials.</p> <p>These officials are now elected by the general public and their positions are always appointed within the governmental subdivision. Additionally, they do not have a vote in the governing body.</p> <p>Examples of these positions may include a county auditor, recorder, attorney or coroner, a city township or county treasurer, and a city or township clerk.</p> <p>And while these are examples of positions that can be classified as appointed non-governing, keep in mind that your governmental subdivision may fill these positions by a general election. And in that case, the position would be considered elected non-governing.</p>	
<p>Now let's talk about another group of individuals, which are employees who are not</p>	

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<p>public officials, and so they are not eligible for the Public Employees DCP for public officials. These are employees whose positions are never elected in the state of Minnesota. Their positions are different than appointed public official positions, which can be elected or appointed depending on the governmental subdivision. However, these positions are never elected and are always appointed or hired, similar to a regular employee.</p> <p>Examples include Deputy Clerk, Deputy Treasurer, and most other hired positions.</p> <p>I do want to note that there are certain groups of employees in hired positions that are eligible for PERA's DCP. For example, city managers, government physicians, and certain ambulance rescue personnel do have their own defined contribution plan, but for the most part, hired employees do not have DCP eligibility.</p> <p>Sometimes employees are misidentified as public officials, but we want you to understand we consider them hired employees, which means they are not eligible for participation in the Public Employees DCP. These employees are only eligible for the Coordinated Plan. So long as they exceed the monthly threshold and no exclusions apply.</p> <p>On a related note, if a public official does other work for your unit that's not for their public official position, for example, they work as a public official for your unit while also working a side job plowing snow for your unit, Then the public official would be subject to mandatory coverage under the Coordinated Plan for the snow plowing job, so long as they exceeded the threshold and no other exclusions applied.</p>	

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<p>In this next section, we are going to briefly discuss the Public Employees DCP for public officials. And we're going to answer the question of what is a defined contribution plan? How does it work? And how is it different for PERA's pension plans?</p> <p>A defined contribution plan, aka DCP, is a 401(a) tax-qualified retirement plan. With a DCP, contributions are made on a regular basis by the member and the employer. The public official will contribute 5% of each paycheck, and the employer will match that 5%.</p> <p>Side note, we have four other defined contribution plans which have different contribution rates, but today we are only discussing the defined contribution plan that's specific for public officials.</p> <p>These contributions are then deposited into the member's account, and because the DCP is a tax-qualified plan, they will not pay taxes on the money they contribute, and the funds will grow tax-deferred. So members do not have to pay taxes until they withdraw the funds.</p>	
<p>Some of the basics of the plan.</p> <p>First off, participation is optional for most eligible individuals, and there's no minimum salary requirements for membership.</p> <p>Once the public official chooses to join, they will see contributions deducted from their paycheck. These contributions, along with the contributions from the employer, are used to purchase shares in one or more of seven investment fund accounts.</p> <p>The future benefit is determined by the amount the member and the employer</p>	

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<p>contribute, plus the performance of the investments. It's important to know that the account balance is affected by market fluctuation and it can change on a daily basis. And PERA and the state of Minnesota cannot guarantee that the member's account value won't decrease to a level below what was originally paid for the shares.</p> <p>Another important tenet of this plan is how the future benefit is paid out, which is a one-time lump sum. I want to emphasize this point because people tend to get the DCP confused with PERA's pension plans, which give members a monthly lifetime benefit. With the DCP, there are no monthly benefits. The benefit is strictly paid out as a one-time lump sum.</p>	
<p>To help clarify the difference between the Public Employee's DCP and the Coordinated Plan, let's compare and contrast the two.</p> <p>One of the main differences between in these plans is how the benefit payment is calculated. The DCP benefit is based on how much the member and the employer contribute, as well as how well the investments perform. While the Coordinated Plan is a traditional pension plan, and the benefit amount is calculated on a formula using the member's highest average salary, years of service and age at retirement. Meaning it doesn't technically matter how much the member contributes and their benefit is not affected by market fluctuations.</p> <p>Another difference is investment decisions. With the DCP, the member is the one in control of deciding how the contributions are invested. Meanwhile, with the Coordinated Plan, the Minnesota State Board of Investment manages the funds on the</p>	

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<p>member's behalf, so it's maintenance-free for the member.</p> <p>And lastly, the way the benefit is paid out. As mentioned, the Public Employees DCP is paid out as a one-time lump sum of the member's account balance, and no further payments will occur, where the Coordinated Plan pays out a set amount every month for the rest of the member's lifetime, regardless of the member's account balance. Most Coordinated members will withdraw their entire account balance within two to three years, but PERA will continue their monthly payments for the remainder of their life.</p> <p>The Coordinated Plan also has survivor options in case the member wants to extend their benefit to cover another person after their death.</p> <p>If anyone wants to learn more about the Coordinated Plan, I'd suggest that you refer to the Chapter three of the Employer Manual. You can also view the Membership Eligibility on demand webinar and its accompanying overview document. And you can find the Coordinated Plan handbook on the member side of our website.</p> <p>Before we move on, I do want to note that there are individuals who have contributed to both the DCP and a pension plan at PERA. In those cases, be aware that the member cannot combine their DCP with their defined benefit plan. They are two separate plans with two separate benefits.</p>	
<p>In this next section, we're going to dive deeper into how to determine which plans your official is eligible for and if PERA-participation is optional or mandatory.</p>	
<p>Previously we mentioned that DCP participation is generally optional. This is the</p>	

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<p>case for public officials if it is their first time being eligible for PERA coverage at the unit which they're now a public official for, but it's only an option within their first 30 days of work. They must make their decision within those 30 days or they'll be opted out of PERA coverage. So these public officials have optional PERA.</p> <p>On the flip side, PERA participation is mandatory for a public official if they previously had any type of PERA coverage with the same employer that they're now a public official for. So if the public official was previously covered by—and the employer had contributed to any PERA plan or a supplemental pension or deferred compensation plan under Minnesota statute 356.24.</p> <p>For example, if you have a long-term employee who works in maintenance at your township who has been paying into the coordinated plan during that time, and then they are later elected to a township supervisor position at your unit. In that case, the employee would be required to participate in PERA for the township supervisor position.</p>	
<p>Let's go into more depth on PERA eligibility for individuals who have their first PERA eligibility with a unit.</p> <p>Certain groups of these individuals have the option of choosing PERA as DCP or choosing no PERA coverage. That would include all governing body officials and all elected non-governing officials as well as appointed non-governing officials whose monthly salary does not exceed \$425. For public officials whose monthly salary does exceed \$425, the Coordinated Plan may be an option.</p>	

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<p>Elected non-governing officials whose salary exceeds the threshold may choose to opt into the Coordinated Plan. They <i>do</i> have a choice in the matter.</p> <p>Meanwhile for appointed non-governing officials whose salary exceeds the threshold, the Coordinated Plan is mandatory. If these officials exceed \$425 in earnings within any month, they must join the Coordinated Plan. That means that if they are already participating in the DCP when their monthly pay ended up exceeding \$425, then they would lose their DCP eligibility and they must be immediately enrolled in the Coordinated Plan instead.</p>	
<p>To help you to determine your public official's eligibility, we made a couple charts that lay out the eligibility rules of each public official position.</p> <p>This chart shows the eligibility of public officials who have their first PERA eligibility with the employer that they're now a public official for.</p> <p>The chart lists each public official position, along with their monthly salary and their eligibility for the DCP, the Coordinated Plan, or no PERA coverage.</p>	<p>A chart Labeled "First PERA Eligibility with the Employer" appears. It lists public official position types, monthly salary, and the public official's eligibility for DCP, Coordinated Plan, or no PERA coverage.</p>
<p>For an example, let's take a look at eligibility for an elected non-governing official.</p>	<p>The "Elected non-governing" category is highlighted.</p>
<p>If an elected non-governing official does not exceed the monthly threshold, then the DCP is optional for them in their first 30 days.</p>	<p>The "\$425 or less" category is highlighted, showing that no PERA coverage is the default, while the DCP is optional.</p>
<p>And if the official <i>does</i> exceed the monthly threshold, then they have the option of both DCP and the Coordinated Plan.</p>	<p>The "over \$425" category is highlighted, showing that no PERA coverage is the default, while both the DCP and Coordinated Plan are optional.</p>
<p>As previously mentioned, PERA participation is mandatory for an employee if they previously had any type of PERA coverage with the same employer that they're now a</p>	

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<p>public official for. For certain individuals in this group, participation in the public employee's DCP is mandatory. That applies to all governing body officials, as well as elected and appointed non-governing officials whose monthly pay doesn't exceed \$425.</p> <p>However, when it comes to appointed non-governing officials, if their monthly pay ever exceeds \$425, then their DCP eligibility ends and they must be immediately enrolled in the Coordinated Plan instead.</p>	
<p>Let's continue discussing public officials who have prior PERA coverage with this employer that they're now a public official for.</p> <p>For elected non-governing body officials, if it is known within 30 days of their first day of work that their monthly salary will exceed \$425 in month one or month two, then they have mandatory coverage under either the DCP or the Coordinated Plan. The DCP is their default coverage, but they can choose the Coordinated Plan. Either way, they must choose between the two and they must make that choice within their first 30 days.</p> <p>And the Coordinated Plan is mandatory for appointed non-governing body officials when their monthly salary exceeds \$425. If an appointed non-governing official's monthly salary does not exceed 425, the official would have mandatory DCP in the meantime.</p>	
<p>Here we have another chart showing the eligibility for public officials who have prior PERA coverage with the employer that they're now a public official for. Again, for these officials, PERA-participation is mandatory.</p>	<p>A chart Labeled "Previous PERA Coverage with the Same Employer" appears. It lists public official position types, monthly salary, and the public official's eligibility for DCP or the Coordinated Plan.</p>
<p>For an example, let's take a look at appointed non-governing officials.</p>	<p>The "Appointed non-governing" category is highlighted.</p>

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<p>If an appointed non-governing official does not exceed the monthly threshold, then DCP is mandatory.</p>	<p>The “\$425 or less” category is highlighted, showing that the DCP is required.</p>
<p>And if the official does exceed the monthly threshold, then the Coordinated Plan is mandatory.</p>	<p>The “over \$425” category is highlighted, showing that the Coordinated Plan is required.</p>
<p>Now I do want to acknowledge that it's difficult to remember the eligibility rules of each category of public officials. To help with that, we recommend that you refer to the charts in these slides to help determine what PERA plans your public official is eligible for.</p>	
<p>We have two DCP enrollment categories for public officials.</p> <p>The first is DCP Elected Officials, which is for all governing body officials, as well as all elected non-governing officials. There are no salary restrictions for this plan, and PERA does not monitor the salary.</p> <p>Then we have the DCP Appointed Non-Governing plan, which is for appointed non-governing official positions. Appointed non-governing officials whose monthly pay does not exceed \$425 must be enrolled in this plan category if they selected DCP coverage or had mandatory DCP coverage. If the individual’s salary ever does exceed \$425, then that individual's DCP participation must end, and they must immediately be enrolled in the Coordinated Plan instead.</p> <p>And due to this rule, employers must monitor earnings of individuals in this group. PERA also monitors earnings for this group to help identify individuals who have exceeded the threshold.</p>	
<p>Here's a chart listing which DCP enrollment category each type of official belong in if they elected coverage or have mandatory coverage in DCP.</p>	<p>A chart labeled “DCP Enrollment Categories for Public Official Positions” appears. It lists public official position types, monthly salary, enrollment categories, as well as the SDR plan ID for each category (16 for DCP Elected</p>

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<p>Again, there's two enrollment categories, DCP Elected Officials and DCP Appointed Non-Governing.</p>	<p>Officials and 27 for DCP Appointed Non-Governing).</p>
<p>All governing officials and all elected non-governing officials should be enrolled in DCP Elected Officials. And their SDR plan ID is 16.</p>	<p>Governing officials and elected non-governing officials are highlighted, showing that their enrollment category is DCP Elected Officials.</p>
<p>And all appointed non-governing officials should be enrolled in DCP Appointed Non-Governing officials, which has the plan ID 27.</p>	<p>Appointed non-governing officials is highlighted, showing that their enrollment category is DCP Appointed Non-Governing.</p>
<p>And the reason we have a different enrollment categories for these two groups is because the second group—appointed non-governing officials—need to have their earnings monitored, because if they ever go over \$425 in a month, they lose their DCP eligibility and must switch to the Coordinated Plan.</p> <p>If you have an appointed non-governing public official who chooses to participate in the Public Employees DCP, contact PERA to add this new enrollment category. After PERA updates your account in ERIS, you'll see the new enrollment category appear for you to choose.</p> <p>For paper or ERIS manual SDR submissions, use the plan ID DCPN. For uploaded SDR files, your system must include the plan ID 27.</p>	
<p>In this section, we will cover enrollment guidelines so that you know what to do to help your public officials enroll in the DCP.</p>	
<p>As we've discussed, for most public officials, participation in the Public Employees DCP is optional, and public officials with optional PERA must make an election within 30 days of their first day of work. And by first day of work, we do not mean when they are elected, or the day they are sworn in. We mean the first day that the public official performs work to earn pay.</p>	

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<p>The public official will make this election by completing the <i>Membership Election by Public Officials</i> form. If the individual doesn't complete this form and make an election within their 30 days of eligibility, they will automatically be opted out.</p> <p>And regardless of what the public official chooses, whether they elected for DCP coverage or they opted out, the decision is permanent for all current and future service with that same employer.</p>	
<p>Let's talk about what your responsibilities are as the employer.</p> <p>First, you must inform your public officials of their PERA coverage options by providing the public DCP Handbook as well as the Coordinated Handbook when applicable.</p> <p>You must also provide them with the <i>Membership Election by Public Officials</i> form with part A already completed by you.</p> <p>You need to inform your public official that they must sign and complete part B within 30 days of their first day of work and ensure that PERA receives a signed and completed membership election form within 60 days of the public officials first day of work.</p>	
<p>Here's an image of the membership election form. This is page one where there's nothing to fill out, but there is some helpful information, including instructions for both the employer and the individual, along with information on different public official positions and membership options.</p>	<p>Page one of the membership election form is displayed.</p>
<p>And here's page two, which both the employer and the individual needs to fill out. You—the employer—will complete part A, and the employee will complete part B.</p>	<p>Page two of the membership election form is displayed.</p>

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<p>Now in the next few slides, I will walk you through the steps of properly completing this form.</p> <p>Step one, of course, is to complete part A. When you're filling out part A of this form, use blue or black ink and be sure to save a copy for your records.</p> <p>Also, ensure that you do not withhold contributions until the public official signs the form and only withhold contributions if the public official chose PERA coverage.</p>	
<p>On to Step two, which is to give the membership election form to your public official and instruct them to complete part B of the form.</p> <p>As previously mentioned, public officials must make their selection within the first 30 days of work. So your public official must complete and sign part B within their first 30 days. And if the public official chooses PERA coverage, you must begin contributions immediately.</p> <p>Now, if the public official doesn't complete and sign this form within their first 30 days and they make no selection, then that will result in an automatic opt-out, meaning the individual will have no PERA coverage. And whether the public official chooses coverage or not, either election is permanent for all current and future service with the same employer.</p>	
<p>Onto the third and final step, which is to submit the completed and signed form to PERA.</p> <p>It's very important that this is done in a timely manner, because PERA must receive the form within 60 days of the public official's first day of work. And we want you to return the form to us no matter what, even if the</p>	

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<p>public official chose no PERA coverage, or if they didn't sign the form.</p> <p>And again, the election is permanent for all current and future service with the same employer.</p> <p>Let's take a look at an example to show how this timeline plays out.</p>	
<p>For this example, our public official Mr. Squirrel was elected in November to Frostbite Falls City Council.</p>	<p>A timeline chart appears. On the timeline are four dots: one to the far right, one to the far left, and two spaced evenly in the middle. On the far left dot is a box labeled "Rocket J. Squirrel elected 11/4/2025 to Frostbite Falls City Council".</p>
<p>And Mr. Squirrel's first day in office is January 6th of 2026.</p>	<p>A second box appears on the left-middle dot, labeled "Mr. Squirrel's first day of work is 1/6/2026".</p>
<p>This means that Mr. Squirrel's 30-day deadline starts January 6th, and he must have completed and signed the form by February 5th.</p> <p>However, he does not need to wait until his first day in office to complete the membership election form, and he can turn the form in even before his first day of work.</p>	<p>A third box appears on the right-middle dot, labeled "Mr. Squirrel must sign the Election Form by 2/5/2026". An arrow appears between the two middle dots. The arrow is labeled as "30-day deadline to sign".</p>
<p>Mr. S's 60-day deadline for PERA to receive his signed and completed form also begins on January 6th, so the form must be turned in no later than March 7th of 2026.</p>	<p>A fourth box appears on the far right dot, labeled "Mr. Squirrel's Election Form must be received by PERA by 3/7/2026". An arrow appears between the left middle dot and the far right dot. The arrow is labeled as "60-day deadline for form to be received at PERA".</p>
<p>In this next section, we're going to take a closer look at the membership election forms. I'm going to be using screenshots of the forms, and we'll walk through some examples of how to sell the forms for different public officials, and I'll show you some important sections that need to be filled out.</p>	

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<p>Just a disclaimer that these examples are purely hypothetical, and all these examples are going to be of public officials who have their first PERA eligibility with the unit that they are now public officials for. Which means they have optional PERA and they must make their coverage election within their first 30 days of work.</p>	
<p>For our first example, we have Mr. Squirrel again, who is recently elected as a new city council member. And for this example, it is Mr. Squirrel's first PERA eligibility with this particular unit.</p>	<p>The top section of Part A of the membership election form is displayed. Part A asks for several pieces of information on the public official, including personal data such as name, address, date of birth, and Social Security number, as well as employment data such as position title, first day of work, and public official classification. Part A is filled in with Mr. Squirrel’s information.</p>
<p>When you are filling out part A of the form, be sure to enter in all the required data. And it's especially important that you write down Mr. Squirrel's position title, his first day of work, and his public official classification.</p>	<p>Mr. Squirrel’s position title (City Council), first day of work (January 6th, 2026), and public official classification (Elected) is highlighted.</p>
<p>Here is a continuation of Part A.</p> <p>In this section, it asks you to choose a box that describes the public official’s position, which tells us what their PERA eligibility is. Since Mr. Squirrel's position is an elected governing body position, we will make sure to select position B.</p>	<p>The bottom section of Part A is displayed. Part A asks the employer to choose from five options—labeled A, B, C, D, and E—that best describe the public official. The five options include the four public official positions (elected non-governing, elected governing, appointed non-governing, and appointed governing). The fifth option (option E) is for an elected county sheriff “who is currently receiving retirement benefits from the PERA Police & Fire Plan and who was not previously employed by the county”.</p>
<p>Now on to part B of the form.</p> <p>Once you've completed part A of the form, you will hand it off to your public official for them to complete and sign the section.</p>	<p>Part B of the membership election form appears. Three PERA coverage options—Defined Contribution Plan (DCP), the Coordinated Plan, and no PERA coverage—are listed, with a small box next to each option. Below the options are a space for the public official’s initials, signature, and date.</p>

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<p>And in part B is where the public official chooses what coverage they want. Since Mr. Squirrel is classified as an elected governing body official, he has options. Mr. Squirrel can choose the Public Employees DCP or he can opt out altogether by choosing no PERA coverage.</p> <p>If Mr. Squirrel selects the DCP you will enroll him in the Public Employees DCP and begin contributions immediately.</p>	<p>The box next to “Defined Contribution Plan (DCP)” is checked, and then the box next to “no PERA coverage” is checked.</p>
<p>For our next example, we have Paul Bunyan who is a Township Clerk who's been appointed to fill an elected position’s vacancy.</p>	<p>The top section of Part A of the membership election form is displayed. Part A is filled in with Paul Bunyan’s information.</p>
<p>Again, it's important that you enter Mr. Bunyan's position title, his first day of work, and his public official classification.</p>	<p>Mr. Bunyan’s position title (Township Clerk), first day of work (July 11th, 2026), and public official classification (Appointed to an elected position’s vacancy) is highlighted.</p>
<p>Onto the rest of part A. For Mr. Bunyan, we will pick box A to signify that Mr. Bunyan is a non-governing official who was appointed to an elected position.</p>	<p>The bottom section of Part A is displayed.</p>
<p>And in part B are Mr. Bunyan's plan options.</p>	<p>Part B of the membership election form appears.</p>
<p>Reminder that as an elected non-governing official, Mr. Bunyan's options also depend on how much he earns per month. If his monthly earnings do not exceed salary threshold of \$425, Mr. Bunyan may choose the DCP.</p>	<p>The box next to “Defined Contribution Plan” is checked.</p>
<p>If his monthly earnings <i>do</i> exceed \$425, then he could choose to stick with the DCP, or he could choose the Coordinated Plan.</p> <p>So if Mr. Bunyan's earnings exceed \$425, you should provide him with both the DCP handbook and the Coordinated Plan handbook so that he can make an informed decision on which one to join.</p>	<p>The box next to “Coordinated Plan” is checked.</p>
<p>And of course, Mr. Bunyan also has the option of choosing no PERA coverage regardless of his monthly earnings.</p>	<p>The box next to “No PERA Coverage” is checked.</p>

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For our last example, we have Ms. Tot, who has been newly hired as a county recorder for Hot Dish County.	The top section of Part A of the membership election form is displayed. Part A is filled in with Ms. Tot's information.
In part A, we will complete all the information on this form, making sure to include Ms. Tot's position title, her first day of work, and her public official classification.	Ms. Tot's position title (County Recorder), first day of work (April 21 st , 2026), and public official classification (Appointed/Hired) is highlighted.
Onto the rest of part A.	The bottom section of Part A is displayed.
<p>For Ms. Tot, we will choose box C, indicating that she is an appointed non-governing official whose monthly earnings do not exceed \$425.</p> <p>And as you can see, there's a note added here about the eligibility of appointed non-governing officials. If at any time Ms. Tot's monthly earnings end up exceeding \$425, she will lose her DCP eligibility and she must be immediately enrolled in the Coordinated Plan instead.</p>	Next to box C is a notice stating: "If, at any time, the public official's earnings exceed the minimum salary threshold set by Minn. Stat. § 353.01 subd, 2a(a), DCP participation must stop and they must immediately be enrolled into PERA's Coordinated Plan until termination of employment. At that time, Social Security taxes will be withheld from their earnings in addition to the deductions taken for coverage of the Coordinated retirement plan".
Now on to part B, where Ms. Tot will choose her coverage.	Part B of the membership election form appears.
<p>Again, if her monthly earnings are under \$425, she can choose to join the Public Employees DCP, or she can choose no coverage.</p> <p>However, if Ms. Tot's earnings ever exceed \$425 within one month, she will lose her DCP eligibility, and she must be immediately enrolled in the Coordinated Plan instead. By having earnings above the threshold, Ms. Tot has no other option than required Coordinated Plan participation.</p>	"Defined Contribution Plan" is checked, then "No PERA Coverage" is checked.
<p>All the examples I just showed you were of the options available to public officials who had their first PERA eligibility with a unit. So, if it was their first time being eligible for PERA coverage at the unit that they're now a public official for.</p> <p>On this slide is a chart showing the options public officials have if they previously had</p>	A chart labeled "Previous Coverage with the Same Employer: Plan Requirements or Options" appears. It lists public official position types, monthly salary, and the public official's eligibility for DCP or the Coordinated Plan.

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<p>PERA coverage with the same employer that they're now a public official for.</p>	
<p>Reminder that for officials with prior coverage, participation is required, which also means these individuals do not need to fill out the membership election form. These individuals will still receive automatic mail requesting a membership election form, even though it's not required for them to fill out. PERA will validate their mandatory coverage in our system. However, you can contact us to process that as soon as you enroll them to prevent those letters from going out.</p>	<p>“Required” DCP is highlighted for all governing officials, elected non-governing officials whose monthly earnings are \$425 or less, and appointed non-governing officials whose monthly earnings are \$425 or less. “Required” Coordinated is highlighted for appointed non-governing officials whose monthly earnings exceed \$425.</p>
<p>Now, for an elected non-governing official who exceeds \$425 in a month, you do need to fill out the election form because they have the option between the DCP and the Coordinated Plan. If they don't make a choice within their first 30 days, then you must enroll them in the DCP, as that is their default plan.</p>	<p>“Default” DCP and “Optional” Coordinated is highlighted for elected non-governing officials whose monthly earnings exceed \$425.</p>
<p>Now, before we move on to our final section, I want to quickly mention another group of individuals, elected county sheriffs. Elected county sheriffs who are receiving retirement benefits from PERA's Police and Fire Plan are eligible for the DCP in their first 30 days of PERA eligibility with the county. However, if they were previously employed by the same county, they are not eligible for PERA coverage for the elected county sheriff position.</p>	
<p>In our final section, I'll be sharing some helpful resources related to what we've learned today about public officials and the DCP.</p>	
<p>Here's a list of resources we suggest you check out.</p> <p>In the Employer Manual, you can find information on both PERA's defined</p>	

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<p>contribution plans, as well as the Public Employees DCP in chapters three and four.</p> <p>You can check out our on-demand <i>Membership Eligibility</i> webinar, along with its complimentary overview document.</p> <p>And of course, the plan handbooks for the Coordinated Plan and PERA's DCP.</p>	
<p>On PERA's main website, mnpera.org, members can find information on different plans under the member dashboard.</p>	<p>The home page of PERA's website appears. At the top of the website are various drop-down menus. One is labeled "Members" and another is labeled "Resources".</p>
<p>Information on the Coordinated Plan can be found under <i>Pension Plans</i> and the DCP handbook can be found by clicking <i>DCP</i>.</p>	<p>The "Members" menu is selected, displaying options such as <i>Pension Plans, Benefit Basics, and DCP</i>.</p>
<p>To find PERA's employer website, you will select <i>For Employers</i> from the top left corner.</p>	<p>An arrow points to <i>For Employers</i> in the top left corner.</p>
<p>That will bring you here to our employer website.</p>	<p>The home page of PERA's employer website appears. At the top of the website are various drop-down menus, with labels such as "Eligibility", "Reporting", and "Resources".</p>
<p>There are numerous resources available under the resources.</p>	<p>The "Resources" menu is selected, revealing options such as <i>Employer Programs, Employer Forms and Publications, and Employer Manual</i>.</p>
<p>You can watch other educational programs on demand by selecting <i>Employer Programs</i>. And we again do suggest attending the <i>Membership Eligibility</i> webinar and reviewing the eligibility overview document to supplement the information that we shared today.</p>	<p><i>Employer Programs</i> is highlighted on the Resources menu.</p>
<p>To locate the membership election form that's needed for your public official, you will select <i>Employer Forms and Publications</i>.</p>	<p><i>Employer Forms and Publications</i> is highlighted on the menu.</p>
<p>The Employer Manual can be found here at the bottom of the list. Again, chapters three and four is where you will find much of the information that we went over today.</p>	<p><i>Employer Manual</i> is highlighted on the menu.</p>

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<p>We just went over a lot of information, so let's recap.</p> <p>First, PERA eligibility for public officials depends on various factors, including the official's position type, monthly earnings, if it's their first PERA eligibility with the employer, and if it's in the first 30 days of their work.</p> <p>Next, the public employee's DCP is not similar to PERA's pension plans. The DCP is a 401(a) tax-qualified retirement plan that pays out as a one-time lump sum benefit. There are no monthly lifetime benefits with the DCP.</p> <p>Also reminder that participation in a PERA plan is optional for most public officials in their first 30 days in office, while it's mandatory for others. We again recommend that you refer to the charts in this slideshow for help determining which is true for your public officials.</p> <p>And lastly, it's very important that you inform public officials of their eligibility for PERA within the required timelines. The public official must make their decision within 30 days of their first day of work, and PERA must receive the membership election form within 60 days of their first day of work.</p>	
<p>A reminder of the statutes that we use to govern PERA. If you're ever looking for some extra reading, you can check these out.</p>	<p>New slide appears, listing Minnesota Statutes 11A, 353, and 356.</p>
<p>And just a disclaimer that if there's a discrepancy between the information I shared today and what is written into law, just know that whatever is written into law is always going to take precedence.</p>	
<p>And that is it, folks.</p> <p>Once again, this is our website, mnpera.org/employers, where you can find</p>	<p>Closing slide appears, listing options for how to contact PERA. Two phone numbers are listed for the employer service line: 651-296-3636, and 1-888-892-7372.</p>

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<p>resources and self-service options. And if you ever have questions, you can contact us via phone or via email.</p> <p>If you have questions regarding enrollment or forms, you can email us at ERISresponses@mnpera.org, or you can call us and select option four.</p> <p>If you have questions regarding eligibility, you can email us at eligibility@mnpera.org, or you can call us and select option three.</p> <p>That marks the end of our program. I hope you found this webinar to be informative, and have a great day.</p>	