

# How to Increase the SVF Plan Benefit Level for Your Fire Department

A fire department's SVF Plan benefit level is the dollar amount corresponding to each year of a volunteer firefighter's certified service.

PERA's cost analysis is intended to help the fire chief and governing body determine whether and the extent to which a benefit level increase is appropriate for their fire department.

The fire department's governing body has the authority to approve benefit level increases for the fire department and may elect to do so once per year. A benefit level increase approved in a given year will go into effect on January 1 of the next year. The governing body cannot elect to decrease the fire department's benefit level.

## The process for increasing a fire department's benefit level under the SVF Plan is as follows:

1. At no charge, PERA prepares and provides the fire chief and governing body with a cost analysis of the benefit level(s) concurrently with the Annual Funding Report(s). Fire departments will receive these reports no later than August 1 of current year.
2. Once received, the fire chief and governing body review PERA's cost analysis and share it with others in the governing body who have the authority to approve benefit level increases for the fire department.
3. If the governing body decides to approve a benefit level increase, it documents that approval in a resolution. The governing body may use PERA's *Sample Resolution for Increasing SVF Plan Benefit Level* to prepare its resolution. This sample resolution template can be found on PERA's website at <https://mnpera.org/plan-information/statewide-volunteer-firefighter/forms/>
4. Return the completed resolution approving the benefit level increase to PERA via email at [PERASVF@mnpera.org](mailto:PERASVF@mnpera.org) by December 31 of the current year to have PERA update the fire department's benefit level effective January 1 of the following year.