

Information Pages: Pension Policy

The City of Ann Arbor Employees' Retirement Plan is a single-employer defined benefit plan administered by the City of Ann Arbor Employees' Retirement System (CAAERS). CAAERS provides retirement, disability and death benefits to plan members and beneficiaries. Cost of living adjustments are provided to members and beneficiaries per the Ann Arbor City Code Section 1:573 of Chapter 18. Chapter 17.1 of the Ann Arbor City Charter assigns the authority to establish and amend benefit provisions to City Council. The following pension policy should be used to provide the general framework for funding the City's defined benefit pension plan.

1. **General Pension Policy**

- 1.1 The City relies on the Trustees of the CAAERS to perform periodic actuarial valuations and provide the City with an appropriate Annual Required Contribution (ARC). The systematic and disciplined funding of the system is imperative to demonstrate to rating agencies, investment bankers, creditors, the State of Michigan and taxpayers that City officials are appropriately funding this financial obligation of the City.
- 1.2 The ARC is based on a set of assumptions set forth by the Employees' Retirement System Board. The key assumptions are as follows:
 - The actuarial cost method used (i.e. entry-age)
 - The rate of return on investments
 - The projected salary increases
 - The amortization period of the unfunded liability
 - The amortization method of the unfunded liability (i.e. open or closed)
- 1.3 The City of Ann Arbor will strive to achieve 100% funding of the City of Ann Arbor Employees' Retirement Plan. To the extent that 100% funding has been achieved, the City will continue to fund at a minimum the Normal Cost as defined by an outside actuary. To the extent that a fully funded plan has not been achieved, the City shall budget each fiscal year the higher of the ARC or the existing level of funding in the current budget year adjusted annually for the change in the General Fund budgeted revenues. If the General Fund revenues are projected to increase less than 2%, the city's contribution shall increase 2%; thereby establishing a minimum increase of 2% per year. In some years this may result in an excess contribution to the Pension Fund, which will serve to both pay down the unfunded actuarial accrued liability and reduce future city cost increases.
- 1.4 The City recognizes that it is of the utmost importance that elected and appointed City officials, and all others associated with the Employees' Retirement System, avoid conflict of interests as well as the appearance of conflicts. City officials and all others associated with the Employees' Retirement System must conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the best interests of the City and taxpayers. City officials and all others associated with the Employees'

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Retirement System must function within all applicable laws and regulations, Federal and State, both statutory and regulatory, as well as within the City's own policies and procedures. A City official and all others associated with the Employees' Retirement System must not use, appear to use or permit others to use the authority of their position in a manner that could erode the confidence of taxpayers. This includes avoiding business gifts, gratuities, and hospitality of more than nominal value. City officials and all others associated with the Employees' Retirement System are expected to disclose any interest or association that interferes, might interfere, or might be thought to interfere with independent exercise of judgment in the City's best interest.

- 1.5 The City of Ann Arbor will not issue debt to fund any liability associated with funding the ARC or the remaining unfunded liability. The City will not use short-term borrowing to finance this cost except in the case of an extreme financial emergency, which is beyond its control or reasonable ability to forecast.
- 1.6 The City may use the services of qualified City staff, consultants, outside legal counsel and/or outside actuaries (other than the actuary used by the CAAERS Board) to assist in the analysis, evaluation, and decision process of benefit changes to union contracts, personnel policies, retirement windows or other changes as needed.

2. **Process**

- 2.1 The City will apportion the ARC to each fund and agency (service unit) based on the number of employees they have budgeted for the upcoming fiscal year that are participating in the system as well as the cost.
- 2.2 Each service unit will be charged 1/12 of the budgeted cost each month regardless of the actual employees participating in the system. This is necessary to ensure the City meets its obligation for the ARC.
- 2.3 For the General Fund, the ARC is partially funded by the Employee Benefits millage. Funds are disbursed to the Pension Fund as collected throughout the tax collection process. For other funds, the funds are remitted monthly to the Pension Fund. For the Downtown Development Authority and Housing Commission, the City will bill each organization for their payroll on a monthly basis. The amounts they owe for Pension will be credited to Pension monthly.