

CHAPTER 128**(HB 364)**

AN ACT relating to retirement.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Kentucky:

Section 1. KRS 6.515 is amended to read as follows:

- (1) Service credit in the Legislators' Retirement Plan shall be acquired only by service as a legislator after July 1, 1980, while a member of the plan, by transfer of credit as provided in KRS 6.505, or by purchase or transfer of credit as provided in this section.
- (2) (a) 1. Any active member of the Legislators' Retirement Plan who has at least five (5) years of service credit in the Legislators' Retirement Plan, or his beneficiary acting in his place if the member dies prior to retirement, shall receive service credit for a maximum of four (4) years for his period of service in the Armed Forces of the United States, if his discharge therefrom is honorable and he has not been credited with the service by any other retirement system administered by the Commonwealth of Kentucky, by paying the retirement system thirty-five percent (35%) of the actuarial cost of the service as determined by the board of trustees, based on assumptions used in the most recent biennial evaluation. The service credit shall be awarded and the cost shall be determined in conformity with the rate which applies to the legislator in question under KRS 6.520. Service credit awarded under this subsection shall be equivalent, for all purposes of the Legislators' Retirement Plan, to other service credit earned in the plan.
2. Any active member of the Legislators' Retirement Plan who has at least five (5) years of service credit in the Legislators' Retirement Plan may purchase and receive service credit for one (1) month of service for each six (6) months of service in the reserves or the National Guard by paying the retirement system one hundred percent (100%) of the actuarial cost of the service as determined by the board of trustees, based on the assumptions used in the most recent biennial evaluation. The service credit shall be awarded and the cost shall be determined in conformity with the rate that applies to the legislator in question under KRS 6.520. Service credit awarded as provided in this subsection shall be equivalent, for all purposes of the Legislators' Retirement Plan, to other service credit earned in the plan. The service in the military reserves or the National Guard shall be treated as service earned prior to participation in the plan. The purchase can be made by the member by transfer, if authorized under subsection (7)(d) of this section, or in a lump-sum payment or by installment payments, as set forth in paragraph (b) of this subsection. The payment shall not be picked up by the employer as provided in KRS 6.505(2).
- (b) The member may purchase all of his military service credit at one (1) time, or in increments of no less than one (1) year, unless there is a fraction remaining after all full years have been paid for. Payment of the total or the increment may be made by lump-sum or by monthly installments through payroll deduction. If the member chooses to pay by installment, the cost of the service credit shall be computed in the same manner as for a lump-sum payment, which shall be the principal. Interest, at the annual actuarial rate in effect at the time each payment is made, shall be added to each monthly payment at the rate of one-twelfth (1/12) of the annual interest rate applied to

the declining principal amount. Installment purchases shall be for no less than twelve (12) nor more than sixty (60) months. If the member leaves office before completing his installment payments, he may satisfy his contract by a lump-sum payment of the remaining principal amount, but no further installment payments shall be accepted thereafter. In this case, the member shall be credited with the military service credit for which he has paid, in years or months but no fraction less than a full month, and any payment remaining after credit for full months has been awarded shall be returned to the member.

(c) The payments made under this section shall be considered accumulated contributions of the member and shall not be picked up by the employer under KRS 6.505(2).

~~(3) If spouses both serve in the General Assembly, but not simultaneously, they may combine their service credit in the Legislators' Retirement Plan for all purposes of that plan into a single account, and may jointly designate to whom the service retirement allowance shall be paid. The designation shall not be changed once it is made. Assuming equal service credit, the benefits paid, under this section, to a legislator and his or her spouse who also served as a legislator shall not exceed the benefits that the same legislator and his or her spouse would receive if the spouse had not served as a legislator.~~

~~(4)~~ In the event of divorce, rights to benefits shall be considered marital property subject to the provisions of KRS 403.190.

~~(5) A former legislator whose spouse currently serves in the General Assembly and who received a refund of contributions under KRS 21.460 may repurchase service credit which he or she previously had by repaying the amount refunded with interest at six percent (6%) per annum, and the service credit shall become part of the single account authorized by subsection (3) of this section.~~

~~(4)~~~~(6)~~ A member who has qualified for benefits under KRS 6.525(1) may transfer to the Legislators' Retirement Plan up to ten (10) years of service credit which he has earned in a retirement system administered by Kentucky Retirement Systems. If the member elects to transfer his service credit, the system from which the transfer is made shall transfer to the legislators' retirement fund an amount equal to the employee's and employer's contributions attributable to that credit, together with interest on the contributions from the date made to date of transfer at the actuarially assumed interest rate of the system from which the transfer is made in effect at the time the contributions were made, compounded annually at that same interest rate. The member shall be entitled to the transferred service credit, at the rate at which he qualifies under KRS 6.520, when he pays the total difference between the amount of the funds transferred and the cost of the credit to the Legislators' Retirement Plan, as determined by the actuary for the Legislators' Retirement Plan. The member may pay by transfer, if authorized under subsection (7)(d) of this section, by lump sum, or by increments, as provided for in this section. The payments made under this section shall be considered accumulated contributions of the member and shall not be picked up by the employer under KRS 6.505(2).

~~(5)~~~~(7)~~ (a) Any active member of the Legislators Retirement Plan who is vested in the Legislators Retirement Plan under KRS 6.525 shall receive service credit for a maximum of four (4) years each for his period of service as a Domestic Relations Commissioner, a Master Commissioner, or a District Court Trial Commissioner of the Commonwealth of Kentucky, or a combination thereof, if the service has not been

credited to the member's account with any other public defined benefit plan, by paying the retirement system one hundred percent (100%) of the actuarial cost of the service as determined by the board of trustees, based on assumptions used in the most recent biennial evaluation. The period of service to be purchased shall be certified to the board of trustees by the custodian of the records. The service credit shall be awarded and the cost shall be determined in conformity with the rate that applies to the member in question under KRS 6.520. Service credit awarded under this subsection shall be equivalent, for all purposes of the Legislators Retirement Plan, to other service credit earned in the plan. The member may pay by transfer, by lump sum, or by increments as set forth in this section. The payments made under this section shall be considered accumulated contributions of the member and shall not be picked up by the employer under KRS 6.505(2).

- (b) Any active member of the Legislators Retirement Plan who is vested in the Legislators Retirement Plan under KRS 6.525, shall receive service credit for his period of service to the United States Government, other than service in the Armed Forces, if the service has not been credited to the member's account with any other public defined benefit plan, by paying the retirement system one hundred percent (100%) of the actuarial cost of the service as determined by the board of trustees, based on assumptions used in the most recent biennial evaluation. The period of service to be purchased shall be certified to the board of trustees by the custodian of the records. The service credit shall be awarded and the cost shall be determined in conformity with the rate that applies to the member in question under KRS 6.520. Service credit awarded under this subsection shall be equivalent, for all purposes of the Legislators Retirement Plan, to other service credit earned in the plan. The member may pay by transfer, by lump sum, or by increments as set forth in this section. The payments made under this section shall be considered accumulated contributions of the member and shall not be picked up by the employer under KRS 6.505(2).
- (c) Any member of the Legislators Retirement Plan, who is in office on June 21, 2001, and who is in active contributing status to the applicable retirement plan on June 21, 2001, and who has at least two hundred forty (240) months of service credit may purchase a combined maximum total of five (5) years of retirement service credit that is not otherwise purchasable, by paying the retirement system one hundred percent (100%) of the actuarial cost of the service as determined by the board of trustees, based on assumptions used in the most recent biennial evaluation. The member shall be entitled to the service credit at the rate at which he qualifies under KRS 6.520. Service credit awarded under this subsection shall be equivalent, for all purposes of the Legislators Retirement Plan, to other service credit earned in the plan. The member may pay by transfer, by lump sum, or by increments as set forth in this section. The payments made under this section shall be considered accumulated contributions of the member and shall not be picked up by the employer under KRS 6.505(2).
- (d) A member of the Legislators Retirement Plan may purchase service credit under the provisions of this section by transferring funds through a direct trustee-to-trustee transfer as permitted under the applicable sections of the Internal Revenue Code and any regulations or rulings issued thereunder or through a direct rollover as contemplated by and permitted under 26 U.S.C. sec. 401(a)(31) and any regulations or rulings issued thereunder. Service credit may also be purchased by a rollover of funds pursuant to and permitted under the rules specified in 26 U.S.C. sec. 402(c) and 26

U.S.C. sec. 408(d)(3). The Legislators Retirement Fund shall accept the transfer or rollover to the extent permitted under the rules specified in the applicable provisions of the Internal Revenue Code and any regulations and rulings issued thereunder. The amount shall be credited to the individual member's contribution account and shall be considered accumulated contributions of the member and shall not be picked up by the employer under KRS 6.505(2).

Section 2. KRS 6.520 is amended to read as follows:

- (1) A member of the Legislators' Retirement Plan who retires on or after his normal retirement date shall receive a service retirement allowance, payable monthly during his lifetime, in an amount per month equal to three and fifty one-hundredths percent (3.50%) of his final compensation multiplied by the number of years of his service, but in no event to exceed one hundred percent (100%) of final compensation. For this purpose, "final compensation" means the average monthly creditable compensation as determined in KRS 61.510(13) of the member for services as a legislator for the sixty (60) months of service immediately preceding retirement, except that in the case of a legislator who retires pursuant to KRS 21.410 or who dies in office, "final compensation" shall be ***the assumed salary in KRS 61.510(13)***~~[two thousand two hundred ninety one dollars sixty six cents (\$2,291.66)]~~.
- (2) A member shall have rights, with respect to retirement before reaching normal retirement date in the Legislators' Retirement Plan, identical in terms with those rights provided in KRS 21.400(2) and (3) in the Judicial Retirement Plan for members of that plan, except that the reduction in a legislators' service retirement allowance for early retirement shall be at the rate of five percent (5%) of the allowance for each year that retirement precedes the normal retirement date.
- (3) Subsections (1) and (2) of this section to the contrary notwithstanding, each legislator in office on July 1, 1982, that is a member of the Legislators' Retirement Plan, who retires on or after his normal retirement date, shall receive a service retirement allowance, payable monthly, on a formula equal to that of a justice or judge of the Court of Justice with an equivalent service entrance date, but in no event less than that specified in subsection (1) of this section, of his final compensation multiplied by the number of years of his service, but in no event to exceed one hundred percent (100%) of his final compensation. For this purpose, "final compensation" means the average monthly creditable compensation as determined in KRS 61.510(13) of the sixty (60) months of service immediately preceding retirement ***as provided in KRS 6.525***.
- (4) Subsections (1) and (2) of this section to the contrary notwithstanding, a member of the Legislators' Retirement Plan with a service entrance date after July 1, 1982, who retires on or after his normal retirement date, shall receive a service retirement allowance, payable monthly during his lifetime, in an amount per month equal to two and seventy-five one-hundredths percent (2.75%) of his final compensation multiplied by the number of years of his service, but in no event to exceed one hundred percent (100%) of final compensation. For this purpose, "final compensation" means the average monthly creditable compensation as determined in KRS 61.510(13) of the member for services as a legislator for the sixty (60) months of service immediately preceding retirement ***as provided in KRS 6.525***.

Section 3. KRS 6.525 is amended to read as follows:

The Legislators' Retirement Plan shall be governed by KRS 21.560 and by provisions identical in terms with those provided in KRS 21.345(1) and (3), 21.360(1), 21.370 to 21.410, 21.420,

21.425, 21.450, 21.460, 21.470, 21.480, 21.525, and 61.552 for the Judicial Retirement Plan, except that:

- (1) Five (5) years of service as a legislator will be sufficient for vesting; and
- (2) A member of the Legislators' Retirement Plan may combine his service credit with his service credit in the Teachers' Retirement System, Kentucky Employees Retirement System, County Employees Retirement System, and State Police Retirement System at the time of his retirement, according to the procedure of KRS 61.680(2)(a), ***except that the salary used to determine final compensation shall be based on the assumed salary in KRS 61.510(13) for service while a member of the General Assembly whether or not a member of the Legislators' Retirement Plan.*** A member of the Legislators' Retirement Plan may retire at the completion of thirty (30) or more years of combined service credit, so long as at least fifteen (15) years of such credit were earned after January 1, 1960, and there shall be no reduction in the retirement allowance because of retirement before the age of sixty-five (65). For the purposes of this section, any reference in the KRS sections listed above to the Judicial Retirement Plan shall also be read as a reference to the Legislators' Retirement Plan, and any reference to the Legislators' Retirement Plan shall also be read as a reference to the Judicial Retirement Plan.
- (3) Any other statute to the contrary notwithstanding, a member of any state-administered retirement system who has ceased to qualify for membership but subsequently returns to a qualified status, shall, for the purposes of determining the date of entry into the state-administered retirement system for the subsequent period or periods of service, be deemed to have never left the retirement system.

Section 4. KRS 6.577 is amended to read as follows:

- (1) The board of trustees of the Judicial Form Retirement System shall arrange by appropriate contract or on a self-insured basis to provide a group hospital and medical insurance plan for present and future recipients of a retirement allowance from the Legislators' Retirement Plan. The board may authorize present and future recipients of a retirement allowance from the Legislators' Retirement Plan who are under age sixty-five (65) to be included in the state employees group for hospital and medical insurance and shall provide benefits for recipients equal to those provided to state employees having the same Medicare hospital and medical insurance eligibility status. For recipients of a retirement allowance who are not eligible for the same level of hospital and medical benefits as recipients living in Kentucky, the board shall provide a medical insurance premium reimbursement plan as described in subsection (5) of this section.
- (2) Each employer participating in the Legislators' Retirement Plan shall contribute to the plan the amount necessary to provide hospital and medical insurance as provided for under this section. The employer contribution rate shall be developed by appropriate actuarial method as a part of the determination of the total employer contribution rate to the Legislators' Retirement Plan.
- (3) ***Depending on the months of service credit on which the retirement allowance was based, provided that there are at least forty-eight (48) months, all or a portion of*** the premium required to provide hospital and medical benefits under this section shall be paid in full from the insurance fund established by KRS 6.575 for all recipients of a retirement allowance from the Legislators' Retirement Plan ***as follows:***

Months of Service

Percentage Paid

<i>48 to 119, inclusive</i>	<i>25%</i>
<i>120 to 131, inclusive</i>	<i>50%</i>
<i>132 to 143, inclusive</i>	<i>55%</i>
<i>144 to 155, inclusive</i>	<i>60%</i>
<i>156 to 167, inclusive</i>	<i>65%</i>
<i>168 to 179, inclusive</i>	<i>70%</i>
<i>180 to 191, inclusive</i>	<i>75%</i>
<i>192 to 203, inclusive</i>	<i>80%</i>
<i>204 to 215, inclusive</i>	<i>85%</i>
<i>216 to 227, inclusive</i>	<i>90%</i>
<i>228 to 239, inclusive</i>	<i>95%</i>
<i>240 or more</i>	<i>100%</i>

The payments shall be made from the fund only if the recipient agrees to pay the remaining percentage, if any, from his monthly retirement allowance or by any other method equally insuring payment by him, if the recipient had two hundred forty (240) months or more of service upon retirement. If the recipient had less than two hundred forty (240) months of service, but at least one hundred thirty two (132) months of service, fifty-five percent (55%) of the premium shall be paid from the insurance fund plus an additional five percent (5%) of the premium for each year of service beginning with the completion of twelve (12) years of service and continuing through the completion of nineteen (19) years of service. The recipient shall agree to pay by payroll deduction or another method the difference between what is paid from the insurance fund and one hundred percent (100%) of the premium. If the recipient had at least one hundred twenty (120) months of service, fifty percent (50%) of the premium shall be paid from the insurance fund, if the recipient agrees to pay the remaining fifty percent (50%) by payroll deduction from his retirement allowance or by another method. If the recipient had less than one hundred twenty (120) months of service but at least forty-eight (48) months of service, twenty-five percent (25%) of the premium shall be paid from the insurance fund, if the recipient agrees to pay the remaining seventy-five percent (75%) by payroll deduction from his retirement allowance or by another method. "Months of service" as used in this section shall not include service added to determine disability benefits.

- (4) The insurance fund shall pay the same percentage of the premium for the spouse and dependents of a recipient, or the beneficiary of the recipient, as the fund pays or paid for the member.
- (5) The board shall establish a medical insurance premium reimbursement plan for recipients of a retirement allowance who are not eligible for the same level of hospital and medical benefits as recipients living in Kentucky having the same Medicare hospital and medical insurance eligibility status. An eligible recipient shall file proof of payment for hospital and medical insurance premiums at the retirement office. Reimbursement to eligible recipients shall be made on a quarterly basis. The recipient shall be eligible for reimbursement of substantiated medical insurance premiums for an amount not to exceed the total monthly

contribution determined by the board of trustees. The plan shall not be made available if all recipients are eligible for the same level of coverage as recipients living in Kentucky.

- (6) Premiums paid for hospital and medical insurance coverage procured under authority of this section shall be exempt from any premium tax which might otherwise be required under KRS Chapter 136. The payment of premiums by the insurance fund shall not constitute taxable income to an insured recipient. No commission shall be paid for hospital and medical insurance procured under authority of this section.
- (7) Notwithstanding any other statute to the contrary, any member with at least forty-eight (48) months of legislative service who is also eligible for benefits, or who is receiving benefits from any retirement plan or system administered by the Commonwealth shall be entitled to hospital and medical benefits as described in subsection (3) of this section, except that the number of months of service credit used in calculating the level of benefits shall be the sum of the service credited to the member in all the state-administered retirement systems or plans.
 - (a) Upon request of the member, the Legislators' Retirement Plan shall compute the member's combined service in all the state-administered retirement systems or plans, and calculate the portion of the member's premium to be paid by the Legislators' Retirement Plan, according to the criteria established in subsection (3) of this section. The state-administered retirement systems or plans shall pay to the Legislators' Retirement Plan the applicable percentage of the plan's costs of the retiree's hospital and medical premium which shall be equal to the percentage of the member's number of months of service in the applicable state-administered retirement system divided by his total combined service. The amounts paid by all the state-administered retirement systems or plans shall not be more than one hundred percent (100%) of the premium amount adopted by the respective boards of trustees.
 - (b) A member who elects hospital and medical benefits under this section shall lose any claim to insurance benefits under any of the other state-administered retirement systems or plans.

Section 5. KRS 21.530 is amended to read as follows:

For administrative purposes only, as hereinafter provided, the Legislators' Retirement Plan and the Judicial Retirement Plan shall be coordinated under the name, Judicial Form Retirement System, but each of the plans shall maintain its separate identity. A board of trustees of that system hereby is created, to consist of eight (8) members, three (3) of whom shall be appointed by the Supreme Court, two (2) by the Governor, one (1) by the President of the Senate, one (1) by the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and one (1) by the president and speaker jointly. The appointments by the Governor shall not be from among the members of either of the plans in the system, or from among the persons drawing benefits from either of those plans. The members of the board shall serve for terms of four (4) years, commencing as of July 1, 1980, and until their successors are chosen and have qualified; provided that if a member of the board who was a member of one (1) of the plans in the system when he was appointed ceases to be a member of that plan, a vacancy shall thereupon be deemed to exist in his position on the board; and provided further, that the members of the Judicial Retirement Board in office on July 1, 1980, shall serve for the remainder of the terms for which they were appointed, as the members of the board created by this section, in the positions appointable by the Supreme Court and the Governor. Vacancies shall be filled by the appointing authority for the unexpired term. The members shall annually elect a

chairman. *Gubernatorial appointees, and judicial and legislative appointees*~~[Board members]~~ who do not receive an annual salary from the State Treasury~~[,]~~ in another capacity~~[,]~~ shall receive an amount equal to the per diem compensation paid to members of the General Assembly for each day they are in session. All members shall be reimbursed for their necessary expenses.

Section 6. KRS 21.580 is amended to read as follows:

- (1) As a pilot project to determine the effectiveness of using senior retired judges to combat backlog and delay in Kentucky courts, there is hereby created a "Senior Status Program for Special Judges." The program shall be implemented as follows:
 - (a) KRS 21.400(1) and any other provision in KRS Chapter 21 to the contrary notwithstanding, a member who retires at a time when combining his total years of judicial service credit and his age equals or exceeds the number seventy-five (75), may elect, within ninety (90) days following retirement, to participate in the "Senior Status Program for Special Judges," if he complies with the provisions of this subsection. In that event, the member shall be entitled to a service retirement allowance, commencing at the member's normal retirement age, payable monthly during his lifetime in an amount equal to five percent (5%) of his final compensation multiplied by the number of years of his judicial service, not to exceed twenty (20) years of judicial service at the five percent (5%) factor, not to exceed one hundred percent (100%) of final compensation. "Final compensation", notwithstanding any provision to the contrary, for all members retiring under any provision of KRS 21.345 to 21.570 or this section, or similar statutes governing the same positions, as defined in KRS 21.400 shall be based on a period of thirty-six (36) months. Any nonjudicial time shall be counted as is otherwise provided in KRS Chapter 21, but in no event shall service retirement allowance exceed one hundred percent (100%) of final compensation.
 1. In the event the retiring judge elects to retire as a "Senior Status Special Judge" under this subsection, he shall commit to serve, upon appointment by the Chief Justice of the Commonwealth, as special judge for one hundred twenty (120) work days per year for a term of five (5) years without compensation other than the retirement benefits under this subsection. The Senior Status Special Judge may agree to work more than one hundred twenty (120) days in any year within the five (5) years of service; however, the Senior Status Special Judge shall be compensated as otherwise provided by law, in addition to his retirement benefits, for any days served in excess of one hundred twenty (120) in that year. If the Senior Status Special Judge has not served a total of six hundred (600) days within the five (5) year period outlined in this subsection, the Chief Justice shall require the Senior Status Special Judge to serve at no additional compensation to the Senior Status Special Judge, until the six hundred (600) day period is served by the Senior Status Special Judge. The Senior Status Special Judge and the Chief Justice may agree in writing to serve less than the one hundred twenty (120) days in any one (1) or more of the five (5) years; however, any of the days not served in a given year shall be served at the end of the five (5) year period set forth in this subsection.
 2. Should any member electing to retire under the Senior Status Program for Special Judges fail, when ordered by the Chief Justice to serve the requisite number of days not to exceed one hundred twenty (120) days a year for the five (5) year period outlined in this subsection, unless otherwise agreed in writing, he

shall no longer be eligible for benefits computed under this subsection and shall return to the benefits otherwise provided under this chapter.

3. Subject to Section 110(5)(b) of the Kentucky Constitution, the Chief Justice shall give due regard, when practical, to the desirability of appointing Senior Status Special Judges to serve within their judicial region as defined by the regional administration charter.
 - (b) The inviolable contract provisions of Kentucky law, KRS 21.480, shall apply during the period of time that KRS 21.580 is effective; however, no other provisions of 2000 Ky. Acts ch. 305 shall be considered subject to an inviolable contract of the Commonwealth.
 - (c) Nothing contained in this section shall be construed to invalidate provisions in the current law which require a penalty for retiring before the normal retirement age.
- (2) The Senior Status Program for Special Judges created by this section shall be open to any member who is a judge in office on *the effective date of this Act* ~~July 14, 2000~~, and who subsequently retires as a Senior Status Special Judge on or before January 31, 2009.

Approved March 18, 2003