

OREGON PERS

PUBLIC EMPLOYEES RETIREMENT SYSTEM



2023-2028
Strategic Plan

MISSION STATEMENT



We serve the people of Oregon by administering public employee benefit trusts to pay the right person the right benefit at the right time.

SHARED VISION

Honoring your public service through secure retirement benefits.

CORE VALUES

Service-focus

We work together to meet the needs of others with dependability, professionalism, and respect.

Accountability

We take ownership for our decisions, actions, and outcomes.

Integrity

We inspire trust through transparency and ethical, sound judgment.

OPERATING PRINCIPLES

Professional

We are responsive, respectful, and sensitive to the needs of our members, employers, and staff.

Accurate

We ensure data integrity and provide consistent, dependable information and benefits.

Judicious

We use sound judgment and prudent, principled decision-making in upholding our fiduciary responsibility.

Vigilant

We are constantly vigilant and take ownership in the basic tenets of information security: confidentiality, integrity, and availability.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	1
ORGANIZATIONAL MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT	2
Workforce Development.....	3
Organizational Communication	4
PERS Outcome Based Management System (POBMS)	5
MEMBER SERVICES AND COMMUNICATIONS	6
Member Engagement	7
Omni-channel Service Delivery	8
DATA CONSISTENCY	9
Data Analytics	10
Data Integrity.....	11
Data Use.....	12
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY	13
ORION System Modernization	14
IT Workforce Development.....	16
FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT	17
Technology Upgrades and System Integration.....	18
Financial Management Resource Development.....	20
RISK MANAGEMENT	21
Risk Management	22

STRATEGIC PLAN INTRODUCTION

This strategic plan looks to a five-year horizon and answers the question: If we are to become better at delivering on our mission, where will we, as an agency, be able to improve over this time?

Moving into this five-year planning cycle, we recognize that we must reimagine how we evolve and deploy our business capabilities via our people, processes, and technologies. This evolution is necessary to meet our member and PERS-participating employer needs into the future. Members and employers have a desire for more personalized and updated service delivery such that they can be informed, interact, and transact with PERS at the time of their choosing, using the channel of their choosing.

The plan articulates ambitious goals to achieve through 2028 within these focus areas, with specific, achievable goals and objectives related to each. The plan also links our objectives to the core outcome and process measures documented in PERS' Fundamentals Map, a key artifact in our PERS Outcome Based Management System.

Our tactics to achieve these goals and objectives leverage the resources any organization must affect change – people, process, and technology – but unifies and prioritizes the allocation of these resources to assure that they are directed consistently and productively on the highest purposes we can achieve.

Achieving the goals outlined in this strategic plan depends upon successful execution of the tactics identified, as well as regular monitoring our progress, and tactical decisions during plan implementation on how to further our progress. As such, this strategic plan is a living document, and we anticipate that changes may be necessary to achieve the goals we set forth.

PERS will use its existing strategic and operational planning function to prioritize and allocate resources for each of the strategies identified. Strategies will be implemented through a variety of approaches, including problem solving, project management, and integration into core business practices. Specific performance metrics will be identified for tracking our progress as part of strategy initiation.

Certain strategies depend on additional funding. We developed and submitted corresponding policy option packages with the agency's budget requests, for the 2023-25 budget cycle.

ORGANIZATIONAL MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

Introduction

This strategic priority includes goals related to three organizational management and development focus areas: workforce development, organizational communications, and PERS' Outcome Based Management System (POBMS).

PERS' success in delivering upon our mission depends on having a highly skilled and diverse workforce supported by leadership that sets clear policies, procedures, and performance expectations. The plan's workforce development goals and strategies recognize this can only be achieved through continued investments in staff development.

Recognizing the importance of recruiting a talented and diverse workforce, we will create relationships with universities, colleges, and community workforce placement programs to support marginalized groups and students with opportunities to gain workforce experience through internships.

Through staff and leadership collaboration, we will strengthen our performance management goals, make investments in staff education to include diversity, equity and inclusion efforts, coach and implement leadership best practices, and implement our agency succession plan.

Enhancing organizational communications is also priority for PERS. Access to timely, accurate, and relevant internal information helps ensure that we, as an agency, communicate effectively with our members, employers, stakeholders, and staff.

This priority was identified by staff in PERS' employee engagement survey. Survey results indicate many staff would like greater transparency and different content regarding information relevant to their jobs; staff also noted the desire for more information on decisions and policies that could affect them.

The third focus area relates to the work of fully integrating POBMS. The agency initiated POBMS in 2012 to improve operations and processes by engaging employees through an outcome-based approach, allowing those closest to the work to drive the improvement. Completing the integration and normalization of POBMS is important to continuing to improve performance outcomes. Employees support and benefit from POBMS because it provides a clear line of sight and a transparent approach to connect to the agency's goals and objectives and staff's role in meeting them.

Focus Area: Workforce Development

GOAL

Develop and support a diverse workforce that satisfies employees' essential needs to achieve their full potential.

Objective 1

Through intentional acts of inclusion, define and implement leadership practices that are consistent with strategic priorities.

Tactics

1. Identify, document, and implement a leadership training plan to reach the desired workforce competencies.
2. Develop and support a leadership culture of workforce excellence that thrives in diversity, equity, and inclusion practices.
3. Measure outcomes and adjust plans as needed.

Related measure

SP 5: Managing and Developing the Workforce

Objective 2

Document and implement employee development plans that help employees achieve their professional goals.

Tactics

1. Record and monitor employee stretch and development activities.
2. Motivate, inspire, and collaborate with employees to validate their abilities to reach growth goals.
3. Provide a safe and supportive environment for employees to communicate concerns and overcome barriers.

Related measures

OM2: Employee Engagement

SP5: Managing and Developing the Workforce

Focus Area: Organizational Communication

GOAL

Foster and enhance transparency and relevancy in messaging to improve employee engagement with internal communications and promote an informed workforce.

Objective 1

Continue to implement an internal communications strategy that engages and meets the needs of a diverse workforce.

Tactics

1. Consider and implement various communication methods to reach a diverse population of employees. This includes evolving our support for organizational change management communications.
2. Implement tools and processes that are flexible.
3. Strategically maximize all communication channels, including the intranet.

Related measures

OM2: Employee Engagement

SP1: Communicating Internally and Externally

SP5: Managing and Developing the Workforce

Focus Area: PERS Outcome Based Management System (POBMS)

GOAL

Complete POBMS integration throughout the agency.

Objective 1

Fully develop team scorecards to measure performance and drive strategic, tactical and operational decisions.

Tactics

1. Train the remaining staff in measures development and POBMS.
2. Complete scorecard development for divisions that do not have them at the team level.
3. Leverage PowerBI to enhance reporting capabilities.

Related measure

SP6: Strategic and Operational Planning

Objective 2

Normalize Portfolio and Project Management organizational methods.

Tactics

1. Put a structure in place to support initiation and implementation of projects and their alignment with the strategic plan.
2. Leverage Enterprise Portfolio Management to prioritize and properly resource agency initiatives and ensure enterprise is focused on priority projects.

Related measure

SP6: Strategic and Operational Planning

MEMBER SERVICES AND COMMUNICATIONS

Introduction

PERS administers public employee benefit trusts to provide retirement benefits and services to our members. In fact, all of PERS' strategic priorities ultimately support our ability to provide the services needed by members and to ensure we “pay the right person, the right benefit, at the right time.”

As a strategic priority, enhancing member services and communications addresses two focus areas: member relations, and quality delivery methods.

PERS' member education and outreach has focused primarily on those who are within two years of their effective retirement date. This just-in-time focus does not provide members with a full understanding of the need to financially prepare for retirement over their entire career. PERS recognizes that providing members with useful tools, resources, and education earlier, and throughout their careers, will better support our goal of having engaged and educated stakeholders.

A key component of this education will be the need for members to augment their PERS retirement with other means, such as deferred compensation and personal savings. Additionally, efforts will be taken to better integrate communications alignment, such that members understand their PERS benefits [Tier One, Tier Two, Oregon Public Savings Retirement Plan (OPSRP), and Individual Account Program (IAP)], as well as benefits offered under the Oregon Savings Growth Plan (OSGP) and the PERS Health Insurance Plan (PHIP).

Engaging and supporting our members in making informed retirement decisions creates a broader role for PERS as a retirement education and planning resource. To be that resource, we must support members by providing the information and easy-to-use tools to track their retirement benefits.

Our current tool set needs to be more accessible and include a broader array of relevant content: not only account and benefit information, but transaction status tracking. This is what our quality delivery methods goals aim to accomplish.

Focus Area: Member Engagement

GOAL

Engage members throughout their careers so they are better prepared for retirement.

Objective 1

Develop member journeys with relevant accessible resources for different life and career stages.

Tactics

1. Enhance existing journey maps online – linked resources on PERS website.
2. Member surveys – provide post-service surveys to ensure sufficient and accessible resources are being provided and improved, to ensure accessibility.

Related measures

OM1: Clear/Concise Communication

OM7: Member Satisfaction

OM10: Informed Retirement Decisions

SP1: Communicating Internally and Externally

Objective 2

Brand PERS as their retirement education and planning resource.

Tactics

1. Enhance marketing of services that PERS offers members.
2. Provide annual PERS Retirement Expo.

Related measures

OM1: Clear/Concise Communication

OM7: Member Satisfaction

OM10: Informed Retirement Decisions

SP1: Communicating Internally and Externally

Focus Area: Omni-channel Service Delivery

GOAL

Improve members' satisfaction with PERS.

Objective 1

Enhance and modernize account accessibility and capabilities for members to self-serve.

Tactics

1. Modernize and secure Online Member Services (OMS), providing more accessibility, member-specific information, and electronic transaction capabilities.
2. Modernize and update the PERS website to allow easier navigation and search capabilities.
3. Integrate OSGP and PHIP to better inform and educate members with a complete PERS picture.

Related measures

OM1: Clear, Concise Communication

OM7: Member Satisfaction

OM10: Informed Retirement Decisions

SP1: Communicating Internally and Externally

Objective 2

Launch new education tools and resources valuable to the member journey from hire to retire.

Tactics

1. Send communication to new members.
2. Send communication when vested.
3. Send communication when nearing retirement eligibility.

Related measures

OM1: Clear/Concise Communication

OM7: Member Service Satisfaction

OM10: Informed Retirement Decisions

SP1: Communicating Internally and Externally

DATA CONSISTENCY

Introduction

Data is the cornerstone of PERS' mission to “pay the right person the right benefit at the right time.” Good, reliable data can be compromised by many factors: changes in determinations of service credit, contributions, and other key retirement data elements over a member’s career; changes in employer reporting and recordkeeping systems as well as retroactive changes to member data by employers; and changes in technology.

Further, PERS is a complex plan, with data terms that confuse members and employers alike. These factors result in data that may be incomplete, inconsistent, or missing, which in turns erodes confidence and trust in PERS by our members, employers, and the public.

To improve data consistency, PERS will take a multipronged approach. First, we will explore and implement a data and analytics program to create a structure that allows for the agency to be an insight driven organization. By doing so, decisions will be heavily influenced by data and analytics. As a result, the directions the agency will take will be based on logic, historical trends, future forecasting, and a thorough data analysis, among others. Additionally, this data and analytics program will provide an architecture that is nimble and accessible.

Second, via the Modernization Program and other corresponding efforts, PERS will look to implement improved technologies that assist with validating inbound data. This approach will result in a more stable and accurate data reporting platform that moves agency processes away from manual data manipulation to technologically automated validations.

Third, PERS will continue to look for and implement processes and efforts to address the legacy data issues. Having access to good, reliable data is important for PERS staff, and our current data management structure presents many challenges that result in data that is difficult to access or inconsistent.

Data management practices that contribute to internal data inconsistencies include different methodologies used to access data, data sources are not mapped, lacking common data definitions and business context descriptions, and the need for an integrated structure to leverage existing data expertise in the agency. The above referenced efforts, which will partly be addressed by the Modernization Program, will have a positive impact on helping assist with the clean-up of lingering legacy data issues.

Additionally, a collection of agency staff is currently collaborating to identify and prioritize legacy data issues. This inventory will help set the stage for staff to actively work the highest priority legacy data issues currently present.

The fourth effort will be an exploration to how PERS can work towards reducing and, ultimately, preventing the need to modify data after it has been submitted. Currently, there are a magnitude of reasons for why data must be modified after transmitted. Reasons include but are not limited to misreported data, inaccurate data, and gaps in reported data. A great deal of resources including time and money is spent in modifying data. By preventing this, resources can be redirected towards other needs, consequently, PERS could provide better services to stakeholders.

Focus Area: Data Analytics

GOAL

Use data analytics to enhance operational efficiency, process management, reporting, and insight.

Objective 1

Improve employer reporting validations to minimize manual review and corrections to data.

Tactics

1. Identify validation gaps in EDX.
2. Create new validations in EDX as part of modernization efforts.
3. Improve employer education program.

Related measures

OP1: Managing Client Data and Services
OM9: Timely Benefit Payments
OM8: Effective Employer Partnerships
OM10: Informed Retirement Decisions
OM11: Accurate Benefit Calculations

Objective 2

Use technology, including data validations where appropriate, to reduce manual processes.

Tactics

1. Develop an inventory of manual and inefficient processes.
2. Identify and propose actions that could reduce manual processes or inefficiencies.
3. Provide feedback and input to modernization planning so that technological solutions to these processes can be included.

Related measures

OP1: Managing Client Data and Services
OM9: Timely Benefit Payments
OM10: Informed Retirement Decisions
OM11: Accurate Benefit Calculations

Focus Area: Data Integrity

GOAL

Resolve legacy data issues.

Objective 1

Identify legacy data issues and prioritize cleanup efforts to improve data quality.

Tactics

1. Create a workgroup to identify and prioritize data issues for resolution.
2. Develop a plan, including resources, to resolve data issues.
3. Provide feedback and input to modernization planning so that technological solutions to these processes can be included.

Related measures

OP1: Managing Client Data and Services
OP2: Collecting Contributions
OP4: Processing Benefit Applications
OP5: Calculating Benefits

Objective 2

Minimize need to change data after receipt from employers.

Tactics

1. Create policies and procedures that eliminate multiple reviews.
2. Create member data locking processes.
3. Communicate with and educate employers and members on data locking impacts.

Related measures

OP1: Managing Client Data and Services
OP2: Collecting Contributions
OP4: Processing Benefit Applications
OP5: Calculating Benefits
OM8: Effective Employer Partnerships
OM10: Informed Retirement Decisions

Focus Area: Data Utilization

GOAL

Use data and analytics to help drive and support agency decisions.

Objective 1

Become an insight-driven organization.

Tactics

1. Reduce the amount of manual data manipulation currently performed to get the desired insights.
2. Enable the right tools and policies, coupled with removing offline tools, to enhance data integrity and quality.
3. Provide feedback and input to modernization planning so that technological solutions to these processes can be included.

Related measures

OP1: Managing Client Data and Services

OM3: Operating Effectiveness

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Introduction

PERS' information technology (IT) system provides the foundational data and information management necessary to “pay the right person the right benefit at the right time.” Our primary IT system is the Oregon Retirement Information Online Network (ORION).

ORION needs to be continuously maintained and enhanced to provide necessary business functionality due to changes initiated both internally and by outside stakeholders. PERS must continuously work to optimize controls over the change management process, as it impacts efficiency and responsiveness in meeting evolving business needs.

Focus Area: ORION System Modernization

GOAL

Improve IT efficiency and responsiveness to business operational changes.

Objective 1

Re-architect core applications in ORION as independent, discrete business services.

Tactics

1. Resolve key issues affecting ORION administration, performance, maintainability, and sustainability to prepare for modernization
2. Restructure nightly jClarety batch processes to improve maintainability and efficiency and reduce batch durations.
3. Redesign logging, monitoring, and error-handling functionality of jClarety batch processes and other ORION core applications to improve supportability.
4. Create an application-programming interface (API) ecosystem to allow ORION to loosely integrate between applications, commercial-off-the-shelf (COTS) solutions, and external services.
5. Analyze opportunities to leverage COTS solutions when beneficial to the agency.
6. Redesign current infrastructure to use Hybrid Cloud (on premises and in cloud).

Related measures

SP3: Leveraging Technology

OM1: Clear, Concise Communication

Objective 2

Architect, plan, and design the PERS Backup Data Center Services for Disaster Recovery (DR) to support business continuity.

Tactics

1. Research and explore opportunities between the SDC and private cloud providers as architected by the ORION Modernization Program.
2. Complete the Backup Data Center project.

Related measures

SP3: Leveraging Technology

OP1: Managing Client Data and Services

OM1: Clear, Concise Communication

Focus Area: IT Workforce Development

GOAL

Improve workforce environment and prepare for and attract the next generation of technical talent.

Objective 1

Transform Information Services Division (ISD) working environment to encourage collaboration and innovation.

Tactics

1. Deploy innovative and collaborative tools for effective real-time communication to support telecommuting between staff, outside contractors, and other partners.
2. Reduce functional silos within ISD by using virtual collaborative platforms and optimizing the Development Operations team.

Related measures

SP3: Leveraging Technology

SP5: Managing and Developing the Workforce

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Introduction

As the financial world continues to evolve with a focus on greater transparency and ease of use for consumers, so too must PERS develop strategies to keep pace with these changes and meet member expectations.

This level of responsiveness and transparency requires investing in an enhancement to our financial management tools, resources, and knowledge. Since 2003, PERS has been required to provide multiple pension plan options and enhancements, and the increasing demands appear likely to continue.

To meet these and future needs, we need to create a financial management strategy that allows greater flexibility to pivot when legislation or members demand it. To succeed, we need to enhance and integrate our financial management systems as well as invest in professional and organizational development.

Our current financial management systems require intense manual oversight, which exposes us to quality control and duplicative work. As a result, we spend an inordinate amount of time not only verifying staff work but also verifying the data we receive. Enhancing our systems promotes efficiency, limits manual oversight, and streamlines workflows.

Additionally, we need to invest in our Financial Services Division's professional development. As we invest in technology upgrades, we must ensure our workforce is able to meet the demands of new programs and be educated on the most up-to-date processes. This group will influence and inform the implementation of our financial strategy and we need to ensure we invest the same amount of attention in their development as we have in the technology meant to assist them.

Focus Area: Technology Upgrades and System Integration

GOAL

Enhance and improve productivity, reduce manual processes, and accurately and quickly respond to legislative and stakeholder needs.

Objective 1

Increase efficiency, improve communications, and reduce manual work.

Tactics

1. Develop an inventory of manual or inefficient processes.
2. Identify and propose actions that could be taken to reduce manual and inefficient processes.
3. Provide feedback and input to modernization planning so that technological solutions to these processes can be included.

Related measure

OP6a: Manual Checks

Objective 2

Standardize financial data organization and reduce manual reconciliation between systems to improve accuracy and responsiveness to legislative and stakeholder needs.

Tactics

1. Engage Central Data Management to improve data gathering and reporting.
2. Actively participate with the Modernization Program to identify where modernization work can reduce manual processes and increase efficiency.

Related measure

OP6e: Tax Reporting

Objective 3

Evaluate and implement electronic filing and paperless processes to respond to inquiries effectively and promptly and efficiently process transactions.

Tactic

1. Evaluate opportunities to transition remaining paper processes to electronic/paperless and implement these changes where feasible.

Related measures

OP6b: Direct Deposit

SP4d: Timely Payment Processing

Focus Area: Financial Management Resource Development

GOAL

Ensure PERS has both the appropriate staff resource and skill level to perform the financial accounting, reporting, budgeting, analysis, and forecasting required to be compliant and deliver exceptional service to our stakeholders.

Objective 1

Ensure Financial Operations has appropriate staffing to provide timely and accurate service to all stakeholders.

Tactics

1. Update section managers' quarterly Performance, Accountability, and Feedback goals to include evaluation of section staffing.
2. Develop division-wide task/responsibility matrix to identify coverage, back up, and potential gaps.
3. Update staff responsibilities and staffing models to address timeliness and accuracy.

Related measure

SP6: Strategic and Operational Planning

RISK MANAGEMENT

Introduction

Risk is defined as the “effect of uncertainty on objectives.” The consequences associated with a risk can enhance the achievement of objectives (i.e., positive consequences) or can limit or diminish the achievement of objectives (i.e., negative consequences). Management of risk, therefore, is an essential business activity required to help the agency achieve its core mission.

Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) is a process applied across the enterprise designed to identify potential events (risks) that may affect the agency and to manage risk to be within the agency’s risk appetite (tolerance), in order to provide reasonable assurance regarding the achievement of the agency’s objectives.

Information Security and Risk Section (SRS) is tasked with developing and implementing an Enterprise Risk Management program, designed to provide oversight, guidance, and monitoring activities for evaluating agency risk for business and technological activities necessary to achieve agency objectives. The agency’s Enterprise Risk Management program will focus on the following types of risk:

- Reputational Risk
- Operational Risk
- Financial Risk
- Strategic Risk
- Hazard Risk
- Compliance Risk

To this end, it is essential for agency staff to have a common understanding of risks associated with the decisions we make while performing our mission. Establishing an Enterprise Risk Management function will serve to guide management and staff during their decisions making process to ensure reducing agency risk is paramount when choosing one path over another.

Two of the largest risk management areas that must be specifically addressed relate to information security and business continuity. PERS is entrusted with the personal information of its members. The agency must ensure this information is adequately protected by employing safeguards as managed in the Information Security Program.

Additionally, retired members rely on the routine and timely monthly benefit payments. PERS must ensure that its members continue to receive their payments in the event of a business interruption. Through the agency’s Continuity Management Program, PERS can ensure that these payments will continue even in the event of a disaster.

Focus Area: Risk Management

GOAL

Establish an Enterprise Risk Management Program within the Security and Risk Section.

Objective 1

Secure legislative support and funding to stand up an Enterprise Risk Management Program that meets industry standards.

Tactic

1. Submit the Policy Option Package for Enterprise Risk Management resources for the 2023 legislative session.

Related measure

SP2.6: Conducting enterprise risk management efforts

Objective 2

Establish and implement an Enterprise Risk Management Program throughout the agency.

Tactic

1. Work with contractor to develop and implement an ERM program.

Related measure

SP2.6: Conducting enterprise risk management efforts

Focus Area: Risk Management

GOAL

Enhance the practices and controls of the Information Security Program.

Objective 1

Strengthen the agency's Information Security Program in alignment with enterprise and industry best practices.

Tactics

1. Establish a risk appetite for the agency in alignment with its core mission.
2. Develop risk management policies and procedures, and train agency staff on those policies and procedures.
3. Monitor adherence to the policies and procedures.

Related measures

SP2.9: Developing and overseeing information security program

SP3.7: Implementing and maintaining system security

Objective 2

Strengthen member and employer identity and access management practices and controls.

Tactics

1. Implement an industry-standard identity and access management solution and practices for PERS members, employers, and third-party administrators (TPA).
2. Implement industry identity-proofing solutions and practices for members and employers.

Related measures

SP2.9: Developing and overseeing information security program

SP3.7: Implementing and maintaining system security

OM7: Member Service Satisfaction

OM8: Effective Employer Partnerships

Objective 3

Develop and implement a privacy initiative for members.

Tactics

1. Develop and implement privacy policies, practices, and solutions to protect members' data.
2. Train agency personnel on the privacy practices, policies, and procedures.

Related measures

SP2.9: Developing and overseeing information security program

SP3.7: Implementing and maintaining system security

OM7: Member Service Satisfaction

Focus Area: Risk Management

GOAL

Enhance practices and controls of the Continuity Management Program.

Objective 1

Design and implement resilient systems and controls to support the agency's mission.

Tactics

1. Implement procedures and controls to ensure PERS can continue operations using its backup data center.
2. Regularly test the ability to restore operations using the backup data center to ensure resiliency.

Related measures

SP2.8: Ensuring continuity of operations

SP3.3: Ensuring system availability and performance

OM9: Timely Benefit Payments

Objective 2

Mature the Continuity Management Program to include additional agency processes.

Tactics

1. Prioritize agency processes in alignment with business requirements.
2. Implement and test the additional business processes to ensure they meet PERS' mission.

Related measures

SP2.8: Ensuring continuity of operations

SP3.3: Ensuring system availability and performance

OM9: Timely Benefit Payments

