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December 15, 2008

TO: Certifying Officers, Police and Firemen's Retirement System (PFRS)

FROM: Wendy Jamison 
Secretary, PFRS Board of Trustees

SUBJECT: Training Requirements for PFRS Eligibility and Enrollment

The Board of Trustees for the Police and Firemen's Retirement System (PFRS) has adopted amendments to the New Jersey Administrative Code (N.J.A.C.). This letter details a new rule within the amendments, N.J.A.C. 17:4-2.4, that addresses "training requirements" for police officers and firefighters, **and may also affect the eligibility of some current members of the PFRS.**

For a position to be eligible for participation in PFRS it must meet the statutory definition of a "police officer" or "firefighter" including the mandate that a candidate for a PFRS position must successfully complete specific training requirements.* All police officers enrolled in the PFRS must be certified in the basic training course for police officers as prescribed by the Police Training Commission (PTC). Similarly, firefighters enrolled in the PFRS must complete and receive Firefighter 1 certification through the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs, Division of Fire Safety.

In addressing the training requirements for PFRS applicants, N.J.A.C. 17:4-2.4, further specifies that **any current PFRS police members or firefighting members** who have not successfully completed the PTC or Firefighter 1 certification within eighteen (18) months after the final adoption of the regulation **will be removed from participation in the PFRS.**

This means that employers — and PFRS members without the required training — have 18 months (December 31, 2008 through June 30, 2010) to establish that all PFRS employees have the required PTC or Firefighter 1 training and certification. **As of July 1, 2010, all PFRS members must be fully trained with PTC or Firefighter 1 certification in order to remain in PFRS membership. Any PFRS members without the required certification will face removal from PFRS membership.**

*As prescribed for police positions in N.J.S.A. 43:16A-1 and 52:17B-66 et seq.; and for firefighter positions in N.J.S.A. 43:16A-1 and 52:17B-66 et seq.

In certain circumstances, police officer members may substitute comparable federal, state, or county training if approved by the PTC and the PFRS Board of Trustees. Employers may submit proof of other police officer certification along with a written request for consideration to the PFRS Board and Trustee Administration, Division of Pensions and Benefits, PO Box 295, Trenton, NJ, 08625-0295.

For fire fighter members, no other training can be substituted for the Firefighter 1 certification.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

If you have additional questions about the information provided in this letter, contact the Division's Office of Client Services at (609) 292-7524, or e-mail the Division at: *pensions.nj@treas.state.nj.us*