

# Your Retirement – Timing is Everything

## **36 – 12 Months Prior to Retirement**

- Make a file called “Retirement” and store in a safe, convenient location. During the retirement process, make copies of all documentation and store in chronological order.
- Attend a SURS pre-retirement seminar (conducted annual in the spring and fall).
- Gather legal documents: marriage certificates, birth certificates, and other relevant information.
- Determine if you qualify for and will benefit from the purchase of additional service credit. If so, make financial arrangements and begin the purchase process.

## **12 Months Prior to Retirement**

- Call SURS to receive an estimate request form. Complete the form and return it to SURS. Allow up to 6-8 weeks to receive your estimate. Remember, the estimate form is not an application for retirement, it is provided for planning purposes only. SURS will respond to estimate requests up to 18 months prior to retirement.
- Contact the nearest Social Security office to determine if you qualify for Social Security benefits. You may obtain an estimate request by contacting the Social Security Administration at 1 800-722-1213.
- If needed, schedule an appointment with a SURS retirement counselor to review your estimated benefits.

## **6 Months Prior to Retirement**

- Discuss the estimated benefits and options with family, friends, an accountant, or financial advisor.
- Contact the Personnel or Human Resource office at your agency to learn more about your options for continuing employer provided benefits such as health insurance after retirement.

- Prepare a “retirement” budget which aligns your future expenses against your anticipated income and benefits at retirement.
- You and your spouse should undergo a complete medical examination.
- Prepare or update your will.

## **2 Months Prior to Retirement**

- Contact your personnel/human resource office or SURS to receive a retirement application. Complete and send to SURS.
- Provide SURS with proof of birth for self and spouse (if applicable).
- Provide SURS with marriage certificate (if applicable).
- Complete an electronic fund transfer application. This ensures reliable and efficient delivery of your retirement annuity to your bank, savings institution or credit union.

## **Prior to Retirement**

- Officially resign from your agency.
- Respond to any other requests for information from your employing agency or SURS in the time-frame requested.

The average American spends approximately 18 years in retirement. Unfortunately, for many, the days and months before retirement can be stressful and frustrating as one is forced to navigate through the many and sometimes complicate steps of retiring and changing your life status. SURS and agency benefit and human resource representatives stand ready to assist you when the time comes. Advance planning on your part, however, may allow you to more fully enjoy your last work days and move effortlessly into your new life as a SURS annuitant.