



**Illinois Public Pension Fund Association**  
**INFORMATION BULLETIN**  
**Benefit Communication Program on IPPFA-TV**  
**MAY 2025**

IPPFA is pleased to announce the availability of a series of updated instructional videos on retirement income for Illinois police and fire professionals. The videos are available free on our IPPFA-TV *YouTube* channel. Active and retired members (and spouses) can access these videos to learn more about the key sources of retirement income: “Downstate” police and fire pensions, Social Security, deferred compensation and retiree healthcare savings plans. In addition, a short video on the HELPS tax reduction for retiree health insurance assists retired members in claiming this valuable tax break.

The videos can be used as a complete guide to retirement income or used individually for members to increase their knowledge in a specific area. The package includes:

**Introduction to Public Employee Retirement Income (running time: 18 minutes).** This video provides an overview of the three main sources of retirement income: pension, Social Security and personal savings. Pension material includes how retirement pensions work, disability coverage, survivor benefits, the impact of divorce and how pension systems are governed. For Social Security, the subjects include covered and non-covered employment and how benefits can be estimated. The personal savings module provides an overview of deferred compensation and retiree healthcare savings plans. The viewer is referred to the expanded video on each particular subject and also provided with references for additional information.

**Article 3 (Police) and Article 4 (Fire) Pension Benefits.** Four separate videos provide information for members of each fund and Tier status as follows:

- Article 3 (Police) Tier 1 (running time: 14 minutes)
- Article 3 (Police) Tier 2 (running time: 16 minutes)
- Article 4 (Fire) Tier 1 (running time: 15 minutes)
- Article 4 (Fire) Tier 2 (running time: 17 minutes)

Covered material in each video includes vesting requirements, final salary definition, pension calculation formulas, annual increases, disability benefits, survivor benefits, employee contributions, transfer of service to another fund, and fund governance (Department of Insurance, board makeup, member data, *etc.*).

**Public Employee Deferred Compensation (running time: 22 minutes).** This “personal savings” module discusses saving via Section 457 Deferred Compensation plans: how the plans work overall, the power of compound earnings, plan administrators, the rules for deferral, traditional *vs.* Roth options, plan investments, rules for withdrawal, savings rates by various employee groups and a case study on optimizing deferred compensation. The presenter emphasizes the successful role that senior employees play in encouraging new police officers and firefighters to participate in these spectacular plans.

**Retiree Healthcare Savings Plan (running time: 38 minutes).** This video is a recording of a real-time presentation on this subject by Joel Babbitt at a 2024 IPPFA Conference. Joel describes how these plans work with emphasis on the two different opportunities for triple-tax savings. First, savings occurs at the federal income tax, state income tax and Medicare tax levels (plus Social Security if applicable). Members also save taxes at the time the money is deposited, while it earns investment returns and when it is withdrawn for eligible retiree healthcare expenses. Talk about a “win-win.” For members who are covered under these plans, this is a great refresher. For people who are not covered, the video is a tool to learn about these plans and move forward towards adoption or negotiation.

**Social Security and Government Pensions (running time: 35 minutes).** This video provides both an overview of Social Security and detailed information on retirement, spousal and survivor benefits. In addition, a discussion on “claiming strategies” is included. All of the information has been updated to reflect the changes in the *Social Security Fairness Act of 2025*. This video was posted earlier in February 2025 and has gotten more than 9,100 views from around the country.

**HELPS Tax Credit for Police/Fire Retiree Health Insurance Payments (running time: 9 minutes).** This video is a brief overview but also provides actionable information on this valuable tax break. For retirees who have any health insurance expense (including Medicare Part B premiums), viewers will learn what expenses qualify, how to claim the exclusion, answers to common questions we receive at IPPFA and referral to the key IRS Publication 575.

### **How To Access IPPFA-TV**

Go to *YouTube* and put IPPFA TV in their internal search box. IPPFA-TV will come up as a choice. Click on that choice and you will be taken to the IPPFA TV page and be able to choose any video from the above list plus other videos featuring interviews with key players in public finance and public pensions. While you’re at it, please press the SUBSCRIBE button to more easily obtain future updates.

Finally, please consider relaying this learning opportunity to all of your active and retired members. A separate flyer suitable for email or bulletin-board presentation follows and is also available separately as a stand-alone document.

Daniel Ryan, Project Coordinator  
Jim McNamee, President, IPPFA



## **New Video Series from the Illinois Public Pension Fund Association (IPPFA)**

### **Retirement Income for Illinois Fire and Police**

A new video series available on *YouTube* provides Illinois municipal police and fire personnel with summary and detailed information on their sources of retirement income. The videos include:

- Introduction to Public Employee Retirement Income
- Illinois “Downstate” Article 3 Police Pensions
- Illinois “Downstate” Article 4 Fire Pensions
- Social Security for Public Employees
- Public Employee Deferred Compensation
- Retiree Healthcare Savings Plans
- HELPS Tax Credit for Retired Fire and Police

Running times range from 8 minutes to 38 minutes. Use these tools to learn about your total retirement income, gain knowledge on a specific topic, and to spread the word to others on the job or retired.

To access these videos, go to *YouTube* and put IPPFA TV in their internal search box. IPPFA-TV will come up as a choice. Click on that choice and you will be taken to the IPPFA TV page and be able to choose any video from the above list plus other videos featuring interviews with key players in public finance and public pensions. While you’re at it, please press the SUBSCRIBE button to more easily obtain future updates.

For more information, contact us at [info@ippfa.org](mailto:info@ippfa.org)