

## **POWERS AND DUTIES OF INVESTMENTS BOARD MEMBERS**

**The Board of Investments provides this summary to enable voters to evaluate candidates for the Board. The Board urges voters to review this summary prior to voting.**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The Board of Investments oversees investment of LACERA's pension retirement fund (\$56.3 billion as of June 30, 2018) and determination of County and member contribution rates. In total, members of the Board of Investments can expect to commit approximately 80 hours of their time each month to discharging their duties to the retirement system.

As to those elected Board members who are employed by the County or a participating district, the law provides that these LACERA duties are included as part of their County or other public employment and shall normally take precedence over any other duties. Given the time commitment necessary to fulfill the responsibilities of Board membership, elected Board members will be required to spend a great majority of their working time each month in carrying out their important LACERA duties and responsibilities.

The responsibilities and duties of Board members are explained in detail below.

### **BOARD MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES**

A Board member's duties include:

1. ***Board and Committee Meetings.*** The Board meets once each month unless otherwise specified, usually on the second Wednesday, with each meeting generally lasting from 6 to 8 hours. In addition to the time required to attend meetings, approximately 24 hours per meeting is required to prepare for meetings and review relevant materials developed by staff and management. The Board has established committees to assist in carrying out its responsibilities. The Board also shares additional committees jointly with the system's Board of Retirement, including the Audit Committee. Committee meetings may be held both before and after regular Board meetings, and at other times, and generally last 1 to 2 hours per committee plus additional preparation time of a similar or greater number of hours.
2. ***Pension Fund Investments.*** The Board of Investments has exclusive control of all retirement system investments and is responsible for establishing investment beliefs and objectives, the asset allocation for the portfolio, strategies, policies, and governance processes, which are subject to change by Board action. The Board evaluates risk and return,

including consideration of corporate governance issues. The Board makes these decisions based on information and input provided by staff and external consultants. Currently, LACERA's investment portfolio is, with a few exceptions, externally managed. The Board does not make individual investment selections for the externally managed portfolio; rather, it selects investment advisors and managers to make investments for LACERA in accordance with investment objectives and guidelines established by the Board. The Board of Investments and its staff then regularly monitor and evaluate the investment activities and results of its advisors and managers.

3. **Retiree Healthcare Funds.** Under agreement with the County and other participating employers, the Board of Investments manages and invests trust funds prepaid for future retiree healthcare benefits.
4. **Contribution Rates and Actuarial Services.** Using an actuarial valuation process, the Board of Investments determines the level of contributions necessary to fund retirement benefits. The Board of Investments is responsible for setting actuarial valuation policies, selecting the actuary who will perform the valuation, and approving the actuarial valuation services provided. The actuary submits to the Board of Investments for the Board's approval such changes in County and member contribution rates as are necessary to fund retirement benefits.
5. **Securities Litigation.** The Board of Investments, with the assistance of counsel and staff, is charged with actively identifying, evaluating and monitoring securities class action lawsuits in which the fund has sustained a loss, and to determine whether the best interests of the fund are served by actively participating in such cases.
6. **Other Fund Management.** A few management functions are shared with the Board of Retirement. The Boards of Retirement and Investments, acting jointly, adopt the annual budget covering LACERA's operations. The two Boards also act jointly in certain employee relations matters, including the approval of class specifications for LACERA's employees, the approval of Memoranda of Understanding (MOU's) negotiated with SEIU Local 721, the union bargaining for represented employees of LACERA, and the approval of compensation to be provided to LACERA's nonrepresented employees. The Board of Investments is not responsible for general administration of the retirement system and benefits. The Legislature assigned those responsibilities to the Board of Retirement.
7. **Retention and Oversight of Vendors, Consultants, and Experts.** The Board approves and oversees the retention and performance of vendors, consultants, and experts to assist in system operations and aid the Board when appropriate.

8. **Delegation.** The day-to-day investment operations of the retirement system are delegated to staff and outside service providers. Board members consider what responsibilities will be delegated and to whom delegation is made. Board members ensure that delegated responsibilities are properly performed through monitoring, questioning, and accountability.
9. **Legal Compliance.** The Board ensures that the retirement system maintains compliance with the plan documents and all applicable laws governing the system. Board members comply with this responsibility by conducting a periodic review of plan documents and monitoring changing legal requirements.
10. **Education.** Board members are legally required to educate themselves on appropriate topics, which may include pension fund investments and investment management processes, actuarial matters, pension funding, pension fund governance, new board member orientation, ethics, and fiduciary responsibilities, among other topics. Such education must consist of a minimum of 24 hours within two years of assuming office and 24 hours every subsequent two-year period the member continues on the Board.
11. **Involvement.** Board members may participate in state and national pension and investment related organizations, including serving as an executive or committee member in these organizations. Board members may also represent LACERA's interests through engagement with the legislative and executive branches of state and federal government.

## **FIDUCIARY DUTIES**

Board members have the following fiduciary duties:

1. **Duty of Loyalty.** The California Constitution provides that Board of Investments members are fiduciaries and are required to, "discharge their duties with respect to the system solely in the interest of, and for the exclusive purposes of providing benefits to, participants and their beneficiaries, minimizing employer contributions thereto, and defraying reasonable expenses of administering the system. A retirement board's duty to its participants and their beneficiaries shall take precedence over any other duty." All Board members, whether elected or appointed, have the same fiduciary duty. The Board members' duty of loyalty at all times is to the participants and beneficiaries as a whole. Board members do not serve as the agent or representative of the agency or group responsible for their election or appointment. Where different groups of participants have different interests on an issue, Board members have a duty to be impartial as between conflicting participant interests and act to serve the overall best interests of all of the participants of the system.

2. ***Duty of Care.*** The California Constitution provides that assets of the retirement system are trust funds to be used only for the purpose of providing benefits and paying the costs of administering the system. Under the Constitution, members of the Board of Investments “shall diversify the investments of the system so as to minimize the risk of loss and to maximize the rate of return, unless under the circumstances it is clearly not prudent to do so.” Governing law provides that the Board “may, in its discretion, invest, or delegate the authority to invest, the assets of the fund through the purchase, holding, or sale of any form or type of investment, financial instrument, or financial transaction when prudent in the informed opinion of the board.” The Constitution further requires that Board members “shall discharge their duties with respect to the system with the care, skill, prudence, and diligence under the circumstances then prevailing that a prudent person acting in a like capacity and familiar with these matters would use in the conduct of an enterprise of a like character and with like aims.”

The duty of care means that Board members must exercise reasonable effort and diligence in administering and exercising oversight over the investments of the system, including: implementing, and periodically reviewing and updating, policies, procedures, and processes; requesting necessary reports and information; analyzing the information, advice, and recommendations received; asking questions; seeking expert advice when required from staff and outside expert consultants; deliberating carefully before making decisions; and understanding the reason for actions before taking them. Board members must monitor the investments of the system, follow the plan documents and applicable law, and take corrective action when required to ensure the sound administration of the retirement fund’s investments and the other matters under the responsibility of the Board of Investments are properly performed.

## **CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

Board members must be free of conflicts of interest in compliance with applicable legal requirements and LACERA’s Conflict of Interest Code and Code of Ethical Conduct. Board members must disclose conflicts of interest when they arise, and they cannot participate in decisions that will impact, positively or negatively, their own financial interests or the interests of certain of their related persons and entities. Board members are public officials under California conflict of interest laws, and they must be familiar with and follow those laws. Board members are subject to public disclosure of their economic interests and annual reporting requirements under the Political Reform Act and Fair Political Practices Commission regulations. Violation of conflict of interest laws and regulations can result in civil and criminal penalties. Conflict of interest laws and regulations are complex, and Board members should seek legal advice when appropriate. See <http://www.fppc.ca.gov/> for more information.

APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF INVESTMENTS ON FEBRUARY 13, 2019.