

# RIPEA

Retired Indiana Public Employees Association

## Working for Your Retirement Today

November 2021



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## A Message from the Executive Director

Welcome to the November issue of the *Communicator*.

Medicare's Open Enrollment period is underway through December 7. And even if you already have Medicare, don't skip this opportunity to review your coverage and see if you can save money next year.

Also, please take a moment to look over the Open Enrollment Packet from Anthem we recently mailed to members. In it, you will find details about RIPEA's Medicare Supplemental and Advantage Plans for 2022. These plans are exclusive to RIPEA members and include one of the lowest annual out-of-pocket insurance options available.

Healthcare is one of the most confusing-yet-necessary aspects of our lives. Always remember, we at RIPEA are here for you if you ever have questions. Our resources are vast—and so is our patience. We look forward to hearing from you.

Until next time,



Bill Murphy, Executive Director



## Reminder to Renew Your RIPEA Membership

You're a vital part of RIPEA's collective voice, and your membership makes us stronger, helping to protect the rights and benefits of every Indiana public employee. And we can't thank you enough for your continued support of RIPEA.

If you have yet to renew your membership, you can do so by calling our office at 1-800-345-9214 or you will receive a 2022 RIPEA dues notice in February 2022.

**Members who renew dues via their PERF deposit can expect the deduction to occur in February 15, 2022, not January 2022.**

## Social Security Benefits Will Increase in 2022

Due to the increasing rate of inflation as measured by the Consumer Price Index (CPI), Social Security recipients will receive a 5.9% increase in benefits beginning January 2022. This means the average monthly retirement benefit will go up by \$92 per month. Exactly how much more money you will see may depend on the amount of Medicare Part B premiums.





## Here's what matters more than anything else to PERF members

This summer, we asked what matters the most to PERF members. And 3,500 of you from every corner of the state made the answer perfectly clear.

If you're one of those 3,500 who took part in our survey, thank you. We can't do this without you. And your feedback helps ensure we stayed focused on the things that matter to you and every other retired or active public employee in the state of Indiana.

Frankly, the only thing that surprised us when we looked at the survey results, was just how many of you participated. It was amazing.

Retired and active public employees represent a large voting block in our state. And when you speak, people listen.

That's why we're letting you know that the results of the survey are in – and that they are indisputable. Going forward, they will serve as a guide to everything we do.

This past August, we conducted a professional survey of PERF members with the help of a company called Big Idea out of northern Indiana. Big Idea has a division called Data Attic which conducts scientific polls and surveys.

The results of the survey showed you care more about two things we do on your behalf,

more than anything else. So, what are they?

Not surprisingly, the answer is fighting for your retirement benefits – specifically, the ongoing fight for a reasonable annual cost of living increase (COLA), and an annual thirteenth check. Literally nothing else was as important as these two things. And it makes sense.

From RIPEA's point-of-view, we can never accept anything less for our retired public employees. You've given a lifetime of service to ensure that our friends and neighbors in every corner of this great state, benefit from great public service – especially when they need us the most.

So, where do we go from here? We continue to fight. We continue to remind state legislators of the importance of the annual COLA and 13th checks.

If we don't do this, no one else will. So as the new year approaches, don't be surprised when we ask you to weigh in on these issues. As a responsible and powerful block of voters, we will make it easy for you to do.

By working together, we will ensure that the annual COLA and 13th checks are a top consideration whenever our state legislators meet. Together, we will make it happen.







# How much activity do you need to keep your heart healthy?

When you hear health professionals talk about keeping your heart healthy, they tend to give two general pieces of advice over and over again: eat right and exercise.

There are a lot of great guides out there on what to eat for a healthy heart. However, they often exclude just how much exercise you need to keep your heart as healthy as possible.

## So, how much exercise do you really need?

If you do not already maintain a regular exercise schedule, making time for exercise can seem daunting. Fortunately, you only need about two hours and thirty minutes of moderate-intensity cardiovascular exercise a week to maintain a healthy heart.

For a week, this means you only need about twenty-one minutes of exercise a day. If you are having trouble finding the time in your day, you can break up your workout into smaller increments—two sessions of ten minutes are as effective as one session of twenty minutes.



# **Best Exercises** **for a Healthy Heart**

## **Weight Training**

Weight training strengthens the whole body. When your body has more muscle mass, you burn fat more efficiently and improve your overall heart health. A good weight training program should engage all major muscle groups, including your legs, back and upper body. Don't be intimidated by this type of exercise. Simply start small by using just your body weight and increase your weight as you get stronger.

## **Swimming**

Swimming is one of the most effective cardiovascular exercises because it engages your whole body. It's also a great, low-impact exercise for your joints. If you have regular access to a pool, try incorporating swimming into your workouts.

## **Running or Walking**

Running and walking are inexpensive exercise options and can be done just about anywhere and any time. And, if you're new to exercise, walking is a great way to get started. As you build strength, endurance and cardiovascular health through walking, your body is better prepared to try new exercise methods.

## **Rigorous Daily Activity**

Don't discount this very underrated form of exercise. Hobbies like gardening and chores like cleaning or push-mowing the lawn are great ways to burn calories and strengthen your heart. Something you do every week, like mopping the floor, can burn up to 300 calories per hour!

*This article is provided by IU Health.*



# What the 1% COLA, Beginning January 2022, Means for PERF Members

As you're aware, the Indiana Legislature did not approve a 13th check for 2021. However, they approved a 1% COLA that will reflect in your January 2022 retirement benefit.

Many members have reached out to RIPEA with questions, so we've compiled a helpful list of questions and answers.



## **Frequently Asked Questions About 1% COLA**

### **Is the 1% COLA a permanent increase in my PERF benefit?**

Yes

### **Will my PERF benefit ever increase again?**

Any increase, COLA or 13th check, must be approved by the Indiana Legislature. RIPEA will submit a bill in the 2022 Legislature for a 13th check because most members prefer the 13th check.


### **My PERF benefit is \$500 a month. I assume my benefit will be \$505 in January of 2022 and will remain that amount unless a future Legislature increases it. Is my assumption correct?**

The answer is not as simple as one would suspect. The 1% COLA is applied to the defined benefit only. Therefore, if you withdrew your Annuity Savings Account (ASA) in a lump sum when you retired and now receive \$500 per month, your new amount in January 2022 will be \$505. The reason is your monthly benefit is comprised only of the Defined Benefit because you withdrew your Annuity Savings Account in a lump sum.

If you chose to have PERF pay your Annuity Savings Account Monthly, your annuity makes up part of your monthly \$500. As a result, your benefit increase in January 2022 would be less than \$5.00 because the 1% is only applied to the Defined Benefit.

*Please note: The Indiana Public Retirement System (INPRS), which administers PERF, is the only agency that knows if you withdrew your Annuity Savings Account (ASA) in a lump sum.*





## Make Every Adventure Affordable with Discounts from AMBA Passport

AMBA Passport is part of your RIPEA member benefits providing exclusive savings at over 2,500 merchants, including premium travel discounts and a wide variety of local and national merchant discounts. There are so many ways AMBA Passport can help you elevate every step, every stop and every stay.

Want to upgrade your home? AMBA has excellent discounts for you. For instance, take advantage of name brands that specialize in

fixtures, faucets, mattresses and more. Want to upgrade your travels? AMBA's big savings on hotels, car rentals and even cruise lines will have you in the lap of luxury. No matter what, you will enjoy lots of fun and celebrate the good times.

You've earned these perks, so why not use them? If you're ready to get the party (or home renovation/vacation/foodie adventure) started, sign up now!

### How to sign up for AMBA Passport

#### **Sign up via your phone:**

- Download the Passport Mobile app from your app store or Google Play
- Select "Other Sign In Options" and "Sign in with an Activation Code"
- Use Activation Code "ambasavers" to access the program
- Complete your profile and start saving!

#### **Or, sign up online:**

- Visit [myambadiscounts.com](http://myambadiscounts.com) and click "Register Here" for first time users
- Enter your email address
- Enter code "ambasavers" as your activation code
- Complete your profile and start saving!

Not only do you get great savings, but also your AMBA Passport membership is absolutely FREE! If you have any questions about the program or would like assistance locating a specific discount or vendor, please contact AMBA Passport at 1-800-410-4211 or [support@passportunlimited.com](mailto:support@passportunlimited.com). To learn more, call AMBA at 866-979-0497 or visit [myAMBAdiscounts.com](http://myAMBAdiscounts.com).



# The Trusted Contact

If you are of a “certain age,” you may have experienced phone calls from a “grandchild” saying they are stuck somewhere and need money. But, of course, the person calling you is NOT your real grandchild. And the majority of us have received the coveted email from a Nigerian prince promising untold riches if we can help him get his money—oddly by giving him some of ours!

You are likely familiar with the concept of a power of attorney, which gives another

person (the attorney-in-fact) the ability to manage and transact your affairs. These can be crucial in cases of a debilitating illness or injury. But you likely haven’t heard of the trusted contact.

Most banks and investment companies now encourage the inclusion of a trusted contact on accounts. The trusted contact you list is significantly different than an attorney-in-fact you appoint but can be the same person if desired.

Unlike the attorney-in-fact, the

trusted contact has no access to your accounts and cannot make changes or withdrawals. Instead, the trusted contact is someone the bank or investment company is allowed to contact if it sees suspicious activity in your account—like a large withdrawal needed quickly or a wire transfer to a Nigerian prince!

The addition of a trusted contact to your accounts can bring peace of mind to your family and you. And, you can still be in charge of your own money!

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# RIPEA Medicare Supplemental and Advantage Plans

Because you're a RIPEA member, you have access to some of the best Medicare Supplemental and Medicare Advantage Plans that can help you pay for dental, vision and hearing. The insurance plans are through Anthem Insurance and operate the same way as other Medicare Supplemental and Advantage plans.

An open enrollment packet was recently mailed from Anthem containing information on RIPEA's Two Medicare Supplemental Plans, F & G. RIPEA also has 3 Medicare Advantage Plans, however, only members currently covered by one of RIPEA's Medicare Advantage Plans receive any mailing on these plans. If you have any interest in one of the three Medicare Advantage Plans contact the RIPEA office.

If you have questions regarding the plans after reviewing the Open Enrollment Packet, please don't hesitate to call the RIPEA office at 800-345-9214. Also, if you did not receive a packet and would like one, please get in touch with our office.



## Important things to remember when reviewing your open enrollment packet:

- To be eligible for RIPEA's health insurance plans, you must be a RIPEA member and/or spouse of a RIPEA member, age 65 or older and already enrolled in Medicare A & B.
- Medicare Supplemental Plans F & G are age-rated plans which means the premium modestly increases year after year until you reach age 80. Once you turn 80 years old, the premium no longer increases due to age but can increase due to claims experience.
- All three Medicare Advantage plans are not age-rated. Therefore, all enrolled participants pay the same premium.
- Medicare Advantage Plan 20P premium increases by \$4.65 for 2022. Please note that this increase is because the 20P Plan has added a dental component for 2022.
- The maximum out-of-pocket cost in a calendar year for participants enrolled in the Medicare Advantage Plan 20P is \$500.
- Medicare Advantage Plans 10P & 10P-E premiums remain the same for 2022.
- Coverage for Medicare Supplemental Plans F & G remains the same for 2022.

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### **Important Telephone Numbers**

#### **Anthem Blue Cross/Blue Shield**

*RIPEA Group Health Plan*  
1-866-649-2041

*Anthem Medicare Advantage Plan*  
Current members: 1-833-848-8730  
More information: 1-833-848-8729

#### **AMBA**

*Dental/Vision/Long Term Care/Cancer/Whole Life/  
Medical Air Service Association*  
1-800-258-7041

#### **HEAR in America**

*Hearing Plan*  
1-800-286-6149

#### **INPRS/PERF**

*Retirement Checks & Benefits*  
1-844-464-6777

#### **Genworth**

*Long Term Care*  
1-765-265-5606

**Note: For RIPEA's 2022 dues notice we will be emailing it to everyone instead of mailing a hard copy. Please check your SPAM folder because the dues notice may end up in SPAM.**

### **The RIPEA Board of Directors Working for You**

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The RIPEA office hours are:  
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