

Beaches Time Service Connections Appeal Hearing
Subject: Administrator's Presentation of Error and Corrective Action

In June 2016, the PFPF received a legal opinion regarding the eligibility of firefighters employed by the federal government to purchase time service.

In a follow-up meeting later that month to discuss the opinion which occurred at the PFPF office consisting of Stephen Durden, Beth McCague, Devin Carter, and Chuck Hayes, PFPF staff concluded that connecting Beaches time service should be treated the same as connecting City of Jacksonville time service.

PFPF staff began a practice of charging members their current contribution rate for time service connections.

This practice went on until it came to my desk in February 2018 when staff began receiving requests to lower earlier time service rates from members who had previously been charged 20%. I went to the PFPF attorney Lawsikia Hodges and received guidance that *"...the law, Section 121.107 on Time Service Connections, is black and white; members may connect time at either a 10% (or current contribution rate) or a 20% rate, depending on where they worked...any incorrect payments would be corrected just like in any other case."*

Over an approximate 16 month period 11 members charge rates less than 20%. Since this time, one member has passed away and his estate has been refunded, one member chose to pay the difference between the rates, one member chose to take a reduced amount of time service credit, and another member is retired and not an appellant today.

In March 2018 I sent letters to the remaining affected members, informing them that errors may have occurred regarding their TSCs. Then in October 3, 2018 I sent follow-up letters to affected members formally requesting members choose one of three options to correct their TSC, or to appeal to the Board of Trustees. Seven members have appealed. The difference between the rates charged to these seven appellants and the 20% rate totals \$173,777.34.