

COAERS CONNECT

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CONTACT COAERS

Our staff is available to assist members via in-person service appointments, telephone appointments or Virtual Visits. Please contact us to schedule an appointment.

Monday - Friday
8:00 am to 5:00 pm

(512) 458-2551
member.services@coaers.org
www.coaers.org/appointment

COAERS BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Michael Benson
Kelly Crook
Ben Ellinor
Michael Granof
Dick Lavine - Vice Chair
Krista Laine
Yuejiao Liu
Chris Noak
Anthony B. Ross, Sr.
Diana Thomas - Chair
Ed Van Eenoo

MEET THE 2025 BOARD



COAERS Board Election Results

COAERS marked the conclusion of the Retired Member Place 10 and the Active Member Place 7 elections.

The COAERS Board certified the results of the Retired Member Place 10 election. Michael Benson was re-elected to the Retired Member Place 10 position after receiving 1,060 votes.

During the January 29 Board meeting, Trustees certified the results of the Active Member Place 7 special election. With 320 votes, Ben Ellinor was elected to the Active Member Place 7 position.

Thank you to all the candidates for their participation, the election committees for their dedication to this important process, and to all our members who voted. We congratulate Mr. Benson and Mr. Ellinor on their elections.

Board Officer Elections and Board Appointees

At its January 29 meeting, the COAERS Board elected Diana Thomas and Dick Lavine to serve as the new Chair and Vice Chair, respectively, for the 2025 term. The newly elected Chair and Vice Chair finalized committee assignments for the year ahead. For more information, visit www.coaers.org/board-committee-assignments.

Trustees also welcomed the reappointment of Dr. Kelly Crook and the appointment of Council Member Krista Laine to the COAERS Board.

Farewell to Trustees Brad Sinclair and Council Member Leslie Pool

COAERS is proud to recognize the tremendous work of Trustees Brad Sinclair and Council Member Leslie Pool. Their service and expertise have been an incredible asset to the Board and the membership at large.

COAERS is thankful for their dedicated service and commitment to the fiduciary responsibilities of a Trustee in working to ensure a secure retirement for all members and to strengthen the System's financial standing.



Trustees Ben Ellinor (l) and Mike Benson (r)



Trustee Brad Sinclair (l)



Council Member Leslie Pool (center)



COAERS Member Services

BY THE NUMBERS A YEAR IN SERVICE

Membership



16,328
Members



8,062
Retirees & Beneficiaries

 **\$269+ million**
in retirement benefits paid

Services Provided



345

New Retirements Processed



890

One-on-One Counseling Sessions Held



1000+

Benefits Claims Completed



6,100+

Member Inquiries Answered

Member Education

72

Seminars and Presentations Conducted

3,100+

Attendees served



Reflecting on 2024, COAERS had an incredible year serving members and helping them navigate their retirement journey with confidence. From personalized counseling sessions to new educational initiatives, the retirement system’s commitment to supporting City of Austin employees and retirees has never been stronger.

The COAERS Member Services team works year-round to provide the highest level of service to members. Here is a reminder of the services you have available to you.

Planning for Retirement? We’re Here to Help

Whether you’re just starting to think about retirement or ready to take the next step, COAERS offers personalized one-on-one counseling to help you understand your benefits, estimate your pension, and navigate the retirement process with confidence. From retirement applications to death benefits, refunds, and survivor benefits, COAERS is committed to making the process as smooth as possible. Schedule a virtual appointment, review your account via MemberDirect or visit our new Member Service Center for in-person assistance. Don’t wait – contact our Member Services team for guidance and support at (512) 458-2551, email member.services@coaers.org or visit www.coaers.org/contact.

Make the Most of Our Retirement and Financial Wellness Educational Resources

Retirement planning isn’t just for the final years of your career—it’s a journey. COAERS provides educational sessions designed for all career stages, from new employees to mid-career professionals to those preparing for retirement and beyond. Topics include pension benefits, financial wellness, and long-term retirement security. If you haven’t attended a session yet, make it a priority in 2025! Login to MemberDirect at www.coaers.org to register for a seminar today.

Invite COAERS to Your City Department

Your pension is one of your most valuable benefits—stay informed about it! COAERS hosts in-person and virtual events, Spanish-language programs, and targeted outreach initiatives to keep you connected. COAERS continues to expand its engagement with City departments, young professionals, women’s groups, and affinity organizations, so there’s never been a better time to get involved. Want COAERS to present at your City department or group? Contact mehrin.rahman@coaers.org to schedule a presentation.

Looking Ahead to 2025

As the new year progresses, COAERS remains dedicated to delivering exceptional service to meet member needs. In 2025, COAERS plans to:

- Expand our digital resources to make information more easily accessible.
- Offer more interactive seminars tailored to members at every career stage.
- Continue strengthening our commitment to personalized service.

COAERS is honored to serve our members.



Board News Breakdown

These highlights are a summary of actions taken and topics discussed by the COAERS Board.

89th Texas Legislative Session

The COAERS Board approved its statement of priorities for the 89th Legislative Session, which states: COAERS will work to ensure that proposed legislation that would, in any way, erode or impair the Board's fiduciary authority or otherwise negatively affect the System and its members, is amended or changed to meet its fiduciary duty.

Investment Update

In January, COAERS issued a Request for Proposal (RFP) seeking qualified firms for the services of private markets investment consulting to provide independent, unbiased, proactive research, information, and advice to the Board and Staff in regard to the COAERS fund. This will allow the Board to be best equipped to make rigorous and thorough assessments of its investment options in seeking robust long-term returns at acceptable levels of risk.

The Board also adopted a revised Investment Policy Statement, which establishes the objectives and policies of the System's investment program, and articulates the policies, guidelines and procedures that are employed in the day-to-day management of System investments by Staff.

Interest Posting

At the December 2024 meeting of the COAERS Board, Trustees set the interest rate paid on member deposits at 4.19% as recommended by the COAERS actuary. Interest was credited as of December 31, 2024, on deposits in member accounts as of January 1, 2024.

Upcoming Events You Don't Want to Miss

FINANCIAL WELLNESS SEMINAR: Retirement Planning for Women March 6 at 12 pm (Virtual)

Join COAERS for a financial wellness seminar to delve into the unique challenges and opportunities women face in preparing for retirement. The session will offer helpful insights and practical advice on building a financial foundation, maximizing savings, and navigating investment options tailored to women's needs.

To participate in the webinar, members must register through MemberDirect. Don't have an account? Visit www.coaers.org to enroll today.

COAERS

FINANCIAL WELLNESS SEMINAR: RETIREMENT PLANNING FOR WOMEN

**MARCH 6, 2025
AT 12 PM - VIRTUAL**

COAERS invites you to join our upcoming Financial Wellness Seminar focused on retirement planning for women.

Benefits 101: Naming a Beneficiary

Keeping your beneficiary information current is a small but crucial step in protecting your loved ones and ensuring your retirement benefits are distributed according to your wishes.

Life changes, such as marriage, divorce, the birth of a child, or even a change in relationships, can impact your beneficiary choices.

An outdated designation could lead to unnecessary complications or delays for those you intend to provide for.



Updating your beneficiary is simple and only takes a few minutes. If you're unsure of your current designation or need to make changes, login to MemberDirect to review your beneficiaries and complete your Beneficiary Designation Form. You can also visit www.coaers.org/forms to access the form.

Tax Prep Reminder: Form 1099-R

Retirees can access and download your Form 1099-R through MemberDirect.

What's on Your 1099-R?

Form 1099-R reports the pension earnings for the 2024 tax year and provides information you'll need to complete your tax return. Retirees who received a payment from COAERS during 2024 will receive a Form 1099-R.

Changes to Deductions and Withholdings

Any insurance enrollment choices and plan changes you have elected may change your net benefit. Be sure to review your deductions for accuracy. You can log on to MemberDirect to review any changes that may have impacted you. If you need help regarding your tax withholdings, please seek guidance from a qualified tax advisor.

Need Assistance?

For questions or concerns about retiree health insurance deductions, please contact the City of Austin Benefits Division at (512) 974-3284.

How to Access Your **Form 1099-R** from COAERS

- 1 Log in to MemberDirect at www.coaers.org
- 2 Click "1099-R Form" tab under Benefits Information
- 3 Select the tax year to view and download your form

Questions? Contact member.services@coaers.org

CONNECT WITH US

(512) 458-2551

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IMPORTANT 2025 DATES

MARCH

3/1 March Retirement Application Deadline
3/6 Financial Wellness Seminar
3/26 Virtual Pre-Retirement Seminar
3/27 Virtual Pre-Retirement Seminar - Spanish
3/26 Board Meeting
3/31 Retiree Annuity Issue Date
3/31 April Retirement Application Deadline

APRIL

4/2 Mid-Career Seminar
4/29 Virtual Pre-Retirement Seminar
4/30 Retiree Annuity Issue Dates

MAY

5/1 May Retirement Application Deadline
5/16 Disability Retirement Application Deadline
5/26 Memorial Day Holiday Closure
5/29 Virtual Pre-Retirement Seminar
5/30 Retiree Annuity Issue Date
5/30 June Retirement Application Deadline

JUNE

6/5 Financial Wellness Seminar
6/19 Juneteenth Holiday Closure
6/25 Virtual Pre-Retirement Seminar - Spanish
6/26 Virtual Pre-Retirement Seminar
6/26 Board Meeting
6/30 Retiree Annuity Issue Date

30-DAY RETIREMENT APPLICATION DEADLINES

To retire during your intended month, the retirement application must be submitted at least 30 calendar days prior to your retirement date. You can review the deadlines here: www.coaers.org/retirement-application-deadlines. Contact Member Services for any questions or assistance regarding retirement deadlines.

COAERS

CITY OF AUSTIN

EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM

4700 Mueller Blvd, Suite 100
Austin, TX 78723

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CITY OF AUSTIN EMPLOYEES RETIREMENT SYSTEM

WINTER/SPRING 2025 NEWSLETTER

