



# **SUMMARY PLAN DESCRIPTION**



## **The City of Miami General Employees' & Sanitation Employees' Retirement Trust**

**11th Edition**

**2024**

THE CITY OF MIAMI G.E.S.E RETIREMENT TRUST IS A PENSION TRUST FUND OF THE CITY OF MIAMI

Summary Plan Description



# City of Miami G.E.S.E Retirement Trust

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## Benefits Staff

Edgard Hernandez  
Pension Administrator

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Sr. Benefits Analyst

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Payroll Analyst

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## **The History of the City of Miami G.E.S.E. Retirement Trust**

A defined benefit pension trust for all City employees was instituted by City of Miami Ordinance No. 5624, effective July 1, 1956. Pursuant to the final judgment entered on May 23, 1985, in the matter of Leonard Gates, et al vs. City of Miami (the “Gates Agreement”), the City of Miami General Employees’ and Sanitation Employees’ Retirement Trust was established by Ordinance No. 10002 effective June 13, 1985, to serve permanent employees other than firefighters and police officers. The Gates Agreement separated the GESE Trust from the Firefighters and Police Officers’ Trust and set individual pension Board guidelines and funding requirements. A nine member Board of Trustees, who are considered fiduciaries, govern the Trusts.

The Board meets once every two months as required by City ordinance. Trustees are selected as follows: one trustee selected by the City Manager, two trustees selected by the general employees, two trustees selected by the sanitation employees, and four independent trustees selected by the City Commission from a list from each union of six non-employee nominees. As fiduciaries of the Trusts, the Board performs their duties and responsibilities solely in the interest of members of the retirement plan. In order to achieve their goals, the Board has employed the services of support staff including a pension administrator to perform daily functions. Services provided by support staff include accounting and financial reporting, member and employer contributions processing, retiree benefits calculations, and monthly disbursement of benefits to retirees or beneficiaries. The Board employs the services of a Legal counsel, a Pension Administrator, a consulting actuary, a custodial bank, an investment consultant and several investment managers. An actuarial valuation for each plan is performed by the actuary on an annual basis to determine the amount of the City’s annual contribution.

## Membership in the Plan

Participation in the GESE Trust is a mandatory condition of employment for all employees except for those employees who may irrevocably waive participation in the plan pursuant to the City of Miami Code Section 40-351. Employees working in the office of an elected official have the ability to choose not to participate in the Plan. Choosing not to participate shall be irrevocable.

Pursuant to the City of Miami Code Section 40-249, any regular, permanent, and full-time employee of the City of Miami (the "City") other than a fire fighter or police officer becomes a member upon employment unless he/she is a member of any other pension or retirement system supported wholly or in part by the City.

An employee will cease to be a member if he/she is absent from service for more than three years of any five consecutive year period, withdraws his/her contributions, becomes a member of any other City-sponsored retirement plan or system, or dies.

Membership Service is the service as an employee for which contributions to the GESE Trust are made as required.

## Contributions

Plan members contribute ten percent (10%) of compensation to the GESE Trust.

The City contributes the actuarially determined amount necessary to fund the normal cost plus the amortization of the unfunded accrued liability and non-investment expenses of the GESE Trust.

***Withdrawal of member contributions allowed under retirement, resignation, termination, or layoff.***

**Loans to participants are prohibited per Ordinance Sec 40-258.**

## Return of Contributions

Accumulated employee contributions is the sum of all amounts deducted from a member's compensation, including paybacks and interest. Contributions returned to the member may be rolled over directly to a qualified individual retirement account or another employer's plan.

A member who terminates employment other than for retirement or death will be paid the accumulated contributions less any mandatory tax withholding upon demand, plus interest at the rate prescribed by the Board which will not be less than one percent per quarter of the contribution balance as of the end of the previous calendar year, including interest.

**Withdrawal of member contributions constitutes a full discharge of all rights under the plan and any credible service is waived.**

## Key Definitions

**Average final compensation** shall have a meaning dependent upon the date of hire and the date of separation of service of the member.

**Your compensation is the basis of the retirement benefit.**

**Creditable service** is the membership credit upon which a member's eligibility to receive benefits under the retirement plan is based or upon which the amount of such benefits is determined. Creditable Service may be referred in this document as years of service.

**Earnable compensation** is an employee's base salary including pick-up contributions, for all straight time hours worked, plus assignment pay and payments received for vacation and sick leave taken, jury duty, and death-in-family leave taken. Earnable compensation does not include overtime pay, payments for accrued sick leave, accrued vacation leave, or accrued compensatory leave, premium pay for holidays worked, the value of any employment benefits or non-monetary entitlement, or any other form of remuneration. Compensation will include a five (5%) percent salary increase for the member's highest one year salary, also referred in this document as a "Kicker".

**The 5% retroactive salary increase is referred in this document as the "Kicker".**

**Employee** shall mean any regular, permanent, and full-time appointed officer or employee of the city, other than a police officer or firefighter as defined in section 40-191 of the city Code. The term "employee" shall include both classified and unclassified employees, provided they are appointed on a full-time basis as defined by the Civil Service Rules, collective bargaining agreement, or other applicable city personnel policy.

**Normal Retirement Age** shall mean age 55 with 10 years of creditable service or Rule of 70 Retirement. For all members hired on or after October 1, 2010, Normal Retirement Age shall mean the earlier of 60 with 10 years of creditable service, age 55 with 30 years of creditable service, or Rule of 80 Retirement with 10 years minimum creditable service.

**Payment Option** shall mean one of several choices available to members with respect to the manner in which a retirement benefit may be paid (see page 12).

**Payback** is a member's contribution to the Plan for creditable service for which other than regular contributions have been made. Contributions required for paybacks shall not be picked up by the city, but may be deducted from a member's compensation. See page 4.

**Service Retirement** is a member's retirement from service under circumstances permitting payment of a retirement benefit without reduction because of age, length of service, or both and without special qualifications such as disability.

**Spouse** is the lawful husband or wife of a member or retiree at the time benefits commence, unless a new designation has been made in writing to the Board.

**Vesting** is ten years of creditable service before the member is entitled to service retirement benefits and non-service disability.

## Paybacks for Membership Credit

A member may receive membership credit in the Plan. If member revokes the payback election, is terminated, resigns, or is otherwise separated from the city before the payback is completed, the member shall only receive credit for the portion paid as of the date of separation.

**Most paybacks must be completed within 5 years from the date of election unless specified.**

### **Restoration of Prior Service for Re-employed Members**

The former member may restore previous membership service by repaying the accumulated contributions withdrawn together with a uniform rate of interest as determined by the Board.

### **Credit for Continuous Service as a Non-Member**

Any person who is now a member of the Plan who had prior service with the city as a probationary or permanent, full-time or part-time, classified, unclassified or executive, but who at the time of that service was not a member of the plan, may purchase up to four years of that prior non-membership service.

### **Excess Non-Member Service Buyback**

A member may purchase any years in excess of four (4) years of *Credit Service as a Non-member* by paying the full actuarial cost for such service. Buyback is available upon payment of 4 years of Continuous Service as a Non-member.

### **Credit for Military Service**

Any member who has served *active* military duty, but whose service is not interrupted by that military duty, may purchase up to a maximum of four years of such service. To be eligible for the four-year service credit, the member must:

- (I) Have engaged in wartime service as declared by state or federal statute or executive order of the President;
- (II) Military service under honorable conditions;
- (III) Be vested in this Plan;
- (IV) Make a contribution to the plan equal to the member's rate of earnable compensation at the date membership service first commenced, the member's contribution rate then in effect, together with four percent interest, compounded annually.

### **Credit for Maternity/Medical Leave**

Any member who takes an unpaid leave of absence for maternity/medical purposes may purchase membership credit up to a maximum of 180 days, or 240 days if the City denies light duty employment. **This payback must be completed within one year.**

### **Non-Service Buyback**

An active member who was separated from service for less than three years and left contributions in the plan is allowed to buyback up to three years of service not worked. Approved on January 31, 2014.

### **Purchase of Additional Service Upon Retirement**

A member in service who has continuous service may, at the time of retirement, purchase up to a maximum of three whole creditable years based upon the present value as determined by the actuary for the plan. **This payback must be completed at once.**

**Paybacks for continuous service for a non member and Maternity, Medical, FMLA are based at the member's current rate of compensation.**



## AFSCME LOCAL 1907

### Benefits Eligibility (Hired prior to October 1, 2010)

#### **Service Retirement:**

The minimum normal service retirement age is 55. Any member in service who has ten or more years of creditable service may elect to retire upon the attainment of normal retirement age.

#### **Rule of 70 Retirement:**

A member in service who has ten or more years of creditable service may elect a rule of 70 retirement on the basis of member's combined age and creditable service equaling 70 or more points.

#### **Early Service Retirement Benefit:**

A member in service who has 20 or more years of creditable service may elect to retire early with an immediate benefit. The early retirement benefit equals the actuarial equivalent of the basic service retirement benefit that otherwise would have commenced upon the attainment of age 55.

#### **Deferred Vested Retirement Benefit:**

A member who ceases to be an employee for reasons other than death or willful misconduct, is not entitled to an immediate benefit, has completed at least ten years of creditable service, and has left his/her accumulated contributions on deposit with the Plan, would be eligible for a deferred vested retirement benefit commencing at age 55.

**The average final compensation is the highest one year.**

#### **Compensation / Multiplier**

The service retirement benefit for members hired prior to October 1, 2010 shall be equal to three percent (3%) of the member's highest one (1) year of compensation. The retirement benefit shall be based on a member's total creditable service and benefit multiplier in effect at the time the service is earned.

**Average final compensation** is the average annual earnable compensation during the highest one year of service. **Includes 5% "kicker" on highest one year.**

YEARS SERVICE × MULTIPLIER × AVERAGE FINAL COMPENSATION

**Example:**             $[ 25 \times 3.00 \% \times (\$ 70,000 * ) ] \div 12 = \$ 4,375.00$  Monthly

\*Includes 5% "kicker" on highest one year.

# AFSCME LOCAL 1907

## Benefits Eligibility (Hired on or after October 1, 2010)

### **Service Retirement:**

Any member in service may elect to retire at the earlier of age 60 and 10 years of service or age 55 and 30 years of service.

### **Rule of 80 Retirement:**

A member in service who has ten or more years of creditable service may elect a rule of 80 retirement on the basis of member's combined age and creditable service equaling 80 or more points.

### **Early Service Retirement:**

A member in service who has 20 or more years of creditable service may elect to retire early with an immediate benefit. The early retirement benefit equals the actuarial equivalent of the basic service retirement benefit that otherwise would have commenced upon the attainment of age 55 or 60.

### **Deferred Vested Retirement:**

A member who ceases to be an employee for reasons other than death or willful misconduct, is not entitled to an immediate benefit, has completed at least ten years of creditable service and has left their accumulated contributions on deposit with the Plan, would be eligible for a deferred vested retirement benefit commencing at age 55 or age 60.

**The average final compensation is the highest 5 years in the last 10 years of service.**

### **Compensation / Multiplier**

The service retirement benefit for members hired after October 1, 2010 shall be the basic retirement benefit equal to a graduated multiplier rule. The retirement benefit shall be based on a member's total creditable service and benefit multiplier in effect at the time the service is earned.

1 thru 20 years of service	= 2.50%
20+ thru Retirement	= 3.00%

**Average final compensation** is the average annual earnable compensation during the highest five years in the last 10 years of service. **Includes 5% "kicker" on highest one year.**

### YEARS SERVICE × MULTIPLIER × AVERAGE FINAL COMPENSATION

**Example:**  $[ 20 \times 2.50 \% \times ( \$ 70,000 * ) ] \div 12 = \$ 2,916.67$   
 $[ 5 \times 3.00 \% \times ( \$ 70,000 * ) ] \div 12 = \$ 875.00$   
 $= \$ 3,791.67 \text{ Monthly}$

\*Includes 5% "kicker" on highest one year.

# AFSCME LOCAL 871

## Benefits Eligibility (Hired prior to October 1, 2010)

### **Service Retirement:**

The minimum normal service retirement age is 55. Any member in service who has ten or more years of creditable service may elect to retire upon the attainment of normal retirement age.

### **Rule of 70 Retirement:**

A member in service who has ten or more years of creditable service may elect a rule of 70 retirement on the basis of member's combined age and creditable service equaling 70 or more points.

### **Early Service Retirement Benefit:**

A member in service who has 20 or more years of creditable service may elect to retire early with an immediate benefit. The early retirement benefit equals the actuarial equivalent of the basic service retirement benefit that otherwise would have commenced upon the attainment of age 55.

### **Deferred Vested Retirement Benefit:**

A member who ceases to be an employee for reasons other than death or willful misconduct, is not entitled to an immediate benefit, has completed at least ten years of creditable service, and has left his/her accumulated contributions on deposit with the Plan, would be eligible for a deferred vested retirement benefit commencing at age 55.

**The average final compensation is the highest one year.**

### **Compensation / Multiplier**

The service retirement benefit for members hired prior to October 1, 2010 shall be equal to three percent (3%) of the member's highest one (1) year of compensation. The retirement benefit shall be based on a member's total creditable service and benefit multiplier in effect at the time the service is earned.

**Average final compensation** is the average annual earnable compensation during the highest one year of service. **Includes 5% "kicker" on highest one year.**

YEARS SERVICE × MULTIPLIER × AVERAGE FINAL COMPENSATION

**Example:**             $[ 25 \times 3.00 \% \times ( \$ 70,000 * ) ] \div 12 = \$ 4,375.00$  Monthly

\*Includes 5% "kicker" on highest one year.



## NON-BARGAINING

### Benefits Eligibility (Hired prior to October 1, 2010)

#### **Service Retirement:**

Any member in service may elect to retire at the earlier of age 55 and 10 years of service.

#### **Rule of 70 Retirement:**

A member in service who has ten or more years of creditable service may elect a rule of 70 retirement on the basis of his or her combined age and creditable service equaling 70 or more points.

#### **Early Service Retirement:**

A member in service who has 20 or more years of creditable service may elect to retire early with an immediate benefit. The early retirement benefit equals the actuarial equivalent of the basic service retirement benefit that otherwise would have commenced upon the attainment of age 55.

#### **Deferred Vested Retirement:**

A member who ceases to be an employee for reasons other than death or willful misconduct, is not entitled to an immediate benefit, has completed at least ten years of creditable service, and has left his/her accumulated contributions on deposit with the Plan, would be eligible for a deferred vested retirement benefit commencing at age 55.

**The average final compensation is the highest one year.**

#### **Compensation / Multiplier**

The service retirement benefit for members hired prior to October 1, 2010 shall be equal to three percent (3%) of the member's highest one (1) year of compensation. The retirement benefit shall be based on a member's total creditable service and benefit multiplier in effect at the time the service is earned.

**Average final compensation** is the average annual earnable compensation during the highest one year of service. **Includes 5% "kicker" on highest one year.**

YEARS SERVICE × MULTIPLIER × AVERAGE FINAL COMPENSATION

**Example:**             $[ 25 \times 3.00 \% \times ( \$ 70,000 * ) ] \div 12 = \$ 4,375.00$  Monthly

\*Includes 5% "kicker" on highest one year.

## NON-BARGAINING

### Benefits Eligibility (Hired on or after October 1, 2010)

#### **Service Retirement:**

Any member in service may elect to retire at the earlier of age 60 and 10 years of service or age 55 and 30 years of service.

#### **Rule of 80 Retirement:**

A member in service who has ten or more years of creditable service may elect a rule of 80 retirement on the basis of his or her combined age and creditable service equaling 80 or more points.

#### **Early Service Retirement:**

A member in service who has 20 or more years of creditable service may elect to retire early with an immediate benefit. The early retirement benefit equals the actuarial equivalent of the basic service retirement benefit that otherwise would have commenced upon the attainment of age 55 or 60.

#### **Deferred Vested Retirement:**

A member who ceases to be an employee for reasons other than death or willful misconduct, is not entitled to an immediate benefit, has completed at least ten years of creditable service and has left their accumulated contributions on deposit with the Plan, would be eligible for a deferred vested retirement benefit commencing at age 55 or 60.

**The average final compensation is the highest 5 years in the last 10 years of service.**

### **Compensation / Multiplier**

Effective October 1, 2010, the service retirement benefit for members hired after October 1, 2010 shall be the basic retirement benefit equals to a graduated multiplier rule of :

1 thru 15 years of service	= 2.25%
15 thru 20 years of service	= 2.50%
20+ thru retirement	= 2.75%

The retirement benefit shall be based on a member's total creditable service and benefit multiplier in effect at the time the service is earned.

**Average final compensation** is the average annual earnable compensation during the highest five years in the last 10 years of service. **Includes 5% "kicker" on highest one year.**

#### YEARS SERVICE × MULTIPLIER × AVERAGE FINAL COMPENSATION

**Example:**

$$\begin{aligned} [ 15 \times 2.25 \% \times ( \$ 70,000 * ) ] \div 12 &= \$ 1,968.75 \\ [ 5 \times 2.50 \% \times ( \$ 70,000 * ) ] \div 12 &= \$ 729.17 \\ [ 5 \times 2.75 \% \times ( \$ 70,000 * ) ] \div 12 &= \$ \underline{802.08} \\ &= \$ 3,500.00 \text{ Monthly} \end{aligned}$$

\*Includes 5% "kicker" on highest one year.

## Retirement Payment Options—(All Members)

### **Option: Normal Form Life Annuity**

A member may elect to receive an unreduced normal monthly service retirement allowance for the life of the member with no survivorship benefit. In the event of the death of the member prior to receiving twelve (12) monthly retirement allowance payments there shall be paid to a named beneficiary a lump sum benefit equal to the sum of the twelve monthly retirement allowance payments less the payments made.

### **Option 2: Equal payment survivor annuity**

A member may receive a reduced retirement allowance throughout his or her life with an equal sum being paid to the member's designated beneficiary at the death of the member. If any person other than a surviving spouse is chosen as the beneficiary, the reduction shall be based on the actuarially equivalent sum. \*\*

### **Option 3: One-half payment survivor annuity**

A member may receive a reduced retirement allowance payable for the life of the member with one-half of the member's benefit being paid to a designated beneficiary at the death of the member. If any person other than a surviving spouse is chosen as the beneficiary, the reduction shall be based on the actuarially equivalent sum. \*\*

### **Option 6(a): One-half payment retiree refund**

A member may elect to withdraw the sum of his or her accumulated contributions credited as of the member's date of retirement, excluding all amounts picked up from the member's earnable compensation and credited to the COLA fund, between June 23, 1985, and September 30, 1993. Under this option, the member shall also receive a monthly service retirement allowance of one-half of the amount to which the member would have been entitled under this plan. This option has no survivorship benefit.

### **Option 6(b): Life annuity**

A member may elect to receive his or her normal monthly service retirement allowance plus an additional five percent of such service retirement allowance for the life of the member, with no survivorship benefit. **This option is only available for members eligible to retire as of September 30, 2010.**

### **Option 6(c): Surviving spouse annuity**

A member may elect to receive an unreduced normal monthly service retirement allowance and at the member's death, 40 percent of the member's monthly normal retirement allowance shall be paid to his or her surviving spouse designated by him or her at the time of retirement. Such benefit will be payable during the lifetime of such spouse. \*\*

**\*\* An actuarial reduction will be applied when choosing an option with survivorship benefit.**

**\*\* The IRS may limit several payment options for non-spouse beneficiary or beneficiaries.**

**Selection of a payment option affects a member's monthly pension income.**

**Members may receive retirement benefits in accordance with options permitted under the plan.**

## Maximum Benefit

### **For members eligible to retire before October 1, 2012**

Effective October 1, 2021, for members retiring or entering DROP from that date on, member retirement allowance shall not exceed the lesser of 100 percent of the member's average final compensation or an annual allowance of \$120,000.00 or \$10,000.00 monthly, based on the normal form of benefit at of that date of retirement.

### **For members eligible to retire after October 1, 2012**

Effective October 1, 2022, for members retiring or entering DROP from that date on, member retirement allowance shall not exceed the lesser of 100 percent of the member's average final compensation or an annual allowance of \$100,000.00 or \$8,333.33 monthly, based on the normal form of benefit at of that date of retirement.

**The maximum annual benefit you may receive is \$100,000 divided in equal monthly payments.**

## Transfer of Accumulated Leave

Members eligible to receive accumulated sick and vacation leave or any other accumulated leave payable upon retirement or separation (including DROP) may elect, not later than the year prior to retirement, to have the leave transferred to the GESE Trust.

Members may elect one of the following options within 30 days of retirement/separation upon transferring balance. Members failing to elect a distribution option within 30 days of retirement or separation will be deemed to have elected Option 1 below:

**Option 1** - Receive a lump sum equal to the transferred leave balance,

**Option 2** - Rollover the entire transferred leave balance amount to any eligible retirement plan, (Example: IRA, 401, 403, 457...).

**Option 3** - Purchase additional service credit as permitted by the Code. If the leave balance exceeds the cost of the service credit purchased, the balance shall be paid to the member in a lump sum.

If a member dies after retirement or other separation, but before any distribution is made, the election option is void. In such an event, any person who would have received a death benefit had the member died in service immediately prior to the date of retirement or other separation, will be entitled to receive an amount equal to the transferred leave balance in a lump sum.

**The Accumulated Leave Balance Transfer Option form is available at [WWW.GESE.ORG](http://WWW.GESE.ORG).**

## BACKDROP Option

BACKDROP Option is effective January 1, 2013. The BACKDROP Option does not replace the DROP program. Any member eligible for the forward DROP remains eligible for the BACKDROP option upon becoming eligible for normal retirement. A member must work one year beyond eligibility date to elect the BACKDROP option.

An eligible member who elects the BACKDROP option shall receive a monthly retirement benefit payable on the employee's actual retirement date (date of retirement & separation from employment) based on the benefit the employee would have received if he/she had left city employment and retired on an earlier date after attaining normal retirement eligibility.

The BACKDROP option provides for a lump sum payment equal to the retirement benefit that the member would have received during the period following BACKDROP through the actual retirement date, plus interest of three percent per year, compounded annually. All or portion of the lump sum payment under the BACKDROP option may be rolled over to an IRA in accordance with federal law. The eligible member may elect a minimum BACKDROP period of one year and maximum BACKDROP period of up to seven years.

The BACKDROP option must be selected within ten years of becoming eligible to retire. Eligible members who wish to elect the BACKDROP option must provide advanced written notification to the department director and human resources director.

### Example:

Annie reaches her normal retirement date on July 1, 2023 and continues working for the City for ten more years. She is retiring on July 1, 2033 and is considering electing the BACKDROP. Her monthly benefit amount for a date of retirement of July 1, 2033 is \$5,600.00. Below is a table showing her monthly benefit and lump sum amounts if she elects the BACKDROP for a minimum of 12 months and a maximum of 84 months.

\*3% interest included in BACKDROP Lump Sum.

**BACKDROP period minimum is 12 months with a maximum of 84 months.**

Monthly Benefit	Lump Sum (Maximum 84 Months, Minimum 12 Months)	Years BACKDROP
\$4,375.00	<b>\$407,781.00</b>	7
\$4,550.00	<b>\$358,005.00</b>	6
\$4,725.00	<b>\$305,145.00</b>	5
\$4,900.00	<b>\$249,362.00</b>	4
\$5,075.00	<b>\$190,810.00</b>	3
\$5,250.00	<b>\$129,639.00</b>	2
\$5,425.00	<b>\$65,990.00</b>	1
\$5,600.00	<b>\$0.00</b>	0

3% interest included in BACKDROP Lump Sum.

## Deferred Retirement Option Program (“DROP”)

Any employee who is eligible for a Service Retirement (55/10, 60/10, or 55/30) or Rule of 70 or 80 Retirement is eligible to participate in the DROP.

Upon election of participation, a member's creditable service, accrued benefits, and compensation calculation are frozen. The member's contribution to the retirement plan for that member ceases as no further service credit is earned. The member may continue City employment for up to a maximum of 84 months. Once the maximum participation has been achieved, the participant must terminate employment.

There are two DROP programs, the Forward DROP and the BACDROP. A member can participate in both programs simultaneously. The *Forward DROP* is a DROP benefit equal to the regular retirement benefit the member would have received had the member separated from service and commenced the receipt of benefits from the plan. The Trust will deposit monthly retirement benefits into the participant's DROP account. The BACDROP is a DROP benefit actuarially calculated. A member may elect to BACDROP to a date, no further back than the date of the member's retirement eligibility date. The BACDROP period must be in 12 month increments, beginning at the start of a pay period, not to exceed 12 months.

An individual account is created for each participant. The Board of Trustees has established, by administrative rule, a series of investment vehicles which may be chosen by the participant. Any losses incurred on account of the option selected by the participant will not be made up by the City or the GESE Trust, and will be borne by the participant only. All interest will be credited to the member's DROP account.

Upon termination of employment, a participant may receive payment from the DROP account in a lump sum distribution or periodic payments. A participant may elect to rollover the balance to another qualified retirement plan, IRA, an Internal Revenue Code Section 457 Plan, or an annuity. A participant may defer payment until the latest date authorized by Section 401(a)(9) of the IRS Code. DROP participation will not affect any other death or disability benefit provided under law or applicable collective bargaining agreement.

If a participant dies before the account balances are paid out in full, the designated beneficiary will receive the remaining balance.

### Example:

Michael reaches his normal retirement date on July 1, 2023. He elects to retire on July 1, 2023 with a monthly benefit amount of \$4,375.00 and will be participating in the Forward DROP. Below is a table showing his monthly benefit amount and expected balance in the DROP account assuming a maximum of seven years participation and no investment earnings in his DROP account.

Years Forward DROP	Monthly Benefit	Expected DROP Account Balance (Subject to 7 year participation, Investment Vehicle Choice, and Market Conditions)
0	\$4,375.00	\$0.00
1	\$4,375.00	\$52,500.00
2	\$4,375.00	\$105,000.00
3	\$4,375.00	\$157,500.00
4	\$4,375.00	\$210,000.00
5	\$4,375.00	\$262,500.00
6	\$4,375.00	\$315,000.00
7	\$4,375.00	\$367,500.00

## Changes in Beneficiary after Retirement

Any member who elects a survivorship option for a spouse may designate a new spousal beneficiary in accordance with procedures established by the Board; provided, that an actuarial valuation will be made following such election, and the benefit for the retiree will be recalculated so that it is the actuarial equivalent of the benefit payable to the original spouse.

Furthermore, the original spouse, at the time of the change in designated beneficiary, must not be entitled to any survivor benefit under the retirement plan by operation of law. It is intended that the Trust will pay only one survivor benefit for any member of the retirement plan and will not incur an increase in benefit costs by reason of change in designated beneficiary.

## Cost of Living Allowance (COLA)

Every October 1st, each retiree will receive a COLA benefit increase between \$54 minimum per year and \$400 maximum per year after the retiree's first anniversary of retirement has been reached.

For retirees exercising Option 6(a), each retiree will receive an annual COLA increase between \$27 minimum per year and \$200 maximum per year.

## Re-employment

If a retiree becomes re-employed by the City into a regular, permanent, full-time position, excluding certain positions, the benefits payable under this plan will be suspended during the period of re-employment. Effective, November 1, 2002, this section shall not apply to city commission and mayoral assistants and secretarial staff position. This section also shall not apply to retirees who enter into legal agreement with the city either through written contracts or otherwise for services not defined as full-time, permanent employees of the city. Upon termination of the period of re-employment with the City, the benefits will be automatically restored on the first day of the month following the termination of re-employment.

## Excess Benefit Plan

The Excess benefit plan was established effective October 1, 2000, to fund the excess, if any, of the benefit earned under the GESE Trust without taking into account the Internal Revenue Code (IRC) Section 415 limits.

Membership consists of members of the GESE Trust who exceed the maximum benefit. There are no member contributions or plan assets.

The Excess benefit plan is an unfunded plan with benefits funded from the City's general fund. The City contributes the actuarially determined amount necessary to fund the excess retirement benefits which reduces the normal pension costs by the same amount.

**The City contributions are made to the Excess Benefit Plan as benefits become payable.**



## Death Benefits

### **Ordinary Death Benefit:**

Upon receipt by the Board of proper proofs of the death of a member in service who has three or more years of creditable service, there shall be paid a benefit equal to a lump-sum payment of 50 percent of the earnable compensation received by the member during the year immediately preceding the member's death plus the member's accumulated contributions with interest to such person, if any, as the member shall have nominated by written designation duly executed and filed with the Board. Otherwise said benefit payment will be paid to the member's estate.

In the event a member who has become eligible for Service, Early Service, Rule of 70, or Rule of 80 Retirement benefits dies before retirement, the member will be considered to have been retired on the date preceding death. In such event, the member's nominated spouse will have the option of:

(I) Receive the sum of the member's accumulated contributions together with interest and 50 percent of the member's compensation in the year before the member's death; OR

(II) Payment of 40 percent of the member's monthly retirement allowance which would have been payable to the member if he or she had attained normal retirement age.

In the event of the death of a member with less than three years of service, the member's contributions with interest shall be paid to the member's nominated beneficiary or to the estate.

### **Service-Incurred Death Benefit:**

If it can be determined that a member's death was the result of an accident in the performance of duty and not caused by willful negligence on the part of the member based on proof that the death was the natural and proximate result of an accident occurring at some definite time and place while the member was in the actual performance of duty, the member is eligible for a service-incurred death benefit.

The amount paid is equal to the member's accumulated contributions with interest payable in a lump sum plus an annuity equal to one-half of the member's average final compensation paid yearly in monthly installments to the member's nominated spouse.

If there is no spouse, or if the spouse dies before the youngest child of the deceased member has attained the age of 18, then the benefit is paid to the children under such age divided in equal shares until they reach 18 years of age or die.

If there are no children under the age of 18, then the benefit is paid to the dependent father or dependent mother for life. If there are no such beneficiaries, the amount which otherwise would have been paid as an ordinary death benefit will be paid to the member's estate.

### **Minimum Retiree Death Benefit:**

If a retired member dies prior to having received 12 monthly retirement payments and prior to having an optional allowance become effective, the designated beneficiary will be paid a lump sum benefit equal to the remaining 12 monthly retirement allowance payments.

**Ordinary death benefits are available for members with at least three years of credible service.**

**Death benefits may be available as a result of an accident on the job and not caused by willful negligence.**

## Disability Retirement

### **Ordinary Disability Retirement Benefit:**

Any member in service who has ten or more years of creditable service may be retired by the Board on an ordinary disability retirement allowance; provided, that the physician retained by the Board after a medical examination of such member, shall certify that such a member is mentally or physically totally incapacitated for the further performance of duty not as a result of an accident in the actual performance of duty and is likely to be permanent, and that such member should be retired.

Upon retirement, for an *ordinary disability*, a member is entitled to receive a retirement allowance paid in monthly installments of the greater of:

- (I) 90 percent of the member's accrued benefit at the time of disability; OR
- (II) 30 percent of the member's average final compensation.

The ordinary disability is not eligible for a return of accumulated contributions, optional allowances or survivorship benefits.

**A disability is the permanent and total incapacity to perform useful and efficient service as an employee of the city.**

### **Service-Incurred Disability Benefit:**

Any member who becomes totally and permanently incapacitated for duty as a result of tuberculosis, hypertension, or heart disease (which was not an existing condition at the time of employment) would be eligible for an immediate benefit payable for his/her lifetime.

Upon retirement for a service-incurred disability, a member shall be entitled to receive a retirement allowance paid in monthly installments of the greater of:

- (I) 90 percent of the member's accrued benefit at the time of disability; OR
- (II) 40 percent of the member's average final compensation.

This disability is not eligible for a return of accumulated contributions, optional allowances or survivorship benefits.

### **Accidental Disability Benefit:**

A member in service who has become totally and permanently incapacitated for duty as a result of an accident occurring while in the performance of his/her duty would be eligible for an immediate benefit payable for his/her lifetime.

Upon retirement for accidental disability, a member is entitled to receive a pension which is equal to 66<sup>2/3</sup>% percent of the greater of the member's average final compensation or the compensation in the year immediately preceding the disability. This disability is not eligible for a return of accumulated contributions or optional allowances. Upon death, 40% percent of that benefit would continue to be paid to the surviving spouse for the lifetime of such spouse.



**Disability benefits continue for the life of the member. The board can require a disabled member to submit to a medical examination. If the exam reveals the member is no longer entitled to receive disability benefits, the benefits will cease.**

## GESE Trust Statement of Net Position

	2024	2023
	(in thousands)	
Cash	\$1,595	\$1,076
<b>Receivables:</b>		
Securities sold	1,491	1,063
Interest & dividends	2,094	1,953
Contributions & other	763	1,304
<b>Total receivables</b>	4,348	4,320
<b>Investments</b>		
Fixed income	241,413	194,920
Equity securities	821,063	677,996
<b>Total</b>	1,062,476	872,916
Capital Assets	1,625	1,664
<b>Total Assets</b>	1,070,045	879,976
<b>Liabilities:</b>		
Securities purchased	2,045	3,550
Other liabilities	893	774
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	2,938	4,324
<b>Net Position-restricted for Pension Benefits</b>	<b>\$1,067,107</b>	<b>\$876,652</b>

## GESE Trust Statement of Changes in Net Position

	2024	2023
	(in thousands)	
<b>Additions:</b>		
Contributions		
Employer	53,458	55,326
Member	15,837	15,313
<b>Total contributions</b>	69,295	70,639
Reimbursement income	2,833	2,673
Net investment income	211,913	107,515
<b>Total additions</b>		
<b>Deductions:</b>	284,041	180,827
Benefits	86,914	81,875
Refunds	2,478	2,217
Administrative	3,194	2,992
<b>Total deductions</b>	92,586	87,084
Change in net assets	191,455	93,743
Beginning of year	875,652	781,909
<b>Net Position-restricted for Pension Benefits</b>	<b>1,067,107</b>	<b>875,652</b>

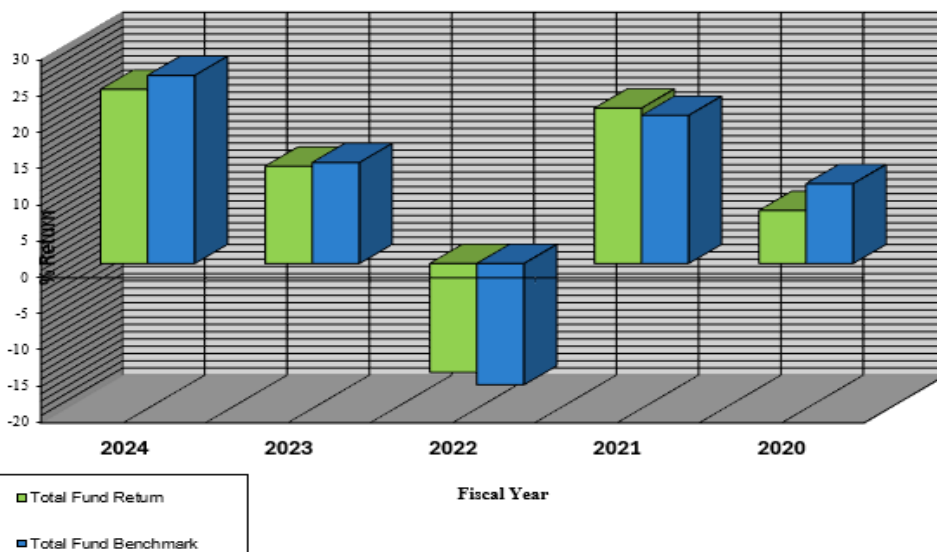
### Select Financial Information

The above financial information is summarized for the GESE Trust and does not include notes or detail. The full audited financial statements for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2024 are included in the Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR) and available online.

The fiscal year ends on September 30. The Statements of Net Position and Changes in Plan Net Position reflects two years of comparative information.

	Annual Rates of Return (%)					Annualized Return (%)	
	September 30,					3 Years	5 Years
	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2022-2024	2020-2024
<b>Equities</b>							
Fund Return - Domestic Equities	31.4	18.7	-15.5	33.9	7.6	9.7	13.7
Fund Return - International Equities	17.3	23.2	-26.4	18.2	7.0	1.9	6.0
S&P 500	36.4	21.6	-15.5	30.0	15.2	11.9	16.0
Dow Jones	28.8	19.2	-13.4	24.2	3.2	10.0	11.8
Russell 2500 Mid-Cap	26.2	11.3	-21.1	45.0	2.2	3.5	10.4
Russell 2000 - Small Stock	26.8	8.9	-23.5	47.7	0.4	1.8	9.4
MSCI EAFE - Non US Stocks	24.8	25.7	-25.2	25.7	0.5	5.5	8.2
<b>Fixed Income</b>							
Fund Return - Fixed Income	12.2	0.9	-13.5	-0.1	7.4	-0.7	1.0
Barclays U.S. - Aggregate	11.6	0.6	-14.6	-0.9	7.0	-1.4	0.3
Barclays - Mortgage Backed	12.3	-0.2	-14.0	-0.4	4.4	-1.2	0.0
Barclays Intermediate - Govt/Credit	9.5	2.2	-10.2	-0.4	6.3	0.2	1.3
T-Bills - 91 Days	5.5	4.5	0.6	0.1	1.0	3.5	2.3
<b>Real Estate</b>							
Fund Return - Real Estate	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
FR NCREIF Index	-3.5	-8.4	16.1	12.2	2.0	0.9	3.3
NAREIT	34.0	-0.9	-17.2	32.5	-13.3	3.2	4.8
Total Fund Return	<b>24.0</b>	<b>13.4</b>	<b>-15.0</b>	<b>21.4</b>	<b>7.3</b>	<b>6.1</b>	<b>9.3</b>
Total Fund Benchmark	<b>25.9</b>	<b>13.9</b>	<b>-16.7</b>	<b>20.4</b>	<b>11.0</b>	<b>6.1</b>	<b>9.6</b>

5 Year Fund Performance



Government Finance Officers Association

Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting

Presented to

City of Miami General Employees' & Sanitation Employees' Retirement Trust Florida

For its Annual Comprehensive Financial Report For the Fiscal Year Ended

September 30, 2023

*Christopher P. Moriel*  
Executive Director/CEO

The City of Miami GESE Retirement Trust received for fiscal year 2023, the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting from the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA).

## **Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)**

### **How do I change my beneficiary as an active employee?**

You can download the CHANGE OF BENEFICIARY FORM from the website at [www.gese.org](http://www.gese.org). Submit either by email, fax, mail, interoffice envelope or in person.

### **How can I change my mailing address?**

Active employees need to contact the City's HR department. Your information as an active employee is received electronically from the City.

### **What's my contribution balance in the pension plan?**

The annual member statement details your contributions for the year and contributions life to date. The statement includes a 4% interest granted that is added to the balance. Member statements are available upon request.

### **I want to buy back time. How do I do that?**

There are many different types of buybacks. Please review Paybacks for Membership Credit on page 4 for the different types of service you may be eligible to buy. Buybacks may be paid through bi-weekly payroll deductions, a lump sum payment or a direct rollover from a qualified retirement plan.

### **Can I obtain a loan on my contributions?**

Loans to participants are prohibited per Ordinance 40-258.

### **When can I retire?**

Your eligibility for retirement is determined based on your date of hire, age and years of service. A minimum of ten (10) years is required. Please see eligibility rules on **pages 6-11**.

### **How much is my monthly retirement?**

It depends on your years of service, multiplier, and final average salary. Please see calculation examples on pages 6-11.

### **Am I eligible to enter DROP?**

Any employee who is eligible for a Service retirement (55/10, 55/30,60/10), or Rule of 70 or 80 Retirement is eligible to participate in the DROP.

### **Am I eligible for BACKDROP at retirement?**

A member eligible for a Service retirement must work one (1) year beyond the retirement eligibility date to elect the BACKDROP option. The BACKDROP option must be selected within ten (10) years of becoming eligible to retire.

### **Can I transfer my accumulated sick and vacation leave to the GESE trust at retirement ?**

Members eligible to receive accumulated sick, vacation or any other accumulated leave payable upon retirement/DROP or separation may elect, no later than the year prior to the year of retirement, to have the leave transferred to the GESE Trust. Members who fail to elect a transfer in the year prior to retirement or other separation will receive a payment from the City in a lump sum at the time of separation with all of the required tax consequences.



# Summary Plan Description as of Sept. 30, 2024



Visit us on the web at  
[www.gese.org](http://www.gese.org)

City of Miami G.E.S.E. Retirement Trust  
2901 Bridgeport Avenue  
Coconut Grove, FL 33133