

## September 2016 Cost of Living Adjustment Increase

Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) is an annual increase to your retirement benefit that is based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI). The CPI measures changes in the price level of certain consumer goods and services, such as transportation, food and medical care. COLA is designed to keep pace with inflation.

The annual COLA increase is paid to *eligible* retirees beginning every September.

The September 2016 COLA equals **1% of the first \$18,000** of your annual retirement benefit (for a maximum of \$180 per year or \$15 per month).

### **To be eligible to receive COLA, you must be:**

- Age 62 or older and retired for five or more years; or
- Age 55 or older and retired for ten or more years; or
- A disability retiree for five years; or
- The spouse of a deceased retiree receiving a joint and survivor pension benefit. An eligible spouse is entitled to one-half of the COLA amount that would have been paid to the retiree when the retiree would have met the eligibility criteria; or
- A beneficiary receiving the accidental death benefit for five or more years on behalf of a deceased BERS member.

If you are already eligible to receive COLA, you will receive the September 2016 COLA increase as part of your September 2016 payment.

If you become eligible to receive COLA at some other point during the year, you will receive COLA effective the month following the month that you become eligible for COLA.