

# Cost-of-Living Adjustment



The cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) for September 2016 through August 2017 benefit payments is 1.0%

As a result, an eligible retired member with an annual benefit of \$18,000 or more will receive a maximum increase of \$15 per month beginning with the September 2016 payment. (Eligible members receiving an annual benefit under \$18,000 will receive a lesser monthly increase.)

This latest COLA will bring the cumulative maximum monthly increase since COLA legislation was enacted in 2001 to \$312 (see chart below).

New York's permanent, automatic COLA is designed to help offset inflation's adverse effects on the fixed retirement benefits of the state's public retirees. By law, the COLA is calculated by taking 50% of the March-to-March Consumer Price Index increase (rounded up to the next higher one-tenth of 1%) and multiplying it by the first \$18,000 of the retirement benefit. The CPI increased from March 2015 to March 2016 (.85%). Since the cost-of-living adjustment percentage cannot be less than 1.0% or exceed 3.0%, the percentage increase will be 1.0%.

## COLA Eligibility

To be eligible for a COLA, you must either be:

- At least age 62 and retired at least five years; or,
- At least age 55 and retired at least 10 years; or,
- A retiree receiving a NYSTRS disability benefit for at least five years (regardless of age); or,
- A surviving spouse of an eligible retiree receiving a lifetime benefit. (By law, the spouse receives an increase equal to one-half the COLA the retiree would have received.)

Retirees who become eligible for the COLA after September will receive their adjustment when first eligible.

## COLA Percentages and Maximum Increases

COLA Effective Date	CPI Increase	COLA	Maximum Monthly Increase*
September 2001	2.92%	1.5%	\$22.50
September 2002	1.48%	1.0%	\$15.00
September 2003	3.02%	1.6%	\$24.00
September 2004	1.74%	1.0%	\$15.00
September 2005	3.15%	1.6%	\$24.00
September 2006	3.36%	1.7%	\$25.50
September 2007	2.78%	1.4%	\$21.00

September 2008	3.98%	2.0%	\$30.00
September 2009	-0.38%	1.0%	\$15.00
September 2010	2.31%	1.2%	\$18.00
September 2011	2.68%	1.4%	\$21.00
September 2012	2.65%	1.4%	\$21.00
September 2013	1.47%	1.0%	\$15.00
September 2014	1.51%	1.0%	\$15.00
September 2015	-0.07%	1.0%	\$15.00
September 2016	0.85%	1.0%	\$15.00

*\*Maximum monthly increase for eligible retirees with an annual benefit of \$18,000. Retirees receiving an annual benefit less than \$18,000 received a lesser monthly increase.*