



**Kansas Association of  
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**Testimony to the Joint Committee on Pensions, Investments and Benefits  
KPERS Tier 3  
November 3, 2023**

Chairman Hoheisel, Vice Chairman Longbine and Committee Members:

The interest of our associations in the KPERS Tier 3 discussion is based on about 3/4 of all Kansas law enforcement agencies in a KPERS system, representing about 1/3 of the law enforcement officers, are in regular KPERS and not in KP&F. All employees of all KPERS systems member law enforcement agencies who are not commissioned officers through KS-Commission on Police Officer Standards and Training (KS-CPOST) are in regular KPERS. These include jailers, clerical staff, and other support staff. All regular KPERS members hired on or after January 1, 2015, are in Tier 3. We do not have the data to tell you how many or what percentage of the law enforcement officers in the state are in Tier 3.

We do know from feedback from our members that neither employers nor employees are satisfied with the Tier 3 plan. KPERS will have better data on current expected benefit calculations for a Tier 3 retirement vs. a Tier 2 Retirement. The most recent data we have is that doing an apples-to-apples comparison of Tier 3 benefits to Tier 2 benefits for a 30-year employee retiring at age 65 will receive between 27% and 34% of their final salary as their annual retirement benefit, compared to 51% of final salary for a Tier 2 retiree under the same circumstances.

In the opinion of our members, the post-retirement benefits play a key role in employee retention and recruitment. Kansas law enforcement is seeing a critical shortage of staff due to the combination of factors which include retirement benefits, competitive salaries and job satisfaction that are more promising outside government employment. This is negatively impacting not only the law enforcement officer staffing but also our support staff, especially our jailers and dispatchers. Many of our larger agencies are down by double digit percentages in law enforcement officers and many of the larger jails are also down by double digit percentages in jail staff. Understaffing in 911 dispatch centers is also significant.

Our ask from the Committee is to include a recommendation in your report to the legislature to end Tier 3 in its current form and preferably recommend returning Tier 3 members to Tier 2.

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