



Ohio Revised Code

Section 145.43 Designation or qualification of beneficiaries.

Effective: March 23, 2015

Legislation: Senate Bill 42 - 130th General Assembly

(A) As used in this section and in section 145.45 of the Revised Code:

(1) "Child" means a biological or legally adopted child of a deceased member. If a court hearing for an interlocutory decree for adoption was held prior to the member's death, "child" includes the child who was the subject of the hearing notwithstanding the fact that the final decree of adoption, adjudging the surviving spouse as the adoptive parent, is made subsequent to the member's death.

(2) "Parent" is a parent or legally adoptive parent of a deceased member.

(3) "Dependent" means a beneficiary who receives one-half of the beneficiary's support from a member during the twelve months prior to the member's death.

(4) "Surviving spouse" means an individual who establishes a valid marriage to a member at the time of the member's death by marriage certificate or pursuant to division (E) of this section.

(5) "Survivor" means a surviving spouse, child, or parent.

(6) "Accumulated contributions" has the meaning given in section 145.01 of the Revised Code, except that, notwithstanding that section, it does not include additional amounts deposited in the employees' savings fund pursuant to the version of division (C) of section 145.23 of the Revised Code as it existed immediately prior to April 6, 2007, or pursuant to section 145.62 of the Revised Code.

(B) Except as provided in division (C)(1) of section 145.45 of the Revised Code, should a member die before age and service retirement, the member's accumulated contributions and any applicable amount calculated under section 145.401 of the Revised Code, shall be paid to the person or persons the member has designated under section 145.431 of the Revised Code. A member may designate two or more persons as beneficiaries to be paid the accumulated account in a lump sum. Subject to



rules adopted by the public employees retirement board, a member who designates two or more persons as beneficiaries shall specify the percentage of the lump sum that each beneficiary is to be paid. If the member has not specified the percentages, the lump sum shall be divided equally among the beneficiaries.

The last designation of any beneficiary revokes all previous designations. The member's marriage, divorce, marriage dissolution, legal separation, or withdrawal of account, or the birth of the member's child, or adoption of a child, shall constitute an automatic revocation of the member's previous designation. If a deceased member was also a member of the school employees retirement system or the state teachers retirement system, the beneficiary last established among the systems shall be the sole beneficiary in all the systems.

If the accumulated contributions of a deceased member are not claimed by a beneficiary or by the estate of the deceased member within five years after the death, the contributions shall remain in the employees' savings fund or may be transferred to the income fund and thereafter shall be paid to the beneficiary or to the member's estate upon application to the board. The board shall formulate and adopt the necessary rules governing all designations of beneficiaries.

(C) Except as provided in division (C)(1) of section 145.45 of the Revised Code, if a member dies before age and service retirement and is not survived by a designated beneficiary, the following shall qualify, with all attendant rights and privileges, in the following order of precedence, the member's:

- (1) Surviving spouse;
- (2) Children, share and share alike;
- (3) A dependent parent, if that parent takes survivor benefits under division (B) of section 145.45 of the Revised Code;
- (4) Parents, share and share alike;
- (5) Estate.



If the beneficiary is deceased or is not located within ninety days, the beneficiary ceases to qualify for any benefit and the beneficiary next in order of precedence shall qualify as a beneficiary.

Any payment made to a beneficiary as determined by the board shall be a full discharge and release to the board from any future claims.

(D) Any amount due a retirant or disability benefit recipient receiving a monthly benefit and unpaid to the retirant or recipient at death shall be paid to the beneficiary designated in writing duly executed on a form provided by the board, signed by the retirant or recipient, and filed with the board. If no such designation has been filed, or if the designated beneficiary is not located within ninety days, any amounts payable under this chapter due to the death of the retirant or recipient shall be paid in the following order of precedence to the retirant's or recipient's:

- (1) Surviving spouse;
- (2) Children, share and share alike;
- (3) Parents, share and share alike;
- (4) Estate.

The payment shall be a full discharge and release to the board from any future claim for the payment.

Any amount due a beneficiary receiving a monthly benefit and unpaid to the beneficiary at the beneficiary's death shall be paid to the beneficiary's estate.

(E) If the validity of marriage cannot be established to the satisfaction of the board for the purpose of disbursing any amount due under this section or section 145.45 of the Revised Code, the board may accept a decision rendered by a court having jurisdiction in the state in which the member was domiciled at the time of death that the relationship constituted a valid marriage at the time of death, or the "spouse" would have the same status as a widow or widower for purposes of sharing the distribution of the member's intestate personal property.



(F) As used in this division, "recipient" means an individual who is receiving or may be eligible to receive an allowance or benefit under this chapter based on the individual's service to a public employer.

If the death of a member, a recipient, or any individual who would be eligible to receive an allowance or benefit under this chapter by virtue of the death of a member or recipient is caused by one of the following beneficiaries, no amount due under this chapter to the beneficiary shall be paid to the beneficiary in the absence of a court order to the contrary filed with the board:

(1) A beneficiary who is convicted of, pleads guilty to, or is found not guilty by reason of insanity of a violation of or complicity in the violation of either of the following:

(a) Section 2903.01, 2903.02, or 2903.03 of the Revised Code;

(b) An existing or former law of any other state, the United States, or a foreign nation that is substantially equivalent to section 2903.01, 2903.02, or 2903.03 of the Revised Code.

(2) A beneficiary who is indicted for a violation of or complicity in the violation of the sections or laws described in division (F)(1)(a) or (b) of this section and is adjudicated incompetent to stand trial;

(3) A beneficiary who is a juvenile found to be a delinquent child by reason of committing an act that, if committed by an adult, would be a violation of or complicity in the violation of the sections or laws described in division (F)(1)(a) or (b) of this section.