

Good Evening,

I am writing to express my deep concern about the retirement process that PERA is currently putting its members through.

I left Minneapolis Police Dept shortly after the riots ended in June. I won't go into the details but the experience of the lack of support and the lack of ability to protect myself, those I worked with and the community at large was like nothing any of us could have imagined prior. I left there feeling raw, scared, angry, disappointed, frustrated, sad and like I would never feel normal again. My relationship with my entire family has changed and suffered, not just because of the riots, but the aggregate effect of multiple years of traumatic events quite suddenly felt beyond my emotional control and understanding. I knew I could no longer do my job safely.

I decided to put my PERA application in the first week of September. I frankly expected to have an answer from PERA around Thanksgiving time. Mid-December came and went and I was then notified that PERA had decided to change their process and send my case to yet another agency for review (MMRO) and MMRO had decided to send me on for another psychological evaluation even though I had three doctors who had concurred that I had job-related PTSD already. I met with Dr. Gratzner who eventually affirmed my PTSD was job related but the experience of having to tell my traumas to him was like being victimized all over again. He was dismissive. He put words in my mouth throughout the interview which required me stopping him at multiple points in the conversation, and he had obviously not even read through my file. I left feeling as if my situation was being belittled with his nonchalant attitude. I equate PERA's process with being called a liar over and over again.

I ran out of paid time off around the middle of November so this delay in PERA's typical process also caused financial stress. I've worked since I was 12 years old and to not work is difficult in and of itself but to not be able to work AND not be able to count on whether or not the pension I earned was going to come through just added to my distress of the past year.

I'm writing so that the pension oversight committee is aware of how difficult this process has been for those of us who have been strung along for many many months and asked to repeat the process after doctors have already confirmed diagnoses multiple times. It's not a fair process as many people don't have to do it and it certainly is a great waste of time and money for the organization as well as the retiree.

Thank you for your time.