

Sec. 5505.048. (A) The office of an employee member or retirant member of the state highway patrol retirement board who is convicted of or pleads guilty to a felony, a theft offense as defined in section 2913.01 of the Revised Code, or a violation of section 102.02, 102.03, 102.04, 2921.02, 2921.11, 2921.13, 2921.31, 2921.41, 2921.42, 2921.43, or 2921.44 of the Revised Code shall be deemed vacant. A person who has pleaded guilty to or been convicted of an offense of that nature is ineligible for election to the office of employee member or retirant member of the state highway patrol retirement board.

(B) A member of the state highway patrol retirement board who willfully and flagrantly exercises authority or power not authorized by law, refuses or willfully neglects to enforce the law or to perform any official duty imposed by law, or is guilty of gross neglect of duty, gross immorality, drunkenness, misfeasance, malfeasance, or nonfeasance is guilty of misconduct in office. On complaint and hearing in the manner provided for in this section, the board member shall have judgment of forfeiture of the office with all its emoluments entered against the board member, creating in the office a vacancy to be filled as provided by law.

(C) Proceedings for removal of a state retirement system board member on any of the grounds enumerated in division (B) of this section shall be commenced by filing with the court of appeals common pleas of the district county in which the board member resides a written complaint specifically setting forth the charge. The complaint shall be accepted if signed by the governor or signed as follows:

(1) If the complaint is against an employee member of the board, the complaint must be signed by a number of members of the retirement system that equals at least the following and must include signatures of at least twenty employee members residing in at least five different counties:

(a) If the employee member was most recently elected in accordance with division (C)(2) of section 5505.04 of the Revised Code, ten per cent of the number of contributing members of the system who voted in that election;

(b) If the employee member was most recently elected to the board pursuant to division (C)(3) of section 5505.04 of the Revised Code or took office in accordance with division (C)(4) of that section, ten per cent of the number of contributing members of the system who voted in the most recent election held in accordance with division (C)(2) of section 5505.04 of the Revised Code for that employee member position on the board.

(2) If the complaint is against the retirant member of the board, the complaint must be signed by a number of service and disability retirants that equals at least the following and must include signatures of at least twenty service and disability members residing in at least five different counties:

(a) If the retirant member was most recently elected in accordance with division (C)(1) of section 5505.04 of the Revised Code, ten per cent of the number of service and disability retirants who voted in that election;

(b) If the retirant member was most recently elected to the board pursuant to division (C)(3) of section 5505.04 of the Revised Code or took office in accordance with division (C)(4) of that section, ten per cent of the number of service and disability retirants who voted in the most recent election held in accordance with division (C)(1) of section 5505.04 of the Revised Code for that retirant member position on the board.

(D) The clerk of the court of appeals common pleas in which a complaint against a board member is filed under division (C) of this section shall do both of the following with respect to the complaint:

(1) Submit the signatures obtained pursuant to division (C) of this section to the board for purposes of verifying the validity of the signatures. The board shall verify the validity of the signatures and report its findings to the court.

(2) Cause a copy of the complaint to be served on the board member at least ten days before the hearing on the complaint. The court shall hold a public hearing not later than thirty days after the filing of the complaint. The court may subpoena witnesses and compel their attendance in the same manner as in civil cases. Process shall be served by the sheriff of the county in which the witness resides. Witness fees and other fees in connection with the proceedings shall be the same as in civil cases. The court may suspend the board member pending the hearing.

If the court finds that one or more of the charges in the complaint are true, it shall make a finding for removal of the board member. The court's finding shall include a full, detailed statement of the reasons for the removal. The finding shall be filed with the clerk of the court and be made a matter of public record.

~~The board member has the right of review or to appeal to the supreme court on leave first obtained. The supreme court shall hear the case in not more than thirty court days after granting leave. In other respects, the hearing shall follow the regular procedure in appealable cases that originate in the court of appeals.~~

(E) No individual who has been removed from the board pursuant to this section shall be eligible to fill an elective or appointed position as a member of the board.