

FUNDING CRISIS LOOMS

Over the past five years, unfunded liabilities – the difference between what pension systems in the 80 largest California city and county governments have and the retirement benefits their employees have earned – grew 35 percent, to roughly \$28 billion. This chart includes the funding ratio for each plan – the percentage that the local entity has sufficient assets to pay. Lower numbers are bad; higher numbers are better. Plans with funded ratios at 80 percent or higher are generally considered healthy. Jurisdictions that have separate pension plans for police and fire workers might show up twice. Also, many of the healthy looking plans are propped up by pension obligation bonds – debts that taxpayers still have to fund.

■ POOR
 ■ MODERATE
 ■ GOOD
 ■ BEST
 ◊ BOND DEBT

CITY/COUNTY	PLAN COVERS	FUNDING RATIO		
San Diego	All	67%		
SAN MATEO COUNTY	All	64%		
Bakersfield	Police	78%		
Berkeley	Police	76%		
Corona	Non-public safety	71%		
	Police	77%		
Escondido	Non-public safety	78%		
FRESNO COUNTY	All	79%		◊
Irvine	Non-public safety	75%		
KERN COUNTY	All	72%		◊
MADERA COUNTY	Public safety	74%		
	Non-public safety	78%		
MERCED COUNTY	All	71%		◊
MONTEREY COUNTY	Public safety	76%		
NEVADA COUNTY	Non-public safety	79%		
Newport Beach	Public safety	79%		
Oakland	Public safety	77%		
ORANGE COUNTY	All	71%		◊
PLACER COUNTY	Public safety	75%		
Roseville	Public safety	73%		
	Non-public safety	76%		
SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY	All	74%		◊
SANTA CRUZ COUNTY	Police	78%		
STANISLAUS COUNTY	All	71%		◊
Torrance	Police	79%		
YOLO COUNTY	Public safety	77%		

ALAMEDA COUNTY	All	89%		◊
Anaheim	Police	86%		
	Non-public safety	87%		
	Fire	87%		
Berkeley	Non-public safety	88%		
Chula Vista	Non-public safety	80%		
	Public safety	89%		
CONTRA COSTA COUNTY	All	88%		◊
EL DORADO COUNTY	Public safety	80%		
	Non-public safety	85%		
Escondido	Public safety	81%		
Fremont	Non-public safety	81%		
	Public safety	82%		
Glendale	Public safety	85%		
Hayward	Police	80%		
	Fire	82%		
HUMBOLDT COUNTY	Non-public safety	83%		
Huntington Beach	Public safety	81%		
Irvine	Public safety	81%		
Los Angeles	Non-public safety	82%		
LOS ANGELES COUNTY	All	89%		◊
MARIN COUNTY	All	87%		◊
Modesto	Public safety	88%		
NAPA COUNTY	Non-public safety	87%		
Oakland	Non-public safety	84%		
Oceanside	Non-public safety	89%		◊
Ontario	Police	87%		
	Fire	89%		
Oxnard	Police	84%		
	Non-public safety	89%		
Palo Alto	Non-public safety	86%		
	Public safety	88%		
Pasadena	Public safety	83%		
PLACER COUNTY	Non-public safety	81%		
Sacramento	Non-public safety	83%		
	Public safety	87%		
SACRAMENTO COUNTY	All	86%		◊
San Bernardino	Public safety	88%		◊
SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY	All	87%		◊
San Jose	Non-public safety	83%		
Santa Barbara	Non-public safety	81%		
	Police	82%		
	Fire	84%		
SANTA BARBARA COUNTY	All	89%		
Santa Clara	Non-public safety	82%		
	Public safety	85%		
SANTA CLARA COUNTY	Non-public safety	87%		
	Public safety	87%		
SANTA CRUZ COUNTY	Non-public safety	87%		
Santa Monica	Police	81%		
	Non-public safety	84%		
	Fire	87%		
Santa Rosa	Police	84%		◊
	Fire	87%		◊
SHASTA COUNTY	Public safety	86%		
SONOMA COUNTY	All	84%		◊
Sunnyvale	Public safety	83%		
	Non-public safety	85%		
SUTTER COUNTY	Non-public safety	82%		
	Public safety	82%		
TEHAMA COUNTY	Public safety	83%		
Torrance	Fire	80%		
YOLO COUNTY	Non-public safety	87%		
YUBA COUNTY	Public safety	82%		◊
	Non-public safety	82%		◊

Bakersfield	Fire	90%		
	Non-public safety	91%		
Berkeley	Fire	90%		
Burbank	Police	93%		
	Non-public safety	96%		◊
	Fire	100%		◊
BUTTE COUNTY	Non-public safety	92%		◊
	Public safety	95%		◊
Fresno	Public safety	120%		◊
	All	133%		◊
Glendale	Non-public safety	95%		
Hayward	Non-public safety	90%		
HUMBOLDT COUNTY	Public safety	90%		
Huntington Beach	Non-public safety	96%		
IMPERIAL COUNTY	All	96%		◊
Inglewood	Public safety	96%		◊
	Non-public safety	100%		◊
KINGS COUNTY	Non-public safety	93%		◊
	Public safety	96%		◊
LAKE COUNTY	Non-public safety	90%		
	Public safety	92%		
Long Beach	Non-public safety	95%		◊
	Public safety	100%		◊
Los Angeles	Public safety	96%		
Modesto	Non-public safety	95%		
MONTEREY COUNTY	Non-public safety	92%		
Newport Beach	Non-public safety	90%		
Oceanside	Public safety	92%		◊
Ontario	Non-public safety	98%		
Pasadena	Non-public safety	91%		◊
Richmond	Public safety	98%		◊
	Non-public safety	100%		◊
Riverside	Public safety	94%		◊
	Non-public safety	96%		◊
RIVERSIDE COUNTY	Non-public safety	95%		◊
	Public safety	96%		◊
San Bernardino	Non-public safety	92%		◊
SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY	All	91%		◊
SAN DIEGO COUNTY	All	92%		◊
San Francisco	All	97%		
San Jose	Public safety	100%		
Santa Ana	Public safety	92%		
	Non-public safety	93%		
Santa Rosa	Non-public safety	95%		◊
SHASTA COUNTY	Non-public safety	95%		
SOLANO COUNTY	Public safety	95%		◊
	Non-public safety	95%		◊
Stockton	Non-public safety	94%		◊
	Public safety	94%		◊
TEHAMA COUNTY	Non-public safety	92%		
Torrance	Non-public safety	95%		
TULARE COUNTY	All	92%		◊
VENTURA COUNTY	All	91%		

Research by PHILLIP REESE/preese@sacbee.com
Graphic by NAM NGUYEN/nnguyen@sacbee.com

PENSION PERSPECTIVES

Those involved deeply in the pension debate offer their views:



“The retirement benefit is a huge hiring point”

Vince Bizzini, president, Stanislaus County Sworn Deputies Association



“Last time I checked, government is not going out of business”

Larry Combs, executive officer, Merced County



“My concern is that the county government is becoming a pension provider that provides government services on the side”

Adam Hill, San Luis Obispo County supervisor



“We’re trying to maintain credibility with taxpayers, but right now, I’m not sure this is defensible”

Dwight Stenbakken, deputy executive director, League of California Cities



“Roseville has built a retirement compensation system that was based on an old model of revenues”

Russ Branson, finance director, city of Roseville



“I was surprised. I thought the bulk of the liability was related to market losses.”

Roberto Peña, pension administrator, Fresno County



“Most of the cities took pension holidays. ... That is a pretty big reason for all this.”

Dave Low, chairman, Californians for Health Care and Retirement Security



“I have to believe everyone understands that pension costs are going to break all of the local governments in California”

Vito Chiesa, Stanislaus County supervisor



“If you sit there and watch the stock market every day, it will drive you to drink”

Frank Mecham, San Luis Obispo County supervisor



“We’re going to have to take drastic measures ... We need to close this gap.”

Deidre Kelsey, Merced County supervisor