



2010 Annual Benefits Statement Frequently Asked Questions for Members

May 2011

The North Carolina Department of State Treasurer creates the Annual Benefits Statement for actively employed public sector personnel. The statement provides members with an accounting of their contributions to their retirement system, coupled with benefit projections for retirement, Social Security and 401(k) or 457 plans.

During these turbulent times in our economy, your Annual Benefits Statement can serve as a tool to develop your financial strategy in the event of a planned retirement or unplanned reduction-in-force (lay-off).

You are encouraged to review your Annual Benefits Statement and other financial documents to aid in your financial planning process. This Frequently Asked Questions document, combined with the [User Guide](#), is designed to enhance your understanding of the format and content of the statement.

Statement Changes

Q: My gap analysis shows that I need more retirement income now than I needed last year. How did that happen?

Your gap analysis under Checkpoint 3 shows that you need to save more for retirement because of changes in two of the assumptions used to estimate your financial need in retirement:

- The rate-of-return on investments was lowered from 7% to 5%, a more conservative estimate given lower expectations for economic growth in future years. Increasing inflation and lower returns on pension fund investments mean that you cannot count on salary increases while you work, or cost-of-living adjustments in retirement. As a result, your dollars will not buy as much as they used to. Saving more will help your finances keep up with or exceed inflation.
- Life expectancy was raised from 84 to 90 years of age. Life spans are becoming longer. Statistics show that more than 50% of people outlive their finances.

As a result of the changes in the assumptions, the gap analysis should provide you with a more realistic picture of how much you may need to save in order to have sufficient income during retirement.

Statement Distribution

Q: When will my statement be available?

The 2010 Annual Benefits Statements will be available online in your personal [ORBIT](#) (Online Retirement Benefits through Integrated Technology) account by May 31, 2011.

Q: Do all public sector employees receive a statement?

If you actively contributed to the Retirement Systems as of December 31, 2010, and have at least 12 months of service, you will have a statement posted to your personal [ORBIT](#) account.

Q: Will I receive my statement in the mail?

Your statement will not be mailed. It will be in your personal ORBIT account.

Q: Why are you not mailing statements this year?

Placing the statement in your [ORBIT](#) account will maintain your personal security by eliminating mailings of personal account information. Up to two years of statements will be stored in your [ORBIT](#) account. You may print out multiple copies of your statement if needed. Not mailing statements also is environmentally friendly and eliminates the cost of printing and mailing.

Q: How do I access my statement in ORBIT?



Your full statement is available to view, print, or download from [ORBIT](#) at www.myncretirement.com.

Follow the log-in or registration instructions. If you do not have access to a computer, please ask your employer to assist you with accessing a computer to view and print your statement. Libraries and many branches of the State Employees' and Local Government Federal Credit Unions have computer kiosks that allow you to view your statement.

Neither Retirement Systems' staff nor your employer has access to your statement.

Q: If I do not have routine access to a computer or printer, how can I see my statement?

We have asked your human resources staff to assist you with computer access if you do not have access to a computer at work or at home. Libraries and many branches of the State Employees' and Local Government Federal Credit Unions have computer kiosks that allow you to view your statement.

Q: I joined my agency in the middle of 2010 and worked less than one year. Will my statement be posted to my ORBIT account?

No. Since you will have fewer than 12 months of service as of December 31, 2010, you will not receive an Annual Benefits Statement. Instead, you will have a letter posted to your personal ORBIT account that indicates where to find your length of service, retirement account balance, and beneficiary designation(s) within [ORBIT](#). A more detailed statement will be prepared next year if you meet the criteria above.

Q: I left my government employer prior to December 31, 2010; how can I get a statement if I want one?

Annual Benefits Statements were generated only for those who contributed to the Retirement Systems as of December 31, 2010. If you left local or state employment prior to December 31, you will not have a 2010 statement in your ORBIT account.



You can see your account information and balance through [ORBIT](#) at www.myncretirement.com.

Click on the “[ORBIT](#)” button. You will be directed to the log-in page to register, or log-in if you’ve already registered.

Q: I was on leave without pay in December. Will a statement be in my ORBIT account?

If you were on unpaid leave and did not make a contribution to the Retirement System as of December 31, 2010, you will not have a statement.



You can see your personal account information and balance through [ORBIT](#) at www.myncretirement.com.

Click on the “[ORBIT](#)” button. You will be directed to the log-in page to register, or log-in if you’ve already registered.

Q: As a retiree who returned to work, I met my maximum earnable allowance for the Local Governmental Employees’ Retirement System in mid-2010. Will I have a posted statement in my ORBIT account?

You will only have a statement in your account if you made a contribution to the Retirement System in December 2010.



You can see your personal retirement account information on [ORBIT](#) at www.myncretirement.com.

Click on the “[ORBIT](#)” button. You will be directed to the log-in page to register, or log-in if you’ve already registered.

ORBIT

Q: Can my employer log on to my ORBIT account and print my annual statement?

Your employer will not have access to your statement or [ORBIT](#) account. Since your statement may contain other financial information, such as supplemental savings or Social Security benefit information, only you will have access to your statement. You may ask your employer to assist you in obtaining computer access, or printing the statement after you type in your user ID and password to gain access to your [ORBIT](#) account.

Q: How do I access my statement in ORBIT?



1. To access [ORBIT](#), visit www.myncretirement.com.
2. Click on the “[ORBIT](#)” button. You will be directed to the log-in page to register, or log-in if you’ve already registered.
3. Once logged on to your personal [ORBIT](#) account, click on “View Annual Benefits Statement” to view or print your statement.

Q: I forgot my ORBIT password. How do I reset my password so I can log on to ORBIT?



To reset your [ORBIT](#) password:

1. Go to the [ORBIT](#) registration page at www.myncretirement.com.
2. Click on “Forgot Your Password...?”
3. Answer the series of questions.

Answering the questions correctly enables you to reset your own password and user identification. The last screen will prompt you to type in a new user identification and password. Once that is done you will receive screen confirmation that your process was successful, and the [ORBIT](#) site will launch. A new password will not be sent to you.

Q: Can employees who are no longer working, but have contributions in the Retirement System, access ORBIT?

Yes. Members who no longer work in local or state government and have contributions in their retirement account can access their account information and balance through ORBIT.



1. To access [ORBIT](#), visit www.myncretirement.com.
2. Click on the “[ORBIT](#)” button. You will be directed to the log-in page to register, or log-in if you’ve already registered.
3. Once logged on to your personal [ORBIT](#) account, click on “View Annual Benefits Statement” to view or print your statement.

Statement Balances and Benefit Projections

Q: As a "Dual Account" participant in Cooperative Extension, will I see both my Local Governmental Employees' Retirement System (LGERS) and Teachers' and State Employees' Retirement System (TSERS) accounts even if I am not actively contributing to both?

Yes. As a "Dual Account" employee in Cooperative Extension, you will see account balances for both LGERS and TSERS. However, your estimate and projected retirement age is based on the system in which you have the most years of service. The estimate and projected retirement age may not be accurately presented in the statement.

Q: Where is the information on the age for eligibility for an unreduced retirement benefit?

Information on the age for eligibility for an unreduced retirement benefit is found under the "Notes and Assumptions" section on the side of Checkpoints 1 and 2. The third checkmark will show your projected age for an unreduced retirement and is based on the years of service qualifications in the Retirement System.

Q: Am I correct that the projected monthly income on "Checkpoint 2" is based on retirement at age 62? How can I, as an employee that plans to retire earlier based on years of service, figure out what my monthly income will be?

The projected monthly income in Checkpoint 2 is calculated to the unreduced benefit for each retirement system. This means that the retirement age is based on years of service or years of service and age, which varies by retirement system.



Please refer to "[Your Retirement Benefits](#)" handbook to understand the qualifications for retiring in your system. The retirement handbooks are found under the "Benefits Handbook" link at www.myncretirement.com.

You may also obtain a benefit estimate using the Retirement Estimator in your personal [ORBIT](#) account, or by submitting a completed [Form 309](#), *Estimating Your Service Retirement Benefits*.

Q: Why don't I see a Social Security benefit projected for me?

Your projected monthly income is calculated to the first date you are eligible to retire with an unreduced benefit. The estimated Social Security benefit appears only if your retirement age will be at least 62.

Q: Now that I have my statement, how can I get more information on long-term financial planning?

Take advantage of the resources available through the Department of State Treasurer, from any of our partners listed in your statement, or from your financial advisor or institution.

Statement Format

Q: What is the format of the statement?

The Annual Benefits Statement will be posted to your [ORBIT](#) account as a PDF. When printed out, the statement will be four pages in an 8 ½" x 11" format.

Member Identification (ID)

Q: Will my member identification number be on the statement?

Yes. The Member ID number enhances your security by reducing the use of your Social Security number on documents within the Retirement Systems. Please use your Member ID number in all future correspondence with our office.

Beneficiary Information

Q: Can I change my beneficiary through ORBIT or will this always need to be submitted on paper?

If you are an active Retirement System member with less than 10 years of service, you can designate beneficiaries online for a return of contributions, or for the employee death benefit (if applicable), in the event of your death. If you have 10 or more years of service, you are required to complete and submit a [Form 2RC](#), *Designating Beneficiary(ies) for Retirement System Return of Contributions*; if applicable, complete [Form 2DB](#), *Designating Beneficiaries for the Death Benefit*.



You can print out personalized forms from [ORBIT](#) by going to www.myncretirement.com.

Making Corrections

Q: What do I do if I find discrepancies in my statement information, such as years of service or age?

First go to your Human Resources (HR) representative to point out the incorrect information. In most cases your HR or payroll representative will be able to correct the information in their monthly reporting to the Retirement System.

If you find that the information cannot be corrected through your employer, please contact the Retirement System at 1-877-627-3287 or (919) 807-3050 (Raleigh area only).

Supplemental Retirement

Q: If I contribute to both the traditional and Roth 401(k) Plan, will this be listed separately on the 401(k) information?

No. Your statement will show only the traditional 401(k) account balance that is offered by [Prudential Retirement](#), our third-party provider for the N.C. Supplemental Retirement Plans. Roth contributions have a different tax treatment and are reported separately.

Q: Are there any plans to add other Deferred Compensation (457) plans (such as Nationwide 457 or International City/County Management Association (ICMA)) to this statement?

No. Only the NC 401(k) and NC 457 savings plans offered by [Prudential Retirement](#), our third-party provider for the N.C. Supplemental Retirement Plans, are included on the Annual Benefits Statements.

Q: I am a local government employee. Will I see a Deferred Compensation contact number listed for reference information?

You will see contact information for [Prudential Retirement](#), our third-party provider for the N.C. Supplemental Retirement Plans, if your employer participates in the 401(k) or 457 plans.



See the “401(k)-457 Employer Participation List” on the “Active Employees” section of the Retirement Systems’ web page at www.myncretirement.com.

Fire & Rescue Squad Workers

Q: Will the North Carolina Firemen's and Rescue Squad Workers' Pension Fund (FRSWPF) be listed as a retirement fund on the statement? If so, will it indicate how many years of service credit a member has in the Fund?

No. Only firefighters who are part of the Local Governmental Employees' Retirement System will receive a statement. Firefighters in the N.C. Firemen's and Rescue Squad Workers' Pension Fund will not be included on the Annual Benefits Statement since the make-up of the pension plan is different than the other systems managed by the N.C. Department of State Treasurer.