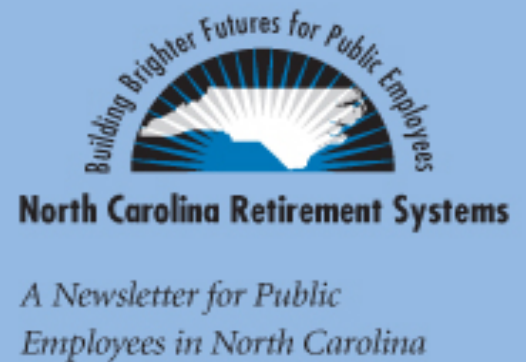


# On the HORIZON



## Members Can Now Designate Beneficiaries Online

Recently passed legislation now allows active Retirement System members **with less than 10 years of service** to designate beneficiaries online for the employee death benefit, or for a return of contributions in the event of the member's death.

Life's defining moments - marriage, divorce or a new addition to your family – are appropriate times for you to review and update your beneficiaries to make sure your loved ones are protected.

To add or change a beneficiary online:

- Visit [www.myncretirement.com](http://www.myncretirement.com) and log-in after clicking the "ORBIT" button.
- Click on "View Account Summary."
- There you will see your current list of beneficiary designations.
- If you have less than 10 years of service, click on the "Change Beneficiaries" link underneath the list of beneficiaries and add or change the names of the person(s) who you would like to designate.
- If you have more than 10 years of service, follow the instructions to open a personalized copy of the Form 2C – *Designating Beneficiary(ies) for Retirement System Contributions and the Death Benefit*. Complete, print out and mail to the Retirement Systems.

An e-mail confirmation will be sent to the e-mail address you provided during your ORBIT registration.



## Supplemental Retirement Income Plans

It's never too early or too late to start saving for retirement. Explore all of your savings options and remember the NC 401(k) and the NC Deferred Compensation (457) Plans are available as supplemental savings retirement plans for many retirement system members.

Be ready for retirement. A sound retirement plan includes three forms of savings that build the three-legged stool of savings:

- An employer-sponsored pension benefit
- Personal savings and assets, including NC 401(k), NC Deferred Compensation (457), IRAs, CDs, home equity, etc.)
- Social Security

For more information on the North Carolina Supplemental Retirement Plans, visit [www.ncplans.prudential.com](http://www.ncplans.prudential.com), or call 1-866-NCPlans (1-866-627-5267).

### Numbers and Websites to Know

Retirement Systems Division:  
1-877-627-3287 (Toll-free)  
(919) 807-3050 (Raleigh area only)  
[www.myncretirement.com](http://www.myncretirement.com)

NC 401(k) and Deferred Compensation Plan  
1-866-NCPlans (1-866-627-5267)  
[www.ncplans.prudential.com](http://www.ncplans.prudential.com)

Department of State Treasurer's Unclaimed Property Program  
[www.nccash.com](http://www.nccash.com)

### National Save for Retirement Week

October 18 – 24, 2009

<http://www.retirementweek.org/>

## Understand the Return-to-Work Laws

*New guidelines from the 2009 Legislative Session*

During these uncertain economic times, retired employees may want to return to work to the familiar surroundings in which they spent much of their career. Before you decide to return to work for an employer under the Retirement System from which you will retire, it is a good idea to familiarize yourself with the law governing return to work.

Return-to-work laws apply differently to members of the Local Governmental Employees' Retirement System (LGERS) and the Teachers' and State Employees' Retirement System (TSERS). Following the return-to-work laws will protect you from incurring financial penalties, possible loss of retirement benefits or possible loss of health benefits. Some of the requirements include:

- Retirees of TSERS and LGERS should not exceed 50 percent of their gross pre-retirement salary or \$28,080 (for 2009), whichever is greater. This is called an earnable allowance.
- Effective October 1, 2009, reemployed retired teachers, except those in full-time positions who must become contributing members, will now be subject to an earnings cap, also known as earnable allowance, and must be reemployed on a part-time, temporary, interim, or on a fee-for-service basis.
- All TSERS members who retired after October 1, 2005, must wait six months from retiring before returning to work.
- LGERS members do not have the same six-month restriction, but are limited to not returning to work during the month in which the retirement became effective, and must work in a position that requires less than 1,000 work hours per year.
- Effective July 1, 2009, a retiree from TSERS can return to work as a nursing instructor in a permanent full-time position, or a part-time position that exceeds 50 percent of the work week, in a certified nursing program at a community college or university for a maximum of three years. A retiree who meets all of the qualifications for this exemption will not be subject to the earnable allowance and will continue to receive his or her TSERS benefit. These qualifications include the following:
  - A retiree is not allowed to work for a university or a community college in any capacity for the six months prior to the new employment.
  - If retired after July 1, 2009, the retiree must have retired with a service (unreduced) retirement benefit.

Unless legislation extends this reemployment exception for nursing instructors, the above provision will expire in 2013.

Since the return-to-work laws are extensive, please visit [www.myncretirement.com](http://www.myncretirement.com) for more detailed information on the regulations pertaining to each system.

### Thank you

Thank you to all who participated in the Retirement Systems all-member survey. Your feedback on our processes and communication will help us enhance our customer service and educational outreach. Highlights of the survey findings will be shared in early 2010 after the survey and focus group results have been tabulated.

## Ask the Retirement Systems

### *Most Commonly Asked Questions*

The N.C. Retirement Systems receives hundreds of questions each month from members. The following are the most commonly asked questions and responses.

**Q: I misplaced the first copy of my retirement statement. How can I obtain a copy of my 2008 Annual Benefits Statement?**

A: A copy of your 2008 Annual Benefits Statement is available in your personal ORBIT account. Due to the personal supplemental savings account information you may have on your statement, Retirement Systems staff do not have access to view or print your benefits statement. To access ORBIT, visit [www.myncretirement.com](http://www.myncretirement.com) and click on the "ORBIT" button. You will be directed to the log-in page where the registration or log-in process can be completed.

**Q: I have 34 months of state employment prior to October 2006. When I left state employment in 2006, I received a refund of my Teachers' and State Employees' Retirement System (TSERS) retirement contributions. I understand that to be eligible for a monthly retirement benefit I must have five years of service. However, I am not clear on the requirements for retirement health insurance. Does the 34 months of membership service that I withdrew count toward the five years required for future health benefits as a retiree under TSERS?**

A: Your withdrawn service from 2003-2006 does not count toward your creditable service in the TSERS unless you purchase your withdrawn service in that system. After five years of service in your currently active TSERS account, you will be eligible to purchase your withdrawn service if you wish. Also, once you have five years of membership service in your active TSERS account, you will be eligible for individual State paid health insurance (under current law) for yourself at the time of retirement since your original hire date was prior to October 1, 2006, even if you do not purchase your withdrawn service.

**Q: I have been trying to get on the ORBIT site and I forgot my password. I started through the questions to get my password, but I did not receive a new password. How do I reset my password so I can log on to ORBIT?**

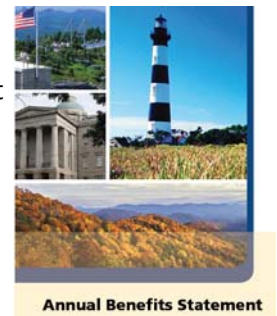
A: Answering the questions correctly enables you to reset your own password and user identification. A new password is not sent to you. To reset your password:

- 1) Go to the ORBIT registration page, at [www.myncretirement.com](http://www.myncretirement.com)
- 2) Click on "Forgot Your Password...?" and
- 3) Answer the series of questions.

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 is successful, and the ORBIT site will launch.

**Q: I received my Annual Benefits Statement in the mail. My address is wrong. How do I correct my mailing address?**

A: Retirement System staff cannot make address changes for active employees. Contact your employer's personnel office to change your address, or change your address through BEACON (for most state agencies).



Once changed, when your next payroll information is submitted to the Retirement System, your new address should be showing.

**Q: I am thinking about retiring and want to better understand how my retirement benefit is calculated. Do you use my last four years to calculate my benefit?**

A: The Retirement System calculates your retirement benefit based on the retirement formula for your specific retirement system. One of the components of the formula is known as the average final compensation (AFC), which is calculated using your highest four consecutive years of reported salary wherever they have occurred in your service under the retirement system. For more information about how your benefit is calculated, please see "Your Retirement Benefits" handbook for your specific retirement system located on our Web site at [www.myncretirement.com](http://www.myncretirement.com).