

The Teachers' and State Employees' Retirement System (TSERS) Quick Reference Guide

How the Retirement System Works

As you are a permanent, regularly scheduled or otherwise eligible teacher or State employee, you are contributing 6% of your compensation to the Retirement System as a condition of your employment. Ultimately, these contributions will be returned to either you or your beneficiaries.

Your employer is also making contributions to the System. During the course of your career, these contributions are managed as a part of one of the strongest public pension systems in the United States. The contributions from employees, employers, and investment earnings from the investment of those contributions are used to provide monthly retirement benefits, as well as death and disability benefits, to teachers and state employees.

For you to be eligible to receive a benefit, you will have to meet certain age and service requirements. A significant milestone in your career is the five-year mark when you are vested in the System. Being vested means being eligible for a retirement benefit as soon as you meet an age requirement.

While the amount of your eventual retirement benefit may be affected by your rate of compensation over the years, this benefit is *not* based on the amount you have contributed to the System. The System is a defined benefit plan qualified under Section 401(a) of the Internal Revenue Code. This means that your retirement benefit will be based on a formula which reflects the amount of retirement credit you have earned over the course of your career in North Carolina. You earn retirement credit each month you make contributions to the System. Increasing the amount of credit you have in the System increases your benefit from the System.

You can keep track of your contributions and retirement credit through ORBIT (Online Retirement Benefits through Integrated Technology). Visit www.myncretirement.com and log-in to this secure, web-based system that provides you with full access to your personal benefit account.

You will also receive an annual statement. This statement provides information about your System account and beneficiary(ies).

Your Benefits At-A-Glance (Subject to the General Statutes of North Carolina)

Note: The following is not an exhaustive description of all benefits for which you may be eligible, of the eligibility criteria, or the benefit amount. For more information, see your member handbook available on our web site at www.myncretirement.com.

Benefit	Minimum Eligibility Requirement	What You Should Know
Monthly Retirement Benefit	5 years of credit as early as age 60; For law enforcement officers, as early as age 50 if 15 years of credit	The amount is based on the retirement formula, which reflects your compensation record, the amount of retirement credit you have, and other factors. At retirement, you will choose among payment options.
Disability Income Plan of North Carolina, Short-Term	1 year of credit	An authorized medical professional must certify the illness. You should reserve your earned sick leave for the 60-day waiting period. Amount is approximately 50% of your income.
Disability Income Plan of North Carolina, Long-Term	5 years of credit and prior receipt of a short-term benefit	Generally 65% of your income with specific offsets, monthly, until you qualify for the monthly retirement benefit
Return of Contributions	None	At your death, your beneficiary(ies) receives all your undistributed contributions, unless eligible for a monthly Survivor's Alternate Benefit.
Death Benefit	After 1 year of credit and in service within the last 180 days	At your death, your beneficiary(ies) receives an amount generally based on one year's compensation with a minimum of \$25,000 and a maximum of \$50,000.
Law Enforcement Officers only: Separate Benefit	After 6 months of service and in service	A \$5,000 benefit (more if line-of-duty related)

Contact Us

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