

TRS Membership



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Teachers' Retirement System of the State of Illinois



Retirement Security for Illinois Educators



Qualifications for TRS Membership

- Three criteria must be met:
 1. The person must be employed by a TRS-covered employer.
 2. The person must hold some type of valid teaching license issued by the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE).
 3. The person must be employed in a position for which ISBE requires licensure.
- Membership in TRS is not optional.
- Anyone who meets all three criteria must participate in TRS.
- Anyone who does not meet one or more of the criteria listed above cannot participate in TRS.



ISBE Determines Licensure Requirements

- ISBE, not TRS or the individual employer, determines whether or not a position requires licensure.
- Licensure requirements are clear for most positions.
- Some job titles may or may not require licensure, depending on what the district includes in the job description.
- If licensure requirements are unclear, send a copy of the job description to ISBE and request a determination.
- Email address for ISBE Licensure Dept. is compliance@isbe.net.



Positions Covered by TRS

- Positions covered by TRS include:
 - Classroom teacher
 - Substitute teacher
 - Administrator in position requiring licensure
 - Librarian
 - Guidance counselor
 - Homebound teacher
 - Psychologist
 - Social worker
 - Speech and language pathologist
- See Chapter 2 of the TRS *Employer Guide* for additional information.



Aides Are Not TRS Members

- Teachers' aides, also known as paraprofessionals, do not qualify for TRS membership.
- If start as teacher then switch to aide position, TRS participation ceases.
- If work part of the day as teacher and part of the day as aide, qualify for TRS membership but only teaching earnings (not aide earnings) are reported to TRS.
- If sub sometimes as teacher and sometimes as teachers aide, qualify for TRS membership but only substitute teaching days and earnings are reported to TRS. Substitute aide earnings are excluded.



Positions Not Covered by TRS

- Positions that do not qualify for TRS membership include:
 - Teacher's aide/paraprofessional
 - Parent educator
 - Physical therapist
 - Occupational therapist
 - Clerical and maintenance positions
 - Any other position not requiring educator license



Questionable Positions for TRS Membership

- Positions that may or may not require licensure and therefore may or may not be covered by TRS include:
 - Technology Director
 - Athletic Director
 - Nurse
 - Tutor
- Send job description to ISBE for licensure determination.



Retired Teachers (“Annuitants”)

- Annuitants can return to teaching after retirement for up to 100 days or 500 hours per school year and still receive retirement benefits.
- Annuitants who stay within the 100 days/500 hours limit do not contribute to TRS.
- Employer should not report annuitant’s earnings and days of service to TRS unless the annuitant exceeds 100 days/500 hours of licensed work in one school year.
- If an annuitant exceeds 100 days/500 hours in the first year of retirement, the full year’s days and earnings must be reported.
- If an annuitant has been retired at least one full year, only days and earnings over 100 days/500 hours should be reported. In other words, reporting becomes prospective and not retroactive if the 100 days/500 hours are exceeded.



Forms for New Members

- New members should complete 2 forms:
- 1st form: **Member Information and Beneficiary Designation (MIBD)**
 - Used to establish a member record in TRS database.
 - Available on TRS website. (Click Forms and Publications and select Forms)
 - Form is fillable but cannot be submitted online.
 - Employer should mail, fax, or upload from within the Employer Access Area of the TRS website.
 - New member should call TRS Member Services at **(877) 927-5877** if assistance is needed to complete the MIBD.



Forms for New Members

- 2nd form needed for new members: **Form SSA-1945**
 - Notifies new employee that their position is not covered by Social Security but is covered by a public retirement system (TRS).
 - Informs new employee about reductions in Social Security benefits that may affect TRS members.
 - Available from the TRS website (Employers / Social Security Notification Requirements – click on link to Social Security website).
 - Employee ID# is the member's Social Security number.
 - Employer ID# is employer's 7-digit TRS code.
 - Completed form should be mailed, faxed or uploaded from within the Employer Access Area of the TRS website.
- Employer may choose to retain copies of MIBD and SSA-1945 for personnel file, but not required.



Social Security & Medicare

- TRS members do not pay Social Security on TRS-covered earnings.
- TRS members do not earn Social Security quarters for their TRS-covered positions.
- All TRS members hired after March 31, 1986 must pay Medicare on their TRS-covered earnings.
- Annuitants who work in licensed positions after retirement must pay Medicare but not Social Security.
- Chapter 2 in the *TRS Employer Guide* has a helpful chart showing when to deduct Medicare/FICA (Social Security) and when not to.



Tier I and Tier II Members

- Tier I members include:
 - Anyone who had contributing service in TRS before January 1, 2011.
 - Anyone who had service with a reciprocal pension system in Illinois before January 1, 2011.
 - Qualify as Tier I even if took refund of pre-1/1/11 service.
 - Reciprocal pension systems include:
 - Illinois Municipal Retirement Fund (IMRF)
 - State University Retirement System (SURS)
 - State Employees Retirement System (SERS)
 - Chicago Teachers Pension Fund.

Tier I and Tier II Members

Tier II members include:

Anyone who first worked in a TRS-covered position after 12/31/10 and
Did not have any previous service credit with a reciprocal pension system.

Tier I vs. Tier II Comparison

	Tier I	Tier II
Minimum age for discounted retirement annuity	55	62
Minimum age for non-discounted retirement annuity	60	67
Number of years used in calculation of final avg. salary	4	8
Creditable earnings limitations: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• TRS membership established before 7/1/96• TRS membership established between 7/1/96 and 12/31/10• TRS membership established after 12/31/10	No limit Limit applies	Limit applies



Employee Lookup

- Employer can view member's Tier status.
 - Sign into the Employer Access Area of TRS website.
 - Click on Employee Lookup and enter member's SSN.
 - Screen will show which tier the member is in and whether or not the member is retired.



Conclusion

- Chapter 2 of the TRS *Employer Guide* has more information about various membership topics.
- Feel free to call TRS Employer Services at (888) 678-3675 with any questions about TRS membership.
- Questions can be emailed to employers@trsil.org.