



Return to Work 70% of Retirement

Benefit FAQ for Teachers, Bus Drivers, and EMS Personnel (PC 827 and 821)

To address ongoing staffing challenges, the Tennessee General Assembly passed legislation this year creating an additional return to work opportunity allowing retired TCRS members to be reemployed as a K-12 teacher, bus driver, or emergency medical services personnel without the loss of their TCRS retirement benefits.

Beginning July 1, 2022, the law allows these personnel to return to work without suspension of benefits under the Return to Work 70% Retirement Benefit provision.

Note: This law sunsets June 30, 2025.



Who qualifies for the Return to Work 70% of Retirement Benefit provision?

Retirees who are returning to work as bus drivers or teachers with K-12 public school systems or as emergency medical services personnel, except those receiving a disability benefit.

How long does a member have to be retired before being eligible for this provision?

The member must be retired at least 60 days.

Do retired teachers and bus drivers need to have specific training or experience to return to work under this provision?

For teachers and bus drivers, the retiree must have the requisite experience and training for the position, there must not be any other qualified persons available to fill the position, and the position must be with a K-12 school system.

Do retired emergency medical services personnel need to have specific training or experience to return to work under this provision?

For emergency medical services personnel, the retiree must possess a current, valid license issued by the emergency medical services board through the Department of Health.

How does a retiree apply for this Return to Work with 70% of Retirement Benefit?

To begin the process, a retiree may obtain a form from RetireReadyTN.gov > Forms and Guides. The form needs to be completed by the retiree and the return-to-work employer then returned to TCRS. Once received, TCRS will review the retiree's eligibility and send a letter to acknowledge eligibility status.

Once the Return to Work provision has been approved for qualifying retirees, TCRS will reduce the member's monthly gross benefit by 30%. While working under the Return to Work provision, the member will not accrue additional TCRS service credit.

Once approved by TCRS, the 30% reduction will remain in place until the member separates from their return to work employment. After each year, if the member does not separate employment, they will need to reapply using the Return to Work 70% Benefit form.

Are contributions required on the salary the retiree makes under the Return to Work with 70% of Retirement Benefit provision?

Payments by the employer are required. The retiree's employer must agree to report the member on the monthly contribution report as a Non-Participant under the Limited Re-Employment category. While under these provisions, the employer must also agree to remit the greater of 5% of the retired member's compensation or the employer ADC to TCRS annually. Employers will be invoiced by TCRS when the retiree completes each year of the Return to Work with 70% of Retirement Benefit program.

How does a retiree have their full benefit reinstated?

Once the retiree separates employment with the return to work employer, Section 3 of the form will need to be completed and returned to TCRS. Once TCRS processes the updated application, the 30% reduction to the member's benefit will be removed in the month following the end of employment.

For teachers, how is the Return to Work with 70% of Retirement Benefit program different than the Limited Reemployment?

See page three for an example of two similar retired teachers.

Retiree 1 on Limited Reemployment:

TCRS retirement benefit: \$2,000 monthly/gross

Salary returning to work as a teacher: \$65,000/gross

This member could draw their entire TCRS benefit (\$2,000) but their teacher salary is limited to 85%, so they could make \$55,250 teaching. The monthly gross amount for both the retirement benefit and salary would be \$6,604 ($\$55,250/12 + \$2,000$) for Retiree 1.

Additional considerations: Retiree 1 must meet eligibility requirements and be retired one (1) year to qualify for this provision.

Retiree 2 on Return to Work 70% of Retirement Benefit:

TCRS benefit: \$2,000 monthly gross minus 30% reduction for return to work = \$1,400 per month gross

Salary returning to work as a teacher: \$65,000/gross

This member would have the 30% reduction to their TCRS allowing them to draw \$1,400/month until they stopped working full time. They would also receive their teacher salary of \$65,000. The monthly gross amount for both the retirement benefit and salary would be \$6,816 ($\$65,000/12 + \$1,400$) for Retiree 2.

Additional considerations: Retiree 2 must meet eligibility requirements and be retired 60 days to qualify for this provision.

Contact Us

Call (800) 922-7772 Monday through Friday 8:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. CT

Call (800) 253-9981 Retiree Insurance (Benefits Administration)

Website: www.RetireReadyTN.gov



@RetireReadyTN

Please include your Member ID and your current address on any correspondence.