



Guide for Retirees

As a retired member of the Teachers' Retirement System of Louisiana (TRSL), you may have questions about your benefits and the retirement laws and regulations that apply to you. In this guide, you will find important information that will answer many of those questions. If you have specific questions, please don't hesitate to contact us.

The information in this booklet is subject to change and is not a substitute for Louisiana law concerning TRSL.

What's inside...

When are my benefits posted?	2
Updating your direct deposit information	3
Income tax information	4
Will my benefit increase?	6
Beneficiary payments	8
Returning to work after retirement	9
DROP/ILSB interest rates	10
How can I view or update my account info?	11
Forms for retirees	12
Frequently asked questions	13
Other TRSL publications	14



When are my benefits posted?

Direct deposit is the safest, fastest, and most convenient way for you to receive your TRSL benefit. With direct deposit, retirement benefits are made available for deposit directly into your checking or savings account.

- **For regular retirement benefits:** TRSL makes regular retirement benefits, including estimated benefits, available for deposit directly into your checking or savings account on the first of each month.
- **For DROP/ILSB withdrawals:** DROP/ILSB withdrawals are made available for deposit directly into your checking or savings account on the 15th of each month.

However, when the first (or the 15th in the case of DROP/ILSB withdrawals) of the month falls on a weekend or a holiday, some financial organizations post the direct deposit to your account the next business day.

NOTE: If you receive a paper check, TRSL delivers checks to the U.S. Postal Service for mailing on the last business day of the month. If you do not receive your paper check by the fifth business day of the month, contact TRSL to request a stop-payment order on the original check and have it re-issued.

Direct deposit payment stubs

Retirees can view their direct deposit payment stubs online with **Member Access** at www.TRSL.org.

TRSL prints and mails direct deposit payment stubs to retirees when (1) direct deposit requests are established, (2) the net benefit changes, and/or (3) once a year in December.

Updating your direct deposit information

Direct deposit forms are available at www.TRSL.org on our “Forms” web page:

- **For regular retirement benefits:** Submit to TRSL a *Direct Deposit of Benefits* (Form 15D). Direct deposit forms received by the 15th of the month will be processed, and the next month’s benefit will be sent electronically to your new financial institution.
- **For DROP/ILSB account withdrawals:** Submit to TRSL a *Direct Deposit of DROP or ILSB Account Withdrawals* (Form 11R). DROP/ILSB direct deposit forms received by last day of the previous month will be processed for the current month. For example, a May DROP or ILSB withdrawal would be sent electronically if the request was received by April 30.

TRSL sends a letter confirming the direct deposit form was processed. You should carefully review the letter to make sure the last four digits of your account number are correct. If you do not receive a confirmation letter, check with your new financial institution on the first working day of the month for regular retirement benefits, or the 15th of the month for DROP/ILSB withdrawals before assuming the direct deposit form was not processed in time for your benefit to be sent electronically.

If you receive multiple benefit payments, indicate the specific account you wish to update. If you do not make a selection, the change will be applied to all benefit payments (excluding DROP/ILSB account withdrawals).



For security purposes, your direct deposit confirmation letter from TRSL will not include your full banking account number.

Income tax information

Each January, TRSL will mail you an annual tax statement called a Form 1099-R. You'll need it when filing your income tax return.

If you haven't received your Form 1099-R by February 15, or if you have questions, please contact TRSL.

You can also access your 1099-R information online through TRSL's Member Access. See page 11 for more information about Member Access.

Understanding your Form 1099-R

Form 1099-R shows your name, address, and the last four digits of your Social Security number, along with the gross amount of benefits paid to you, the amount of deductions (if any) for federal tax withholding, and any nontaxable payments you may have received during the previous year. Some boxes are not applicable to TRSL.

Refer to the definitions and the sample form on the next page for more information about Form 1099-R.

- **Box 1 – Gross distribution.** Shows the total amount you received during the calendar year.
- **Box 2a – Taxable amount.** Shows the taxable portion of the benefits you received during the calendar year.
- **Box 4 – Federal income tax withheld.** This is the amount of federal income tax withheld from the taxable amount in Box 2a.
- **Box 5 – Employee contributions/Designated Roth contributions or insurance premiums.**
 - » **If you have an amount in Box 5** – This is the tax-free amount of the retirement benefit you received during the calendar year. It is not the amount of your insurance premium. This amount is the difference between the Gross distribution in **Box 1** and the Taxable amount in **Box 2a**.

The tax-free amount includes a portion of the retirement contributions you paid that were already taxed. Because you already paid taxes on the amount in Box 5, you don't have to pay them again.

» **If you don't have an amount in Box 5** – This means that you no longer have any tax-free contributions. Some disability retirees won't have an amount in Box 5 because they aren't eligible to recover their tax-free contributions until they would reach normal retirement age.

- **Box 7 – Distribution code(s).** This code identifies the type of benefit you received. Code descriptions are listed on the back of Form 1099-R.

Example of a Form 1099-R					
www.irs.gov/form1099-r		Form 1099-R <input type="checkbox"/> CORRECTED (if checked)		OMB No. 1545-0119 2016	
1 Gross distribution		2a Taxable amount		Distributions From Pensions, Annuities, Retirement or Profit-Sharing Plans, IRAs, Insurance Contracts, etc.	
\$		\$			
2b Taxable amount not determined		Total distribution			
				FATCA filing requirement	
PAYER'S name, street address, city or town, state or province, country, and ZIP or foreign postal code					
PAYER'S federal identification number			RECIPIENT'S identification number		
3 Capital gain (included in box 2a)		4 Federal income tax withheld		5 Employee contributions / Designated Roth contributions or insurance premiums	
\$		\$		\$	
6 Net unrealized appreciation in employer's securities		7 Distribution code(s)		IRA/ SEP/ SIMPLE	8 Other
\$					%
9a Your percentage of total distribution		9b Total employee contributions			
		% \$			
RECIPIENT'S name, street address (including apt. no.), city or town, state or province, country, and ZIP or foreign postal code					
Account number (see instructions)			11 1st year of design. Roth contrib.	10 Amount allocable to IRP within 5 years	
				\$	
12 State tax withheld		13 State/Payer's state no.		14 State distribution	
\$				\$	
15 Local tax withheld		16 Name of locality		17 Local distribution	
\$				\$	
Copy C For Recipient's Records					
This information is being furnished to the Internal Revenue Service.				Department of the Treasury Internal Revenue Service	
(keep for your records)					



Will my benefit increase?

Permanent Benefit Increase (PBI)

A permanent benefit increase (PBI), commonly referred to as a cost-of-living adjustment (COLA), is normally payable to eligible retirees and beneficiaries on July 1, subject to TRSL Board of Trustees recommendation and legislative approval, as long as there are sufficient funds in the TRSL Experience Account (an account that holds funds dedicated to PBIs) and all applicable criteria has been met.

PBI funding

The Experience Account is credited with up to 50% of TRSL's excess investment earnings, after a portion of excess earnings have been applied to the unfunded accrued liability (UAL). The dollar amount of excess earnings dedicated to the UAL is based upon the increase or decrease in TRSL's actuarial value of assets.

Amount of PBI

The amount of a PBI is determined by the TRSL funding percentage, TRSL's actuarial rate of return, and the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U), an inflation indicator. A PBI will not be given if there is no increase in the CPI-U or when the balance in the Experience Account is not sufficient to fund a PBI.

Retirees will be notified of possible PBIs through TRSL's *Retirees* newsletter that is published and mailed to retirees twice a year in June and December. You can also visit www.TRSL.org to subscribe to TRSL eNews to receive TRSL updates delivered straight to your inbox. For more information regarding the amount of PBIs, please visit our website, www.TRSL.org.

Eligibility

The following requirements must be met on or before July 1 of the year the PBI is effective.

- **Regular retiree:** Must have received a benefit for at least one year and be 60 years of age.
- **Retiree receiving a disability benefit:** Must have been retired at least one year regardless of age.
- **Beneficiary of retiree:** Retiree or beneficiary (or both combined) must have received a benefit for at least one year, and the deceased retiree would have been 60 years of age at the time the PBI is payable.
- **Survivor (non-retiree beneficiary):** Must have received a benefit for at least one year, and the benefits must have originated from the service of a deceased member who would have been 60 years of age at the time the PBI is payable.

PBI amount limits

PBIs are calculated only on the first \$60,000 of a retiree's annual retirement benefit. The \$60,000 limit is increased each year in an amount equal to the increase in the CPI-U for the preceding year, if any.

Beneficiary payments

Death of a retiree

TRSL should be notified immediately of a retiree's death. Beneficiaries can then take the necessary steps to apply for benefits that may be due from TRSL.

TRSL retiree benefits that are paid on the first of each month represent benefits the retiree is eligible to receive for the entire month. Benefits paid on the first of the month after a retiree's death must be returned to TRSL. Having been named a beneficiary does not entitle a family member to the retiree's monthly benefit check. Beneficiary payments are totally separate from the monthly benefit check paid to a retiree. Anyone cashing or depositing a monthly benefit check after the retiree's death may be subject to criminal prosecution or a civil suit to recover the funds.

A copy of the retiree's death certificate and birth certificates of any minor or other eligible children should be sent to TRSL. Monthly benefits to any eligible beneficiary(ies) will be effective the first day of the month following the death of the retiree.

NOTE: A member can create a trust for his or her minor children so that any benefits due the minor children after the member or retiree dies can be paid into the trust for the benefit of the minor children. A trust must be established while the member is alive and approved by TRSL's Legal Department. A trust cannot be the named beneficiary of a member's retirement or retiree's option benefit; only a person or the succession can be designated as the beneficiary.

Find more detailed information about survivor benefits and eligibility in TRSL's publication, *Death and Survivor Benefits*, on www.TRSL.org.

Returning to work after retirement

If you're thinking about returning to work in a position eligible for TRSL membership, including employment by contract or corporate contract, it's important that you understand the state's return-to-work laws. Failure to comply with these laws, by you and your employer, could result in suspension of your retirement benefits.

Under state law, TRSL retirees who return to work in a position eligible for TRSL membership are categorized as either retired teachers or retired members.

Retired teachers

- Divided into three categories: re-employment eligible retirees, re-employment eligible positions, and re-employment eligible critical shortage positions
- Eligible to continue receiving TRSL retirement benefits during re-employment only after fulfilling a 12- or 36-month waiting period that starts on the date of retirement
- Must pay contributions to TRSL during re-employment
- Some positions are subject to a 25% of annual benefit earnings limit

Retired members

- Do not meet the definition of retired teacher as outlined in the *Returning to Work After Retirement* brochure (generally include, but are not limited to, retirees returning to work as teachers in non-critical shortage areas, administrators, and secretaries)
- TRSL benefits suspended during re-employment
- Do not make contributions to TRSL during re-employment



Find more detailed information about return-to-work laws in TRSL's publication *Returning to Work After Retirement* available at www.TRSL.org.

DROP/ILSB interest rates

After DROP participation ends or an ILSB retirement, members can begin earning interest on their accounts. Interest rates are determined by when the member was first eligible to participate in DROP/ILSB.

Eligible to participate in DROP/ILSB prior to January 1, 2004:

These accounts earn 0.5% less than TRSL’s actuarially realized rate of return. Interest is posted to the DROP/ILSB account once a year (based on daily compounding), usually in the first quarter of the calendar year (January-March). No interest is lost because of the delayed posting.

Eligible to participate in DROP/ILSB on or after January 1, 2004:

These accounts earn interest at the liquid asset money market rate less a 0.25% administrative fee. Interest is posted monthly and is based on the balance in the account for that month.

DROP/ILSB account statements

Statements can be accessed through TRSL’s secure online Member Access at www.TRSL.org. Online DROP statements are available to all members who have balances in their accounts.

Interest rates on DROP accounts

Fiscal Year Ended June 30	DROP Interest Rate	
	<i>Members eligible prior to Jan. 1, 2004</i>	<i>Members eligible on or after Jan. 1, 2004</i>
2016	6.17%	0.0595%
2015	10.76%	0.0000%
2014	12.64%	0.0000%
2013	12.91%	0.0000%
2012	4.55%	0.0001%

NOTE: The interest rate on DROP accounts is subject to adoption by the Public Retirement Systems’ Actuarial Committee (PRSAC).

The full history of DROP interest rates is available at www.TRSL.org.

How can I view or update my account info?



TRSL's Member Access gives you secure, online access to your TRSL retirement account information.

Register today at
[**www.TRSL.org**](http://www.TRSL.org)

With Member Access you can:

- View your benefit summary that includes your employment history, service credit, and benefit information.
- View your account history with your years of service, contributions, and earnings.
- View your benefit payment history showing monthly payment details.
- View your DROP account summary and payment history, if you receive a DROP payment.
- Access your member account statements from the years you contributed to TRSL.
- Update your email address.
- View and print your 1099-R form.
- Change your federal tax withholding.

***NOTE:** Retirees who participated in DROP or worked part-time have different Member Access features. Contact TRSL for more information.*

Forms for retirees

Change of address

- *Retiree Change of Address Authorization* (Form 15C)

Updating direct deposit information

- *Direct Deposit of Benefits* (Form 15D)
- *Direct Deposit of DROP or ILSB Account Withdrawals* (Form 11R)

DROP & ILSB accounts

- *DROP or ILSB Spousal Consent to Withdrawal Method* (Form 11G-1)
- *DROP or ILSB Retiree Withdrawal Method Selection* - use if under age 70.5 (Form 11J)
- *DROP or ILSB Retiree Withdrawal Method Selection* - use if over age 70.5 (Form 11N)
- *Direct Deposit of DROP or ILSB Account Withdrawals* (Form 11R)

Beneficiary (designations by member)

- *Change of Beneficiary for Option 1 Retiree* (Form 3A)
- *Beneficiary Designation for DROP and ILSB Accounts* (Form 3B)
- *Beneficiary Designation for Retiree Return-to-Work Employee Contributions* (Form 3C)

Refunds

- *Retiree Refund Application* (Form 7A)

Other retiree forms

- *Affidavit for Power of Attorney* (Form 15PA)
- *Withholding Certificate for Pension or Annuity Payments* (Form W-4P) - This is a federal form.

These forms are available on the “Forms” web page at www.TRS.org.

Frequently asked questions

What can I do if my paper benefit check is late or missing?

TRSL delivers the regular monthly benefit checks to the U.S. Postal Service for mailing on the last business day of the month (payment date is the first of the month). DROP/ILSB withdrawals are released to the U.S. Postal Service for mailing and delivery on the 15th of the month (payment date is the 15th of the month). When the first or 15th falls on a weekend or holiday, delivery will be the next business day.

If you do not receive your paper check by the fifth business day after the payment date (first or 15th) of the month, or if you know your check was either stolen or destroyed, contact TRSL to request a stop-payment order on the original check and have it re-issued.

Remember, direct deposit is the safest, fastest, and most convenient way for retirees to receive their TRSL benefits. Complete and submit a *Direct Deposit of Benefits* (Form 15D) or a *Direct Deposit of DROP or ILSB Account Withdrawals* (Form 11R) to set up direct deposit or to change the financial institution and/or account number where your benefit is deposited. To ensure your payroll record changes are processed for the next month's payment, submit Form 15D by the 15th of the month, or Form 11R by the fifth of the month.

How can I get a letter verifying my monthly retirement benefit?

Send a written request with your signature and Social Security number. You can submit it to TRSL either by mail or by fax at 225-925-4779. For more information, contact TRSL.

How can I get a letter verifying my first eligibility date for Social Security purposes? Send a written request with your signature and Social Security number. You can submit it to TRSL either by mail or by fax. You can also request this letter by contacting TRSL.

Who can I talk to about my health or life insurance? Your former employer or insurance carrier can assist you with health insurance questions. Although TRSL may process your monthly deduction amount, we don't have the necessary information to answer any questions you may have about your coverage or premiums.



REMEMBER: We do not recommend sending confidential information, such as Social Security numbers, to us by email.

Other TRSL publications:

- ***Returning to Work after Retirement.*** Find out if your TRSL benefit will be impacted if you decide to return to work.
- ***Community Property & TRSL Benefits.*** Louisiana is a community property state. Find out what this means for you and your TRSL retirement benefits.
- ***TRSL & Social Security Benefits.*** If you're counting on Social Security income in retirement, find out how certain federal laws could impact you.
- ***Death & Survivor Benefits.*** Learn about the benefits your loved ones may be eligible to receive upon your death.
- ***DROP/ILSB Account Withdrawals.*** Important information about the requirements for withdrawing funds from your DROP or ILSB account.
- ***Special Tax Notice Regarding TRSL Payments.*** Payments from TRSL may be subject to certain taxes. Find out how you may be affected.
- ***TRSL Member Handbook.*** An overview of your retirement plan.
- ***Designating a beneficiary.*** Learn how to designate a beneficiary as well as beneficiary form basics.

Last revised June 2017

This is an electronic document. The Teachers' Retirement System of Louisiana (TRSL) did not incur any printing costs.

Questions about life after retirement?

We're here to help!

Physical address:

8401 United Plaza Blvd, Ste 300
Baton Rouge LA 70809-7017

Mailing address:

PO Box 94123
Baton Rouge LA 70804-9123

Telephone: 225-925-6446

Toll free (outside Baton Rouge area):
1-877-ASK-TRSL (1-877-275-8775)

Email: web.master@trsl.org

Web: www.TRSL.org

Facebook: facebook.com/TRSLonline

Twitter: [@TRSLonline](https://twitter.com/TRSLonline)

