

Group Benefit Presentation

Teachers' Fund for Retirement

Fall 2025

TFFR Plan

WHAT IS TFFR?

The Teachers' Fund for Retirement (TFFR) is a **defined benefit plan** for North Dakota public school educators.

Under Internal Revenue Code, it's a **401(a)**, a tax-exempt pension plan where benefits are defined by state law.



WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR TFFR?



The TFFR Board of Trustees has statutory responsibility, overseeing program administration.

The North Dakota Retirement and Investment Office manages the program.

- Retirement Services
- Investment Management

HOW IS IT FUNDED?

TFFR is funded on an actuarial reserve basis. While the members are working, contributions are invested to pay for future retirement benefits.

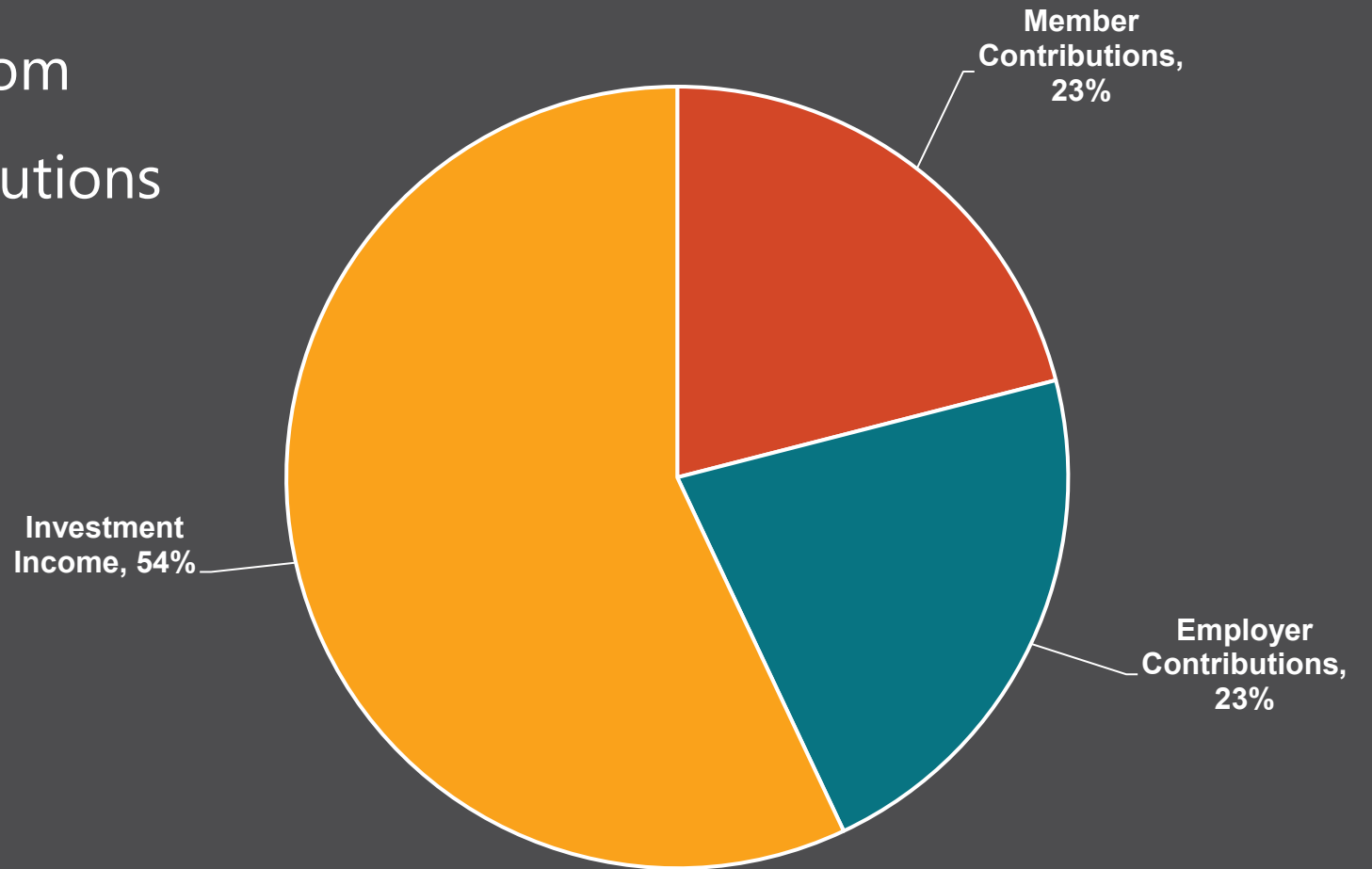
Funding comes from three sources:

- Member contributions – 11.75% of salary
- Employer contributions – 12.75% of salary
- Investment income



FUNDING SOURCES (FY 2024)

TFFR benefit funding comes from member and employer contributions and investment earnings.



MEMBERSHIP AND TIERS

- Must be licensed to teach in North Dakota and under contract with public school or state institution for teaching, supervisory, administrative or extracurricular services .
- Tiers and Grandfathering Status
 - Tier 1 Grandfathered – TFFR credit on July 1, 2008, and were within 10 years of normal retirement as of June 30, 2013
 - Tier 1 Non-grandfathered – TFFR credit on July 1, 2008, and were more than 10 years from normal retirement as of June 30, 2013
 - Tier 2 – new and returning refunded members on or after July 1, 2008
- Exemption - 20-year military retiree

REPORTABLE SALARY

Eligible Retirement (Reportable) Salary:

- Administration
- Teaching
- Supervisory
- Extracurricular duties during the school year
- Salary reduction or deferral amounts under 26 USC 125:
 - 132(f) – certain fringe benefits
 - 403(b) – tax-advantaged retirement plans
 - 457 – retirement savings plan



NOT REPORTABLE SALARY

Retirement salary does **not** include:

- Amounts received in lieu of previously employer-provided benefits or payments
- Bonuses
- Bus driving
- Early retirement incentive or severance pay
- Fringe benefits (i.e., allowances, meals or lodging)
- Insurance programs
- Janitorial pay
- Referee pay/ticket taking
- Teacher's aid pay

WHO CAN BE BENEFICIARIES?

You may name:

- Spouse as only primary beneficiary, unless consent is provided
- Any person, organization, church, charity or estate, if not married or if you have written spousal consent.

If you name more than one primary beneficiary, they are not eligible for a lifetime monthly annuity.

Contingent beneficiaries are not required.

DIVORCE

TFFR benefit is generally considered to be a **marital asset** subject to valuation and division in a divorce.

- Division requires a **Qualified Domestic Relations Order (QDRO)** approved by the TFFR Board **before** being signed by the judge.

Former spouse (i.e., alternate payee) may:

- Receive a lump sum only if you take a refund at termination.
- Elect a monthly lifetime benefit based on your accrued benefit at divorce.
- Receive a benefit even if you continue working.

Your benefit is reduced based on the actuarial value of the alternate payee's benefit.



SERVICE CREDIT AND VESTING

Earned Service Credit

- 700 compensated hours = 1 year
- If less than 700 hours, credit is granted in proportion to 700 hours.
 - Example: $650 \text{ hours} / 700 = .929 \text{ year}$

Dual Membership

- Service credit in TFFR and the Public Employees Retirement System (defined benefit only) or Highway Patrol Retirement System
 - Included for vesting and eligibility.

Vesting – when achieved, entitled to lifetime benefit.

- Tier 1 requires 3 years of TFFR service credit.
- Tier 2 requires 5 years of TFFR service credit.

SERVICE CREDIT PURCHASE

Active members may purchase service credit for:

- Refunds previously taken from TFFR
- Air time
- Out-of-state teaching
- Non-public school teaching
- Leave of absence
- Legislative service
- Military service
- Government agency teaching



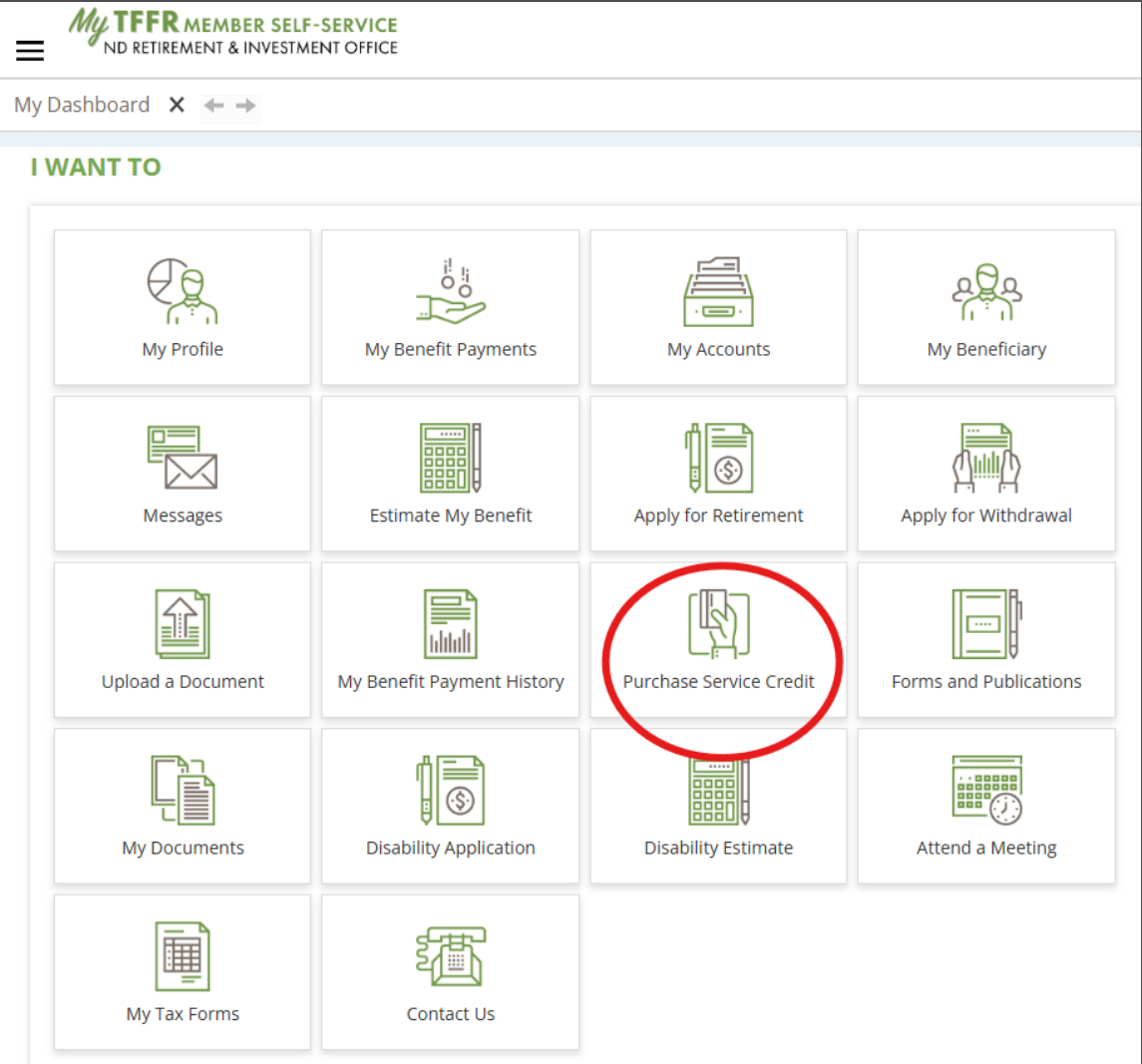
COST TO PURCHASE

Actuarial Equivalent Calculation

1. Current Final Average Salary.
2. Current and Retirement Age.
3. Number of Years to Normal Retirement.
4. Increase in Benefits Resulting From Purchase.
5. Loss of Contributions from Earlier Retirement Eligibility.

RIO may accept tax deferred money by direct rollover from eligible retirement plans including IRAs (not Roth IRA), qualified 401(a) and 401(k) plans, 403(b) tax-sheltered annuity plans, and 457 governmental plans.

CREATING A SERVICE CREDIT ESTIMATE



Benefit

RETIREMENT ELIGIBILITY AND CLASSIFICATIONS

Eligibility

- Must be a vested member
- Must cease covered employment

Classifications

- Deferred retirement - vested members can go inactive, deferring retirement to a later date
- Reduced retirement – available at age 55
- Normal/Full (unreduced) retirement
 - Tier 1 Grandfathered = Rule of 85
 - Tier 1 Non-Grandfathered = Rule of 90, minimum age 60
 - Tier 2 = Rule of 90, minimum age 60
 - Age 65

BENEFIT FORMULA

$$\begin{array}{ccccccc} \text{Monthly} & & & & & & \text{Single} \\ \text{FAS}^* & \times & \text{Service} & \times & 2.0\% & = & \text{Life} \\ & & \text{Credit} & & & & \text{Annuity} \end{array}$$

*Tier 1 Members Final Average Salary (FAS) is 3 high fiscal year salaries ÷ 36

*Tier 2 Members Final Average Salary (FAS) is 5 high fiscal year salaries ÷ 60

BENEFIT OPTIONS

- Refund of Account Value
- Single Life Annuity
- 100% Joint & Survivor or 50% Joint & Survivor
- 10-Year Certain & Life or 20-Year Certain & Life
- Partial Lump Sum



REFUND OF ACCOUNT VALUE

What does it include?

- Employee contributions, 11.75% of salary
- Interest earned, 6% guaranteed

Why does it matter?

- If you leave employment – rollover or refund
- If you pass away – beneficiaries may receive

*Think of your account value as a record of what you've put into the plan, **not** what you'll receive.*



SINGLE LIFE ANNUITY

- Payable for life
- No monthly provision for a beneficiary
- If the member dies before receiving the full account value, beneficiary(ies) will receive a lump-sum payment of the balance.



JOINT & SURVIVOR OPTIONS

- Both options are payable for life.
- Actuarially reduced based upon your age & beneficiary age.
- Can only be used with one primary beneficiary.
- If beneficiary pre-deceases you, your benefit “pops-up” to the higher Single Life Annuity amount.
- 100% Joint & Survivor
 - If the beneficiary is your spouse, they can be any age. If not the spouse, the beneficiary must be within 10 years of your age.
- 50% Joint & Survivor
 - Beneficiary can be any age.

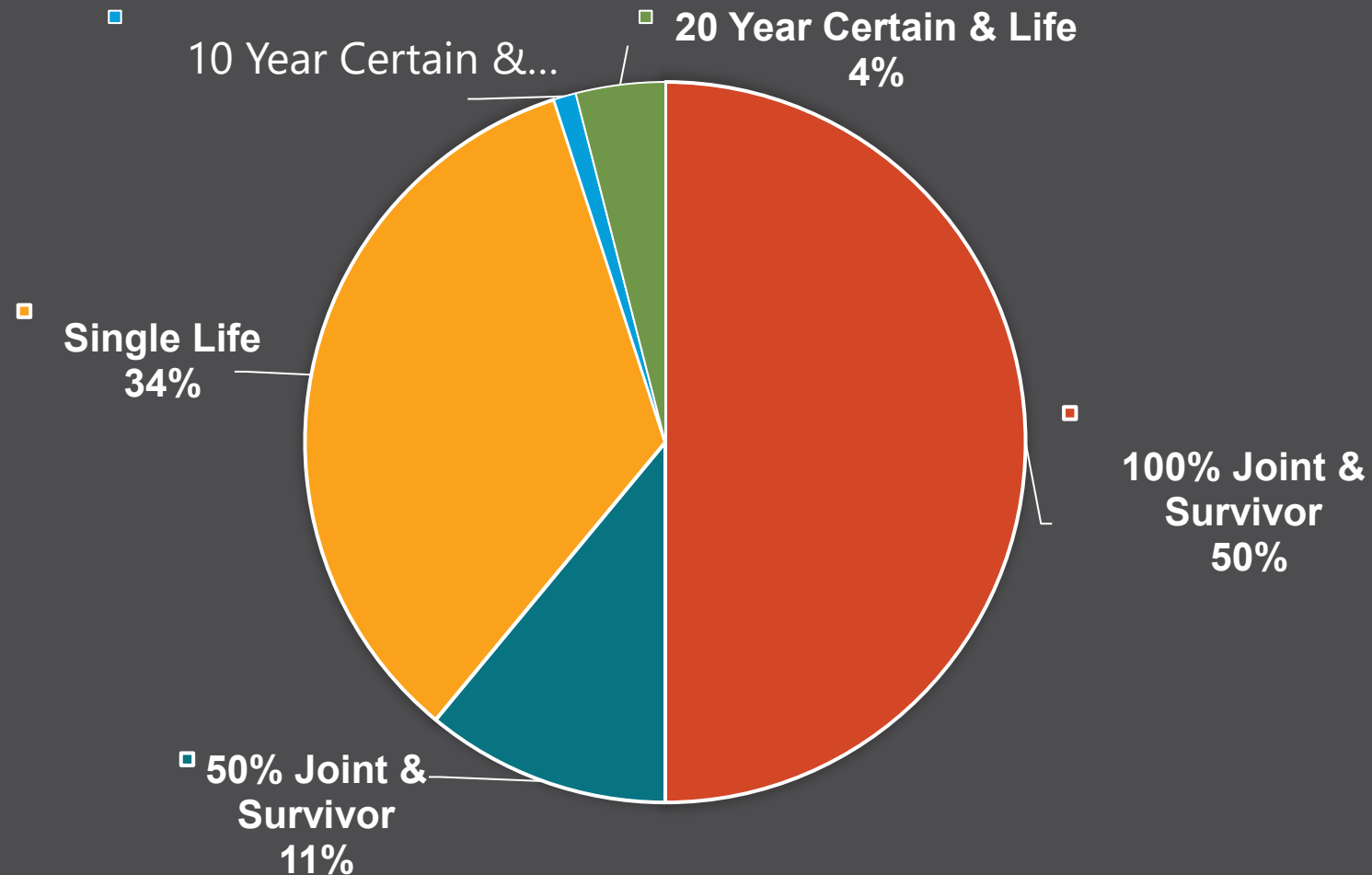
10-YEAR OR 20-YEAR TERM CERTAIN & LIFE

- Both options are payable for life
- No pop-up feature
- 10-Year Term Certain & Life
 - If you should die within 10 years of your retirement date, your beneficiary(ies) will continue to receive the benefit in the same amount for the remainder of the 10-year period.
- 20-Year Term Certain & Life
 - If you should die within 20 years of your retirement date, your beneficiary(ies) will continue to receive the benefit in the same amount for the remainder of the 20-year period.

PARTIAL LUMP SUM OPTION (PLSO)

- Provides a cash payment in exchange for an actuarially reduced benefit.
 - Lump sum = 12 times Single Life Annuity.
 - Payable portion may be rolled over.
- Still need to choose a benefit option.

SERVICE RETIREMENT OPTIONS (FY 2024)



A photograph showing the back of a person with short brown hair, wearing a light blue button-down shirt, sitting in a silver metal wheelchair. They are walking away from the camera through a modern office space with large glass windows and doors. In the background, another person is visible sitting at a desk. The floor is a light-colored carpet.

DISABILITY BENEFIT

Eligibility

- 5 years of service credit
- Active member when disability occurs
- Application w/in 36 months of employment
- Unable to perform the duties of a teacher
- Certified eligible by TFFR Board of Trustees
- Must be total, can be temporary

Disability Formula

- $\text{FAS} \times \text{Service Credit} \times 2.0\% = \text{Disability Single Life Annuity}$
- No age reduction
- Beneficiary options are available

SURVIVOR BENEFITS

Death prior to retirement

- Nonvested member
 - Refund of account value
- Vested member
 - Refund of account value
 - If only one beneficiary designated, monthly benefit for life

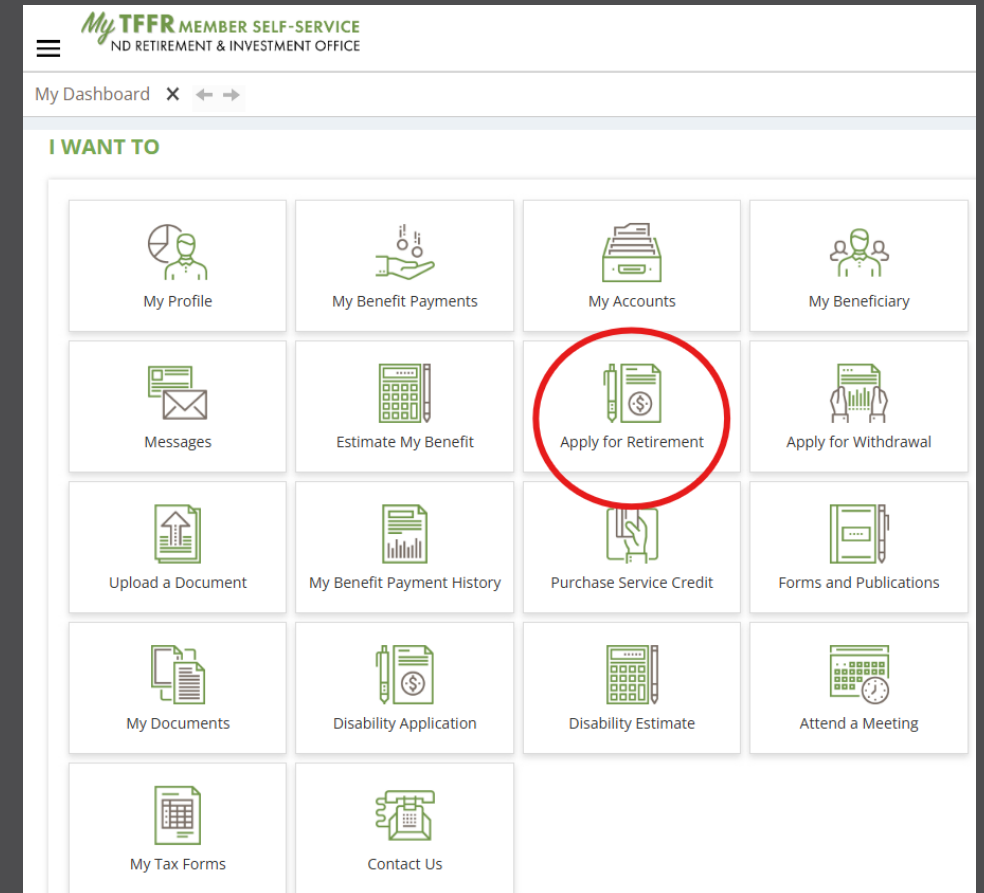
Death after retirement

- Benefit is paid based on the retirement option selected



RETIREMENT PROCESS

1. Learn about your Annuity Options and run a Benefit Estimate
2. Notify your employer of your resignation
3. Review and update your MyTFFR account
 - Member information
 - Relationships and beneficiaries
4. Prepare to complete an application
 - Determine your retirement date
 - Gather the required documents electronically
 - Find your bank information and know your tax status



HEALTH INSURANCE AFTER RETIREMENT

If you are receiving a TFFR benefit, within 31 days of becoming Medicare eligible, you may be eligible to enroll in non-NDPERS retiree insurance plans.

- [Non-NDPERS Retiree Insurance Guide](#)
- [What is Medicare and who can get it?](#)

[ND State Health Insurance Assistance Program](#) - help with Medicare

[ND Navigators](#) - help finding affordable health insurance

These resources available on RIO's website, <https://www.rio.nd.gov>. To locate, select the TFFR Member tab and scroll down to Retirement Resources

Working After Retirement

EMPLOYMENT LIMITATIONS



After you retire, you may return to TFFR covered employment under certain employment limitations.

- Must have a **one-month** break from all TFFR employment or relationships.
- Returning before the one-month break may require **repaying** all benefits.
- Notify RIO **each year** you return to TFFR-covered employment to avoid losing one month of benefits.

GENERAL RULE

1. General Rule – Annual Hour Limit

- a. Maximum Number of Hours in FY (July 1-June 30) based on Length of Contract.
 - i. 9-month contract = 700 hours
 - ii. 10-month contract = 800 hours
 - iii. 11-month contract = 900 hours
 - iv. 12-month contract = 1,000 hours
- b. Excludes in-staff subbing, extracurricular duties and professional development.
- c. Employer and employee contributions are paid on retirement salary, excluding in-staff subbing, extracurricular duties, and professional development. Does not impact monthly benefit.

CRITICAL SHORTAGE AREA

2. Exception A – Critical Shortage Area

- a. Critical Shortage Areas are determined by Education Standards and Practices Board.
- b. Can exceed the Annual Hour Limit without losing retirement benefits.
- c. A one-year waiting period is required.
- d. Must reapply for this exemption annually.
- e. Excludes in-staff subbing, extracurricular duties and professional development.
- f. Employer and employee contributions are paid on retirement salary, excluding in-staff subbing, extracurricular duties, and professional development. Does not impact monthly benefit.

BENEFIT SUSPENSION AND RECALCULATION

3. Exception B – Benefit Suspension and Recalculation

- a. Can exceed the Annual Hour Limit.
- b. Benefits are suspended the first month following the month you reach the limit.
- c. Employer and employee contributions are paid on all retirement salary before and after the benefit suspension.
- d. Upon subsequent retirement, your benefits will be recalculated using all the years you were reemployed.

Outreach

COMMUNICATIONS AND OUTREACH

RIO Website > TFFR Member webpage

- *MyTFFR* Member Self-Service login
- Member Handbook
- Frequently Asked questions

Social Media > YouTube

- resources for TFFR members and employers

Newsletters – posted online and can subscribe

Retirement Education (Outreach Services)

NEW PENSION ADMINISTRATION SYSTEM

Full-service, like online banking

- Update account (address, phone and email)
- Designate beneficiaries
- View salary, service credit and account balance
- Purchase service credit
- Estimate retirement benefit
- Apply for retirement
- Apply for a refund



KEEP YOUR MyTFFR ACCOUNT SECURE

1. Register or update your account, choosing a **unique username** and **password**.
2. Keep your **contact information current**; ensures you receive security alerts if changes are made to your account.
3. If you receive a **security alert**, review it and contact RIO if there is unauthorized or suspicious activity.



[MyTFFR Member Self-Service login](#)

CONTACT US – GOOD, BETTER AND BEST

Best way to reach us: *MyTFFR* > Contact Us tile

Phone: 701-328-9885 or 800-952-2970

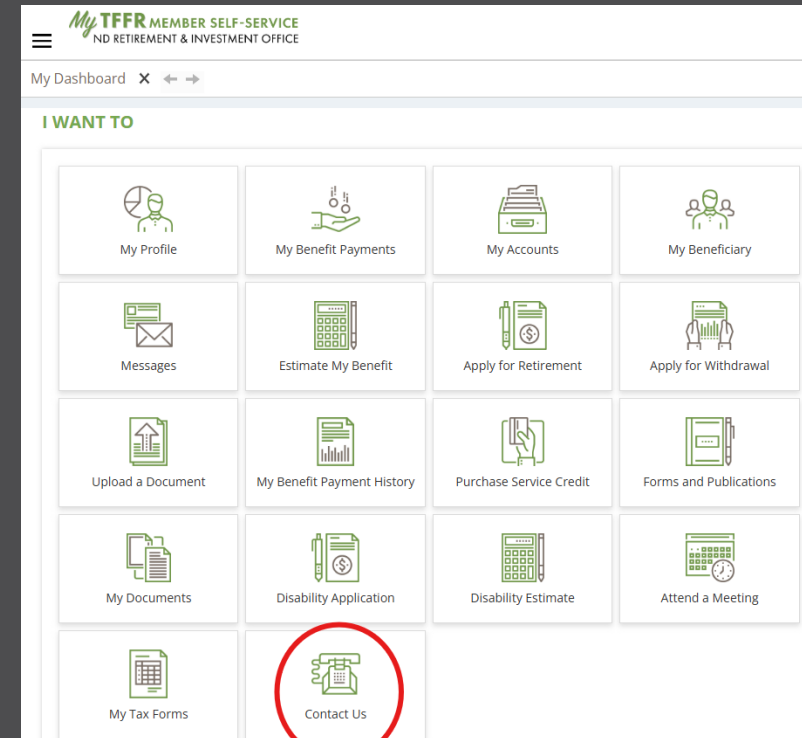
Fax: 701-328-9897

Email: rio@nd.gov

Website: www.rio.nd.gov

Retirement and Investment Office

- Business hours are Mon-Fri, 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.
- Office hours are Mon-Thu, 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.; Fri 8:00 a.m.- 12:00 p.m.
- Appointments - to ensure availability, contact RIO first.



WORKSHOP WRAP UP AND EVALUATIONS

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