

Briefly

Employer Newsletter

ND Teachers' Fund for Retirement
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August 2019

Employer Reporting Reviews

Business Managers play an important role in administering the retirement plan for ND teachers and administrators. Without your efforts, TFFR would not be as effective or efficient. The Internal Audit division of the Retirement and Investment Office recently revised the procedures used to review employer reporting of TFFR salaries, contributions, and service hours. Once Internal Audit has completed its review, the information will be forwarded to TFFR Retirement Services staff. Retirement Services will then create a TFFR Employer Reporting Review report summarizing the findings, corrections, and recommendations from the Internal Audit review. This report will be sent to the School Board President, Superintendent, and Business Manager.

In order to improve transparency and increase communication with school boards, administrators, and business managers regarding employer reporting practices, the employer will be asked to respond to the TFFR Employer Reporting Review report within 30 days as outlined below.

- Review TFFR Employer Reporting Review report and contact TFFR with any questions.
- Add TFFR Employer Reporting Review report to next regular School Board meeting agenda.

- School Board should take action to either Accept or Reject TFFR Employer Reporting Review report.
- If accepted, Superintendent and School Board President should sign and return an acknowledgement letter (a sample will be included), and provide a written explanation describing how the employer will comply with the findings, corrections, and/or recommendations.
- If rejected, Superintendent and School Board President should sign and return the acknowledgement letter, and provide a written explanation describing any areas of disagreement or reasons for rejection which will be considered.

TFFR will make any member account corrections and send the Business Manager a billing invoice for under reported contributions or a refund check if contributions were over reported. The schedules which detail the member accounts reviewed and the required corrections will also be sent to the Business Manager.

ACH Monthly Payment Option

Did you know you can send your TFFR monthly payment by ACH? Please let us know if you are interested in switching to this fast and efficient payment method and eliminate the need to mail a check each month.

ESPB Permit to Teach

To be eligible for TFFR participation a teacher must be currently licensed to teach in North Dakota by the ESPB and contractually employed in teaching, supervisory, administrative, or extracurricular services by any state institution, multi district special education unit, area career and technology center, regional education association, school board, or other governing body of a North Dakota school district.

Recent legislation created a Permit to Teach, issued by ESPB. This permit does not meet the license requirement for TFFR pension participation. If you employ individuals that only have the Permit to Teach, do not report these employees to TFFR.

Member Reporting Requirements

A [Member Action form](#) must be completed when a participating employer hires a new teacher. The form is also required if you rehire a teacher after a break in employment with your school district of one year or more. The Member Action form should also be used to notify TFFR when a teacher is taking or returning from a leave of absence. This form provides TFFR with important information including the member's legal name, social security number, birth date, and current mailing address. If the employee is a new TFFR member, also have them complete a [Designation of Beneficiary form](#). Designating a beneficiary allows the member to direct payment of survivor benefits in the event of the member's death.

If TFFR does not receive the Member Action form within thirty days from the date the member is first reported to TFFR, the employer may be assessed a \$250 penalty for late reporting.

Employing Retirees in Critical Shortage Areas

In addition to the "General Rule," retired teachers may also return to TFFR covered employment in an approved "Critical Shortage Area" (CSA) without losing retirement benefits. If retired prior to January 1, 2001, no waiting period is required. However, if the TFFR retirement date is after January 1, 2001, a one year waiting period is required. Only non-contracted substitute teaching may be performed during the waiting period. The CSA exception must be requested each year by completing a [Retired Member Employment Notification form](#).

The critical shortage areas are determined each year by the Education Standards and Practices Board (ESPB). For the 2019-20 school year, ESPB has declared all teacher content areas as critical shortage. Administrator positions are not critical shortage areas for 2019-20.

TFFR Forms

- Please submit a [Notification of School District Change form](#) if there are any changes in contact (i.e. superintendent/business manager) or demographic information.
- If you are employing a new teacher, TFFR will need a [Member Action form](#).
- If you have employed a TFFR retiree, please complete the [TFFR Retired Member Employment Notification form](#). This form must be completed each year a retiree is employed and submitted to TFFR no later than 30 days after employment begins.
- These forms and others are also found on the TFFR [website](#).

GASB Statement 68 Update

The audited fiscal year [2018 GASB Statement 68](#) information is available on the TFFR website. This information includes the Schedules of Employer Allocations and Pension Amounts by Employer, GASB 68 Disclosure Template, and Sample Journal Entries. Employers and auditors can use this information to complete your 2019 financials.

Group Benefits Counseling Sites Scheduled

The 2019-20 Group Benefits Counseling sites have been scheduled. The location details and registration link can be found in the TFFR [Member Services Directory](#). Please help us inform your teachers about this valuable program by emailing the above link to your employees.

TFFR Employer Audit Information Corner

Sara Sauter
Supervisor of Audit Services

GASB 67 & 68 Census Data Audits

Each July, TFFR's pension plan auditor, CliftonLarsonAllen (CLA), selects eleven participating employers to be included in the census data audit to comply with the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) 67 and 68 requirements. The selected participating employers will receive notification via email. Employers will be required to provide a master payroll file which includes information such as name, birth date, and gross wages for all employees. CLA auditors will review the information provided and select a sample of individuals for further investigation. CLA will request supporting documentation from the participating employer which may include I-9 forms, employee contracts, and human resource forms.

At the conclusion of the audit, TFFR will issue the *Schedule of Pension Amounts by Employer* and the *Schedule of Collective Pension Amounts* which are provided to assist employers and their auditors with GASB 68 compliance. For additional information reference the GASB website at www.gasb.org or the TFFR website at www.nd.gov/rio/TFFR.