

EMPLOYER
NEWSLETTER

TFFR

Mission

Statement:

To administer a comprehensive retirement program that provides North Dakota public educators with a foundation for retirement security.

NORTH
Dakota
Be Legendary.

Teachers' Fund For Retirement
RETIREMENT & INVESTMENT

Briefly

MAY 2021

June-July Reporting of Hourly Wages

The following is a common error we see when a TFFR member works in June at an hourly wage.

- In July, an employee submits a salary request (time sheet) for hourly work done in June. These wages are paid in July and get reported on the July TFFR report in error.

Salary must be reported in the fiscal year earned, not when paid.

If the salary was reported in the wrong year, please let us know. We will move the salary back to the correct fiscal year. If the contribution rates between the two years are different, we will also need to correct the over and under payment of contributions.

If you recognize that the pay belongs in a prior year, before adding it to your regular July payroll, please contact TFFR to discuss the best way to report the pay correctly.

Deadline: July 15, 2021 -

Year-end Employer Payment and Reports

The widespread use of the 10-day grace period has had a negative impact on RIO agency fiscal operations at year end. Employers unable to meet this deadline may still request a waiver or extension to the deadline in writing in advance of the 15th to avoid a late penalty. The waiver is not automatic, so we strongly encourage you to reach out with any questions or concerns.

Fiscal Year-End Reminders Checklist

- ✓ **All member records including reemployed retirees must be closed with compensated hours and last date worked.** Compensated hours should be capped at 700 hours for active members. However, do not cap the hours reported for reemployed retirees and report actual compensated hours even if it exceeds 700 hours. (For reemployed retirees, **include** in-staff subbing hours from July 1, 2020 - January 22, 2021, and **exclude** extra-curricular and professional development hours.)
- ✓ **Please be aware of any changes to the last day taught and total hours reported on your June report as it can be affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. TFFR needs to have accurate records for the teachers and re-employed retirees.**
- ✓ Salary needs to be reported when **earned** and not when paid. Members contracted over 9 months, but paid over 10, 11, or 12 months, must be expensed out on the June report which is due July 15.
- ✓ Salary for summer programs must also be reported when **earned** and not when paid. Report June work on the June report and July work on the July report.
- ✓ Payments for unused vacation and/or sick leave should **not** be reported to TFFR.
- ✓ An Employer Payment Plan form must be filed if an employer is changing models. The new model must be implemented at the beginning of the fiscal year (July 1) and must cover all TFFR members. Administrators cannot be covered under a different model. The form should be sent no later than August 15.
- ✓ If you do not have contributions to report for a month, please notify TFFR by e-mail, so we don't send you a late notice.

What is the “PAS Project” and How is it Going to Affect Me?

Many of you have likely seen our communications regarding the TFFR PAS project over the last two years and we thought it was time to revisit what this project is and how it may affect your efforts and processes relating to TFFR reporting.

The Teachers’ Fund for Retirement’s (TFFR) Pension Administration System (PAS) supports the administration of the TFFR benefits program for over 22,000 active, inactive, and retired members and 213 employers. The current PAS administrator interface is 16 (sixteen) years old and was deployed in 2005 as a client-server application. An employer self-service portal is available to all employers and provides the ability to upload payroll contribution and earnings data files for processing by staff. Employers, however, cannot perform any business rule validations of the member data contained in the file. TFFR staff must perform the validations, evaluate data exceptions and any action for data corrections that are to be addressed and resubmitted by the employer. Currently, 182 of our 213 employers are utilizing the employer self-service portal.

As a result of an extensive evaluation of program needs, and system capabilities and limitations, the TFFR Program is proceeding with a PAS Modernization Project. This project was initiated in 2019 and is expected to continue into 2023. One goal of this project is to increase the efficiency and utilization of the employer self-service portal. We are excited to be able to offer an improved employer reporting experience in the future. We intend to request employer feedback through surveys and employer education and information sessions as we proceed with the project. If you have any questions or concerns about your current employer reporting experience we would very much like to hear from you so that we may incorporate such feedback in our system development. Please don’t hesitate to reach out. Thank you again for all that you do!

Employer Contribution Rates for 2021-22

TFFR contribution rates will remain the same for the upcoming 2021-2022 school year.

Member Contribution	11.75%
Employer Contribution	12.75%

TFFR Retirement Education Workshop

TFFR is happy to offer an in-person Retirement Education Workshop (REW) again this year! All teachers are invited to register for this workshop that covers TFFR benefits, Social Security benefits, estate planning, financial information, and retiree health insurance options.

Bismarck – July 14, 2021

Heritage Center Reid Auditorium – 10:00-1:30

Your help in marketing the REW is always appreciated. To register, TFFR members should complete the online registration found under Events on our [website](#).



TFFR Retired Member Reemployment

The Education Standards and Practices Board (ESPB) has once again declared all subject areas as critical shortage, except for Administration, for the 2021-22 school year. If you employ a retired TFFR member, a [TFFR Retired Member Employment Notification](#) form must be completed.

TFFR Fast Facts

Looking for a simple summary of TFFR statistics and plan benefits? Then the 2020 ND TFFR Fast Facts is your answer. The document is available on the NDRIO [website](#).

Spring Business Manager Workshop

We were happy to be able to present this year at the Virtual Business Manager Workshop! Although, it is different not being able to see your faces, we did appreciate the opportunity to give an overview of TFFR reporting. We are hoping that next year we can get back on the road and see you all in person!



ACH Monthly Payment Option

You can send your TFFR monthly payment by ACH. Please contact us if you would be interested in switching to this fast and efficient way to send your TFFR payment and eliminate the need to mail a check each month.

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.rio.nd.gov.

Changing Models?

If your TFFR employer payment model is changing (different model or a change in the amount of pickup under Model 2 or 3), an [Employer Payment Plan form](#) must be filed with TFFR. The model change must be implemented at the beginning of the fiscal year (July 1) and must cover all TFFR members. The form should be sent to TFFR no later than July 31. If you have any questions on the TFFR models, please contact the administrative office.

Enjoy your
summer!



Teachers' Fund For Retirement
RETIREMENT & INVESTMENT

Employer Newsletter

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TFFR Vision Statement:

To be a trusted leader in the administration of a financially sound retirement program for North Dakota educators by providing exceptional customer service, professional plan management, and organizational effectiveness by adhering to the principles of good governance, transparency, and accountability.