

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

## New 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.

**We ask that all Member Action and Designation of Beneficiary forms be sent to TFFR electronically.**

When you are ready to send these forms, please send an email to [rio@nd.gov](mailto:rio@nd.gov) to request a secure link that you can use to send the documents. You will receive an email with a link that will take you to the State of North Dakota Secure File Transfer System. You will be able to upload the file from your computer. We ask that you scan all of the forms as one PDF document. Please scan only the front side of the forms. Once you upload your PDF and click on submit, we will have access to these forms and be able to process them promptly.

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.

## Did You Review Your Employer Summary Yet?

A 2020-2021 Employer Summary Report was mailed to each school district at the end of August. Please review this report and verify that the reported salaries and service hours are correct. Let us know if you find any discrepancies and the accounts will be corrected.

Also, if you find any salary that should be have been reported in the prior fiscal year, please let us know, and we can move it to the correct year. The salary should be reported in the year it was earned.

The sooner you let us know, the easier it is to fix!

## TFFR Education Opportunities for Business Managers

We will be having virtual Business Manager Education Workshops that focus on TFFR requirements for reporting salary to us. Let us know if there is anything specific that you would like us to talk about.

The workshops will be under an hour and very informal so that you can ask questions. We are going to touch on different areas like, what is reportable? Or what form do I use?

You will be notified by email when they are available and the subject of the specific workshop.

Stay tuned!

## ND School Board Association Convention

Please stop by our booth during the SBA convention at the Bismarck Ramkota on October 29<sup>th</sup>. We look forward to seeing you and answering any of your questions.

# In-Staff Subbing by Re-Employed Retirees

## Policy Suspension

In an effort to alleviate the strain put on school districts to find substitute teachers, the TFFR board voted to extend the temporary suspension of the in-staff subbing policy as it relates to retirees.

### Effective July 23, 2021 until further notice:

- Retired members under contract can now perform in-staff subbing duties without having the hours count towards the annual hour limit.
- The salary that they receive for in-staff subbing should not be reported to TFFR until further notice.

Please note that non-contracted subbing hours and salary is not reportable to TFFR.

The TFFR Board will continue to review this policy and its impact on the TFFR plan, our membership, and our employers going forward.

## Updated TFFR Employer Guide

The [TFFR Employer Guide](#) has been recently updated and is available on our website. Please use this as a reference for any questions you may have about the TFFR retirement plan.



## TFFR Staffing Update

After a combined 75 years of service, Bonnie Heit, Ruby Benning, and Estelle Kirchoffner are retiring this fall. Bonnie and Ruby retired as of August 31, 2021, and Estelle will be retired as of September 30, 2021. Their dedication to the RIO office is much appreciated and they all will be greatly missed.

Please join us in wishing them a long and happy retirement!

## Retirement Eligibility Report

Upon request, TFFR can provide school districts with a Retirement Eligibility Profile report. This report gives the district a 30-year projection regarding TFFR member retirement eligibility. The report also contains the names of individuals for workforce planning purposes. The personal information must be kept confidential. If you are interested in receiving a profile for your district, please contact our office. Due to timing issues with new members and retirees, the retirement eligibility profile is not available from July through October of each year.

## Retiree Re-Employment Guidance

A common question asked by employers and re-employed retirees is how annual service hours should be calculated. At the close of each fiscal year participating employers are required to report to TFFR the total number of hours a re-employed retiree was compensated for during the school year. One measure of reasonability used by TFFR to determine if a re-employed retiree may exceed the annual hour limits is to look at the contract/work agreement. If a contract shows 4/7 or less (teaching 4 periods or teaching 3 periods and a prep) that generally will create total service hours under 700 once professional development days are excluded.

TFFR recommends that participating employers establish procedures to monitor and calculate the correct number of compensated service hours. Participating employers must also be able to provide documentation in support of service hours reported to TFFR when requested to do so. Timecards or other tracking mechanisms can accomplish both of these goals.

# 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 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.

## 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 2021-22 school year, ESPB has declared all teacher content areas as critical shortage. Also, Administrator positions are not critical shortage areas for 2021-22.

# 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 new [Member Action](#) form and a [Designation of Beneficiary](#) form.
- If the teacher has a change of address or name, they need to fill out a Change of Name or Address form.
- If you have employed a TFFR retiree, please make sure to 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 other ones you may need are also found on our website: <https://www.rio.nd.gov/teachers-fund-retirement-employers>



Teachers' Fund For Retirement  
RETIREMENT & INVESTMENT

## Employer Newsletter

ND Teachers' Fund for Retirement  
3442 East Century Avenue  
PO Box 7100  
Bismarck, ND 58507-7100  
Phone: 701.328.9885  
Toll-Free: 1.800.952.2970  
Website: [www.rio.nd.gov](http://www.rio.nd.gov)

## 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.