

Steps to Retirement

Teacher Retirement System of Texas, October 2016

-Thinking of retiring? Let me show you a road map to a TRS retirement in four basic steps. This presentation will cover four areas:

Planning ahead, completion of paperwork, your annuity payment and additional assistance

-Along the way, pay special attention to these important road signs.

-TRS recommends that you start the retirement process six months before your last day of employment.

Planning ahead includes: choosing a retirement date, learning how to apply for, and receive retirement benefits, and, completing and returning the required forms

-To help you get started, the *TRS Benefits Handbook* provides a wealth of information.

-You can find the *TRS Benefits Handbook* on the TRS website at www.trs.texas.gov

-Now we are ready for the paperwork!

-Let's start with form 18, *Request for Estimate of Retirement Benefits*.

-TRS Form 18 helps TRS provide you with an estimate of your retirement benefits.

-How do I find and fill out TRS form 18?

-The fastest way to complete and submit form 18 is on the TRS website.

-If you do not have a *MyTRS* User ID and password, you will need to register for a *MyTRS* account by going to the TRS website.

-You can also print, fill out, and mail form 18 to TRS.

-If you do not have a computer or printer, you can ask TRS to send you the form by calling 1-800-223-8778.

-What happens after I mail in TRS form 18 to TRS?

-When you submit form 18, TRS will mail you a retirement packet to your address of record within 31 days.

-The retirement packet contains: your retirement estimate, a number of standard forms and additional forms if applicable

-Let's take a look at some of the other forms in the packet.

-TRS Form 30, also known as *Application for Service Retirement*, is the most important form in your retirement packet.

-Use TRS form 30 to: indicate your preferred retirement date, select your choice of retirement payment plan, designate your beneficiary or beneficiaries

Please refer to the instructions in your packet for important information regarding the deadline for filing your retirement application.

-At retirement you are required to verify your age. Please read the *Acceptable Proof of Age Documents*, TRS Form 13, found in your retirement packet.

It is very important that you write your social security number on all proof of age documents that you submit.

-TRS will also need to receive TRS form 7, *Notice of Final Deposit Before Retirement*.

-Form 7 is used to report: your final salary payment, your exact salary for the current school year, and the date your employment terminates

Please give form 7 to your school business official who will send the completed form to TRS, once they have paid you your final check.

-What about TRS form 278, *Direct Deposit Request*?

-TRS recommends that your annuity payment be deposited directly into your personal bank account using the electronic transfer process. To do that you need to submit TRS form 278, *Direct Deposit Request* to TRS.

-Complete form 278 and return it to TRS BEFORE your retirement date.

-There is one other important form in your retirement packet: TRS form 228A, *Federal Income Tax Withholding Certificate*.

-Your retirement benefit is subject to federal income tax. Please refer to the letter and added information about taxes included in your retirement packet.

-Tax tables are included in the retirement packet so that you can complete form 228A and return it to TRS.

We have reached our first milestone!

TRS Form 18: Request for Estimate of Retirement Benefits, TRS Form 30: Application for Service Retirement, TRS Form 13: Acceptable Proof of Age Documents, TRS Form 7: Notice of Final Deposit Before Retirement, TRS Form 278: Direct Deposit Request, and TRS Form 228A: Federal Income Tax Withholding Certificate

-If I wish to apply for a disability retirement because of a permanent disability, what do I need to do?

-If you request a disability retirement packet on your *Request for Estimate of Retirement Benefits*, all the forms necessary to apply for a disability retirement will be included in your retirement packet.

-If you have any questions about a disability retirement, please refer to the information in the *TRS Benefits Handbook* or call TRS and speak with a benefit counselor.

-When can I expect my first annuity check?

-Your first annuity payment is due the last business day of the month following your effective date of retirement. If all forms are not received or you remain on your employer's payroll, your payments will be delayed but you will receive any past due payments.

-If your retirement date is effective May 31, your first payment representing the month of June would generally be payable on the last business day of June provided TRS has received all required forms.

-If your employer pays you through August, it would be mid-September before you would receive payments from TRS.

Up to this point we have learned that: Planning ahead is the first step to retirement, the TRS website and the *TRS Benefits Handbook* are important resources to help you with the retirement process, it is important to submit the necessary forms in a timely manner, your first annuity payment is due the last business day of the month following your effective date of retirement. If all forms are not received or you remain on your employer's payroll, your payments will be delayed, but you will receive any past due payments and TRS provides information and resources for anyone wishing to find out more about applying for a disability retirement.

-I understand that TRS provides more types of assistance to help with the retirement process.

-Yes. That's true. Let me show you.

-Benefit presentations are held throughout the state of Texas, including at TRS facilities in Austin, Texas. They provide in-depth TRS benefit and retirement process information including: your options, health benefits, working after retirement, and the opportunity to answer your questions

-For your convenience, online registration for benefit presentations will be available on the TRS website.

To schedule an office visit in Austin, you need to call 1-800-223-8778, or if you live in the Austin area, call 512-542-6400. A counselor will be happy to assist you. Information on the field visit locations and times will be posted on the TRS website. To schedule a one-on-one visit you must register for *MyTRS* and then you register yourself for the appointment you want.

You must have a scheduled appointment to visit with a counselor.

-You can also call any of our telephone counselors who will help you with answers to your important questions. Telephone counselors are available Monday through Friday from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m.

-Finally, don't forget to visit our website at www.trs.texas.gov. The website is updated periodically with new information for both active and retired members.