

# Retirement Checklist

When the time comes to retire, we want you to be ready. Make the most of your retirement by taking steps to plan for it now. This checklist will help you navigate the process from start to finish.

## ► Within Three Years of Retirement

Schedule a counseling meeting with a RetireReadyTN Plan Advisor and request a benefit estimate by calling 800-922-7772. During a counseling session you will:

- Review your TCRS benefit estimate, benefit payment options, and employment history
- Review your 401(k)/457(b) account balances, investment choices, and retirement income options
- Discuss Social Security options
- Discuss how to execute your retirement plan

### Helpful tip

Be sure to review your TCRS service record periodically by logging into Self-Service at **MyTCRS.tn.gov**. If you believe you may be entitled to establish creditable service for any prior and/or missing service, such as previously withdrawn service or military service, contact RetireReadyTN at your earliest convenience. While some types of service may be established without charge, others require payment of contributions and interest.

### Create a monthly retirement budget

- Determine when and how to begin drawing income from your 401(k)/457(b) accounts and any other outside retirement accounts.
- Decide the TCRS benefit payment option that will best suit your needs. Benefit plan descriptions will be included in your benefit estimate.
- Determine how much monthly income you will rely upon in retirement based on your TCRS benefit, 401(k)/457(b) account balances, Social Security, and any other outside sources.
- Track your expenses to ensure your retirement income will support your chosen lifestyle.

### Consider your eligibility for 401(k)/457(b) Catch-Up Contributions

- Members age 50 and over at the end of the calendar year may make additional contributions above the annual contribution limit. For more information on catch-up contribution limits, visit **IRS.gov**.

## ► When You're Ready to Retire

### For your TCRS benefit

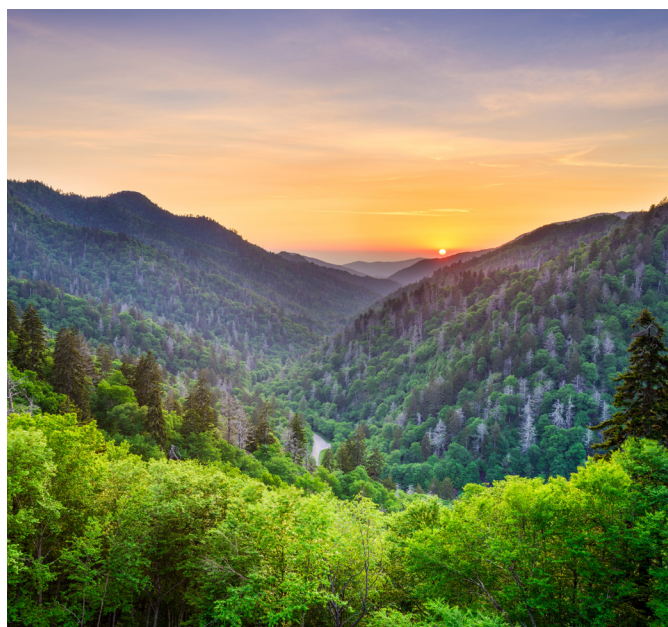
Once you have met the TCRS retirement eligibility requirements, you can apply for retirement online by logging into Self-Service at **MyTCRS.tn.gov**. Be certain you have enough months of creditable service to retire.

If you are still in service, notify your employer of your intent to retire and submit your TCRS Retirement Application at least 60 days prior to what will be your last paid date of service. If you have already separated from service, submit your TCRS Retirement Application within 150 days of becoming eligible for TCRS retirement. Please note, TCRS can only pay benefits retroactively up to 150 days prior to the receipt of your application, so if you are separated from service you are encouraged to apply as soon as you become eligible. **Failure to apply as soon as you become eligible will result in loss of benefits.**

### Helpful tip

TCRS can only pay benefits up to 150 days prior to the receipt of the application. If you separated from service, it is important to apply for retirement as soon as you become eligible.

- Before beginning your retirement application, take a moment to update your contact information, review your beneficiary(s), and determine which benefit payment option is right for you. You will also need to gather the following information:
  - **Social Security Numbers for you and your beneficiary(s)**
  - **Bank routing and account number for establishing your direct deposit**
  - **Tax withholding information**—determine the number of allowances you wish to claim or the percent/dollar amount you wish to be withheld
- You can check the status of your retirement application anytime by logging in to Self-Service at **MyTCRS.tn.gov**.
- Once your retirement application has been processed, you will receive a Notice of Retirement letter confirming the exact amount of your retirement benefit. If you elected a joint and survivorship plan option and would like to make any change, you must do so within 60 days of the date of the Notice of Retirement letter. TCRS retirement benefits are paid on the last business day of each month.



## ► When You're Ready to Retire *(continued)*

### Helpful tip

When applicable, Cost-of-Living Adjustments (COLA) are paid in July of each year. State/higher education employees, teachers, and employees of local governments who have adopted a COLA provision qualify for cost of living adjustments in the first July pay period that occurs after at least 12 consecutive months on retired payroll.

### For your 401(k) and 457(b) accounts

Generally, under federal law you may begin taking qualified distributions from your 401(k) without early withdrawal penalty upon reaching age 59½. You may begin taking qualified distributions from your 457(b) account at any age without early withdrawal penalty, as long as you have separated from service. Distributions can be set up in a variety of ways, including periodic payments, partial lump-sum, full lump-sum, or a combination of those options. Contact a RetireReadyTN Plan Advisor to discuss which distribution method is right for you.

### For social security benefits

TCRS members pay into Social Security and should be able to receive those benefits once eligible. Social Security benefits are managed by the Social Security Administration. Your TCRS retirement benefit is not reduced, or affected in any way, by a benefit you are eligible to receive from the Social Security Administration (SSA). To better understand what benefits may be eligible to you at retirement, we encourage you to request a Social Security Benefit Estimate.

Apply for your Social Security benefits when you become eligible and desire to activate this benefit. To learn more, or to apply for benefits, go to **SSA.gov**.

### Helpful tip

As you prepare to transition into retired life, don't forget to review your estate planning. Are your wills, trusts, powers of attorney, and other important documents up to date?

### Healthcare considerations

Determine the source of medical insurance for you and your family post retirement.

If you are seeking to continue your insurance coverage at retirement, contact your agency benefits coordinator or contact the Retirement Benefits Division of Benefits Administration at **800-253-9981** to discuss eligibility and coverage options. For more information visit: **[tn.gov/partnersforhealth/continuing-insurance-at-retirement](https://tn.gov/partnersforhealth/continuing-insurance-at-retirement)**.

- If you are enrolled in a reimbursable account through the Flexible Benefit Program, consider how your retirement will affect this account. For more information contact your Flexible Benefits Program.
- Contact the Social Security Administration to begin evaluating the Social Security benefits, including Medicare, that may be available to you.





## ► After Retirement

### For your TCRS benefit

#### Use Self-Service:

Be sure to log in to Self Service at **MyTCRS.tn.gov** to report changes or make updates to your address, direct deposit, and tax withholdings. Your 1099-R, the documentation needed to file federal taxes, will be available in Self Service, and mailed to your home by January 31 of each year.

#### Returning to work:

As a retiree you can accept employment with any employer outside of TCRS without impacting your retirement benefit.

If you are considering returning to work with a TCRS-covered employer, your retirement benefit may be impacted. Before accepting a position with a TCRS-covered employer, contact RetireReadyTN to determine how your TCRS retirement benefits will be impacted. Each TCRS return to work program requires a specified waiting period before reemployment, and applications may be denied if there is evidence of prearrangement (written or oral) prior to your retirement date.

### For your 401(k) and 457(b) accounts

- Report changes or make updates to your address, direct deposit, and tax withholdings by logging into your 401(k) and/or 457(b) accounts.
- Prepare to begin any required minimum distributions. Per federal law, after reaching age 73, you are generally required to start withdrawing money from a traditional 401(k) or 457(b) account.

## ► Contact Us

Call us at **800-922-7772** Monday through Friday 8:00 a.m.—7:00 p.m. CT

Visit **RetireReadyTN.gov**   @RetireReadyTN

*The information in this document is general in nature and may be subject to change without notice. In the event of a conflict between this guide and plan documents, the plan documents will take precedence. Additionally, the value of a 401(k) account will fluctuate and it is possible for the value to be less than what was contributed. The risks associated with investing are numerous, and as with any investment, it is possible to lose money. The state of Tennessee and its employees are not authorized to provide legal, financial, or tax advice. For legal and tax advice concerning your situation you should consult your personal legal, tax, or other advisers.*