



OKLAHOMA

Teachers' Retirement System

Permanent Rules

Effective
September 1, 2025

Preface

The official permanent rules of the Teachers' Retirement System of Oklahoma are codified in Title 715 of the Oklahoma Administrative Code (OAC) and are maintained by the Secretary of State's Office of Administrative Rules. The following rules in this document are considered permanent "unofficial" rules.

Emergency rules are not necessarily contained in this document. Any emergency rule is considered promulgated and effective immediately upon the Governor's approval or later if specified by the agency and are generally only effective through September 14 of the following legislative session or until the rules are superseded by another rule.

If any conflicts arise between material in the official/unofficial code and the law, the law takes precedence.

Contents

Chapter 1 - Administrative Operations	1
715:1-1-1. Purpose	2
715:1-1-2. Board of Trustees	2
715:1-1-3. Medical Board	2
715:1-1-4. Administrative office [REVOKED]	2
715:1-1-5. Executive Director	2
715:1-1-6. Bonds (protective) [REVOKED]	2
715:1-1-7. Purchases	2
715:1-1-8. Payment of payrolls and claims	2
715:1-1-9. Investment of funds [REVOKED]	3
715:1-1-10. Grievances and complaints	3
715:1-1-11. Information requests	5
715:1-1-12. Public participation in adoption of rules	5
715:1-1-13. Change of address, name or district	6
715:1-1-14. Definition of IRS Code	6
715:1-1-15. Distribution rules	6
715:1-1-16. General IRS qualification rules	7
715:1-1-17. Inspection, copy and/or reproduction fees	8
715:1-1-18. Retirement benefit reduction to pay a judgment or settlement as an offset	8
715:1-1-19. Appointment of Non-voting Trustee	9
715:1-1-20. Electronic Signatures	10
Chapter 10 - General Operations	11
Subchapter 1 - Membership Provisions	11
715:10-1-1. Purpose	12
715:10-1-2. TRS membership eligibility	12
715:10-1-3. Mandatory TRS membership	12
715:10-1-4. Optional TRS membership	12
715:10-1-5. Ineligible for TRS membership	12
715:10-1-6. Date of Membership	13
715:10-1-7. Membership in education associations	13
715:10-1-8. Membership of Employees of Charter Schools	14
715:10-1-9. Definitions	15
715:10-1-15. Salary limitations for certain returning classroom teachers [EXPIRED]	15
Subchapter 3 - Service Eligibility	17

715:10-3-1. Requirements for creditable service	18
715:10-3-2. Requirements for fulltime service	18
715:10-3-3. Requirements for halftime service.....	19
715:10-3-4. Combining fractional years of service.....	19
715:10-3-5. Minimum compensation requirements	20
Subchapter 5 - Establishing Other Service Credits	21
715:10-5-1. Oklahoma service credit after July 1, 1943	22
715:10-5-2. Employment as a substitute teacher in Oklahoma schools.....	22
715:10-5-3. Official sabbatical leave from an Oklahoma school.....	22
715:10-5-4. Cost to purchase Oklahoma service.....	23
715:10-5-4.1. Payment of Contribution Deficit for Education Employees Service Incentive Plan.....	24
715:10-5-5. Oklahoma service performed prior to July 1, 1943 [REVOKED]	25
715:10-5-6. Verification of Oklahoma service before membership	25
715:10-5-7. Credit for service in other Oklahoma public retirement systems	25
715:10-5-7.1. Transfer of service credit from the Oklahoma Public Employees Retirement System	26
715:10-5-7.2. Transfer of service credit to the Oklahoma Public Employees Retirement System	27
715:10-5-7.3. Service credit transfers for TRS members who are CLEET-certified employees of the University of Oklahoma and Oklahoma State University	29
715:10-5-8. Revocation of \$7,800 waiver.....	29
715:10-5-9. Re-establishing withdrawn service.....	29
715:10-5-10. Military service credit.....	30
715:10-5-11. Military service limited to maximum of five years	30
715:10-5-12. Military service performed prior to July 1, 1943 [REVOKED].....	31
715:10-5-13. Military service performed after July 1, 1943	31
715:10-5-14. Military service combined with Oklahoma service.....	31
715:10-5-15. Application for military service credit	31
715:10-5-16. Cost to purchase military service	31
715:10-5-17. Adjustment for military service after retirement	32
715:10-5-18. Other restrictions on military service	32
715:10-5-19. Out-of-state service credit	32
715:10-5-20. Out-of-state service performed prior to July 1, 1943 [REVOKED].....	32
715:10-5-21. Out-of-state service performed after July 1, 1943	32
715:10-5-22. Out-of-state service limited to maximum of five years.....	33
715:10-5-23. Out-of-state service combined with Oklahoma service.....	33

715:10-5-24. Continuous, consecutive out-of-state service	33
715:10-5-25. Application for out-of-state service credit.....	33
715:10-5-26. Cost to purchase out-of-state service.....	34
715:10-5-27. Other restrictions on out-of-state service	34
715:10-5-28. Sick leave service credit	34
715:10-5-29. Verification of accumulated sick leave	35
715:10-5-30. Ten-year averaging of sick leave.....	35
715:10-5-31. Documentation of service.....	35
715:10-5-32. Roll-overs from other qualified plans or conduit IRAs.....	36
715:10-5-33. Credit for family leave.....	36
715:10-5-34. Credit for adjunct service in Higher Education	37
715:10-5-35. Employer pick-up of service credit purchase	37
715:10-5-36. Compliance with USERRA and Code Section 414(u), including applicable HEART Act provisions	38
715:10-5-37. Incentive service credit.....	39
715:10-5-38. Credit for prior service as an optional employee.....	40
Subchapter 7 - Membership Vesting and Termination.....	42
715:10-7-1. Vesting of membership in TRS	43
715:10-7-2. Limitation of benefits to an inactive, vested member	43
715:10-7-3. Termination of non-vested membership accounts because of absence	43
715:10-7-4. Extension of TRS membership for non-vested members after absence.....	44
715:10-7-5. Retired members.....	44
715:10-7-6. Termination of a non-eligible person [REVOKED]	44
Subchapter 9 - Survivor Benefits	46
715:10-9-1. Return of contributions when death occurs before retirement	47
715:10-9-2. Death benefit when death occurs before retirement	47
715:10-9-3. Monthly annuity in lieu of death benefit	47
715:10-9-4. Death Benefit when death occurs after retirement [REVOKED]	48
715:10-9-5. Payments to beneficiaries of deceased members.....	48
715:10-9-6. Probate waivers	48
715:10-9-7. Beneficiary designation following a divorce.....	49
715:10-9-8. Beneficiary Designation for Death Benefit	49
Subchapter 11 - Withdrawal From Membership and Refund of Deposits	51
715:10-11-1. Withdrawal from membership by an eligible person	52
715:10-11-2. Withdrawal of optional membership while still employed [REVOKED].....	53
715:10-11-3. False affidavits.....	53

715:10-11-4. Correcting mistakenly paid contributions	53
715:10-11-5. Termination of rights to benefits	53
715:10-11-6. Reinstatement of an account.....	54
715:10-11-7. Rollovers from TRS to other eligible retirement plans	54
Subchapter 13 - Contributions for Membership Service	57
715:10-13-1. Regular annual compensation requirements.....	58
715:10-13-2. Contributions required on all regular annual compensation from all employers	58
715:10-13-3. Employee contribution rates.....	59
715:10-13-3.1. Employer contribution rates [REVOKED].....	60
715:10-13-3.2. Employer contribution rates for employers other than comprehensive and regional four-year universities beginning July 1, 2007 [EXPIRED]	60
715:10-13-3.3. Employer contribution rates for comprehensive and regional four-year universities beginning July 1, 2007 [EXPIRED]	60
715:10-13-4. Maximum compensation level election for years prior to July 1, 1995	60
715:10-13-4.1. Maximum compensation level election for the 1995-96 school year [REVOKED]	61
715:10-13-5. Compensation corrections	61
715:10-13-6. Employee contributions paid by the employer	61
715:10-13-7. Matching funds	61
715:10-13-8. Procedure for making contribution deductions	62
715:10-13-9. Monthly remittance report of contributions [REVOKED].....	63
715:10-13-10. Annual report of employment	63
715:10-13-11. Percentage limits on compensation increases.....	63
715:10-13-12. Contracts bought up by employer.....	63
715:10-13-13. Contributions while receiving workers' compensation payments	63
715:10-13-14. Termination credit for state agency employees who are members of the Teachers' Retirement System of Oklahoma	64
715:10-13-15. Waiver of employer late fees.....	64
Subchapter 15 - Service Retirement.....	67
715:10-15-1. Eligibility for service retirement.....	68
715:10-15-2. Age, service requirements for regular retirement.....	68
715:10-15-3. Date of retirement; making application.....	68
715:10-15-3.1. Employer's Verification of Retirement Information	69
715:10-15-4. Effective date of retirement contract	69
715:10-15-5. Date of retirement contract is binding; revocation of contract.....	70
715:10-15-6. Verification of date of birth.....	70

715:10-15-7. Standard retirement formula.....	70
715:10-15-7.1. Retirement formula for members employed by a comprehensive university [REVOKED]	71
715:10-15-7.2. Retirement formula for members retiring under provisions of the Education Employees Service Incentive Plan ("EESIP").....	71
715:10-15-8. Age, creditable service determination	72
715:10-15-9. Minimum service retirement benefits	72
715:10-15-10. Retirement plans	72
715:10-15-10.1. "Pop-up" of Option 2 or Option 3 retirement plans.....	74
715:10-15-10.2. Partial lump-sum payments	74
715:10-15-10.3. Partial Lump-sum Option Factors	75
715:10-15-11. Designation of beneficiaries or joint annuitant for retirement options.....	76
715:10-15-11.1. Designation of trustee of Oklahoma discretionary and special needs trust as joint annuitant or beneficiary	76
715:10-15-12. Spousal consent	77
715:10-15-13. Survivor benefits when death occurs after retirement [REVOKED]	77
715:10-15-14. Actuarial tables	77
715:10-15-15. Disability retirement; application; effective date	77
715:10-15-16. Review by Medical Board and Recommendation of Permanent Disability Retirement or Temporary Disability Retirement	79
715:10-15-17. Additional medical evidence can be required.....	80
715:10-15-18. Suspension, termination, or reduction of disability retirement benefits.....	80
715:10-15-19. Disability retirement payments.....	82
715:10-15-20. Conversion of disability retirement to retirement option 2	82
715:10-15-21. Return to employment by a disabled retiree [REVOKED]	82
715:10-15-22. Reporting of gainful earnings for disability retirees.....	82
715:10-15-23. Special \$150 per month plan; application; effective date.....	82
715:10-15-24. Due-date of retirement benefit payments	83
715:10-15-25. Changes and corrections to retirement benefit payments	83
715:10-15-26. Code Section 415 limits as applied to TRS	83
715:10-15-27. Code Section 401 (a) (17) limits as applied to TRS	89
715:10-15-28. Waiver of retirement application deadline	90
715:10-15-29. Suspension of Retirement Benefit Pending Proof of Life	90
Subchapter 17 - Post-Retirement Employment	93
715:10-17-1. Definitions	94
715:10-17-2. Break between employment and retirement	94
715:10-17-3. Fulltime employment after retirement [REVOKED]	94

715:10-17-4. Fulltime employment with no effect on benefits [REVOKED]	94
715:10-17-5. Permissible employment	94
715:10-17-6. Earnings limits	94
715:10-17-7. Employment by a disabled retiree	95
715:10-17-8. Repayment of benefits	95
715:10-17-9. Annual W-2P tax statements	95
715:10-17-10. Effective date of OAC 715:10-17-1 through 715:10-17-9 [REVOKED]	96
715:10-17-11. Special waiver for retirees past age 70 [REVOKED]	96
715:10-17-12. Earnings report by remitting agencies	96
715:10-17-13. Election to return to qualifying employment.....	96
715:10-17-14. Termination and Resumption of Benefit Payments.....	97
715:10-17-15. Salary limitations for certain returning classroom teachers	97
715:10-17-16. Post retirement employment with the State Department of Education	98
Subchapter 19 - Tax-Sheltered Annuity Program [REVOKED]	100
715:10-19-1. Authority for program [REVOKED].....	101
715:10-19-2. General description [REVOKED]	101
715:10-19-3. Eligible employees [REVOKED].....	101
715:10-19-4. Program requisites [REVOKED]	101
715:10-19-5. Contributions [REVOKED]	101
715:10-19-6. Calculation of exclusion allowance [REVOKED]	101
715:10-19-7. Methods of computing maximum Program contribution [REVOKED]	101
715:10-19-8. Distributions [REVOKED]	101
715:10-19-9. Withdrawals for financial hardship [REVOKED].....	101
715:10-19-10. Example of tax-shelter earnings [REVOKED]	101
715:10-19-11. Rollovers from Program to other eligible retirement plans [REVOKED]	101
715:10-19-12. The Oklahoma Teachers' Deferred Savings Incentive Plan Fund [REVOKED]	101
715:10-19-13. Contributions from the Oklahoma Teachers' Deferred Savings Incentive Plan Fund into Program accounts of active contributing TRS members [REVOKED]	101
Subchapter 21 - Investment Policy [REVOKED]	103
715:10-21-1. Investment of funds [REVOKED]	104
715:10-21-2. Statement of investment policy [REVOKED].....	104
715:10-21-3. Investment guidelines [REVOKED]	104
715:10-21-4. Portfolio assets allocation [REVOKED]	104
715:10-21-5. Cash equivalents guidelines [REVOKED].....	104
Subchapter 23 - State and Education Employees Group Health and Dental Insurance Program	106

715:10-23-1. State and Education Employees Group Health and Dental Insurance Program	107
715:10-23-2. Monthly health insurance premium supplement paid by the Teachers' Retirement System	107
715:10-23-3. Participating education employers not enrolled in the State and Education Employees Group Insurance Plan	107
715:10-23-4. Retired members who return to employment	108
715:10-23-5. Retired members ineligible for health insurance supplement	108
715:10-23-6. Health Insurance Contribution	108
Subchapter 25 - Qualified Domestic Order	111
715:10-25-1. Definition.....	112
715:10-25-2. Filing a qualified domestic order.....	112
715:10-25-3. Contents of qualified domestic order	112
715:10-25-4. Payment to alternate payee	113
715:10-25-5. Termination of a qualified domestic order	113
715:10-25-6. Teachers' Retirement not subject to ERISA [REVOKED]	113

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Title 715 - Teachers' Retirement System
Chapter 1 - Administrative Operations

715:1-1-1.	Purpose
715:1-1-2.	Board of Trustees
715:1-1-3.	Medical Board
715:1-1-4.	Administrative office [REVOKED]
715:1-1-5.	Executive Director
715:1-1-6.	Bonds (protective) [REVOKED]
715:1-1-7.	Purchases
715:1-1-8.	Payment of payrolls and claims
715:1-1-9.	Investment of funds [REVOKED]
715:1-1-10.	Grievances and complaints
715:1-1-11.	Information requests
715:1-1-12.	Public participation in adoption of rules
715:1-1-13.	Change of address, name or district
715:1-1-14.	Definition of IRS Code
715:1-1-15.	Distribution rules
715:1-1-16.	General IRS qualification rules
715:1-1-17.	Inspection, copy and/or reproduction fees
715:1-1-18.	Retirement benefit reduction to pay a judgment or settlement as an offset
715:1-1-19.	Appointment of Non-voting Trustee
715:1-1-20.	Electronic Signatures

715:1-1-1. Purpose

The rules of this Chapter have been adopted for the purpose of complying with the provisions of the Administrative Procedures Act, 75 O.S., Section 250 et seq, and for establishing and explaining the internal and external administrative operations of the Teachers' Retirement System ("TRS").

715:1-1-2. Board of Trustees

The general administration and responsibility for the proper operation of the Teachers' Retirement System of Oklahoma, and effectively implementing the retirement statutes, are vested in the Board of Trustees. The statutory authority for the Board of Trustees is Title 70, Oklahoma Statutes, Section 17-106 [70 O.S. 17-106].

715:1-1-3. Medical Board

The statutory authority for the Medical Board is Title 70, Oklahoma Statutes, Section 17-106 [70 O.S. 17-106].

715:1-1-4. Administrative office [REVOKED]

715:1-1-5. Executive Director

The Executive Director shall be the administrative officer for the Board of Trustees and shall be responsible for the general administration of the Teachers' Retirement System.

- (1) All employees shall be under the direct supervision of the Executive Director.
- (2) All vouchers drawn against TRS shall be signed by two members of the administrative staff: the Executive Director, the Deputy Executive Director of Operations, Chief Financial Officer, or the Assistant Chief Financial Officer.
- (3) The Executive Director shall make reports to the Board of Trustees at its regularly scheduled meetings regarding administrative matters, funds and budgetary matters, and present statements showing the general condition of the System's finances.

715:1-1-6. Bonds (protective) [REVOKED]

715:1-1-7. Purchases

The Executive Director shall have authority to make such purchases of equipment and supplies as may be needed for the operation of TRS, subject to approval by the Board of Trustees.

715:1-1-8. Payment of payrolls and claims

- (a) The Executive Director is authorized to approve and pay all payrolls for the regular personnel and extra help of TRS, as provided in the budget approved by the Board of Trustees. In the absence of the Executive Director, the Deputy Executive Director of Operations may approve payrolls.
- (b) The Executive Director and TRS staff must comply with the Oklahoma Central Purchasing Act and associated policies and procedures in making purchases of supplies, printing materials and equipment. Internal approval of claims shall be made in compliance with the TRS Procurement Policy as approved by the State Purchasing Director from time to time.

715:1-1-9. Investment of funds [REVOKED]

715:1-1-10. Grievances and complaints

Grievances and complaints are initially settled by correspondence or informal conference between an interested party and TRS staff. TRS staff will provide notice in writing to an interested party of a final decision issued to settle a grievance or complaint. "Interested party" means a member; a member's legal representative, beneficiary, or joint annuitant; or a participating employer.

(1) An interested party with a grievance or complaint that cannot be settled by correspondence or informal conference may submit a written request for an informal hearing before the Executive Director of TRS within sixty (60) days of receipt of the final decision of staff. The written request for an informal hearing before the Executive Director must include the name and address of the interested party, include a clear statement of the grievance or complaint and a statement of the relief sought. The Executive Director will provide a written response to the interested party within thirty (30) days of receipt of the written request for informal hearing, stating the official position of TRS in the matter being grieved. The response will either grant or deny the interested party's requested relief. If denied, the Executive Director shall provide in the written response the applicable statutes, rules and administrative procedures used in reaching the decision to deny the requested relief of the interested party.

(2) Any decision of the Executive Director may be appealed to the Board of Trustees of the Teachers' Retirement System within sixty (60) days of receipt of notification of denial by the Executive Director.

(3) All appeals to the Board of Trustees will be assigned to an administrative hearing judge, who will conduct a hearing and prepare a proposed order for the Board of Trustees. The Executive Director shall appoint the administrative hearing judge from a list of individuals employed by the Board of Trustees to act in this role. Administrative hearings shall be conducted in the offices of TRS at a time and date agreed to by the parties. Any party to the hearing shall provide timely notice to the other parties if a delay or failure to appear is anticipated.

(4) Hearings will be conducted under the provisions of the Administrative Procedures Act [75 O.S. §250 et. seq.]. Opportunity shall be afforded all parties to respond and present evidence and arguments on all issues involved. The administrative hearing judge will have the authority to conduct the hearing and rule on the admissibility of all evidence. Any party shall at all times have the right to counsel, provided that such counsel must be duly licensed to practice law by the Supreme Court of Oklahoma, and provided further that such counsel shall have the right to appear and act for and on behalf of the party he or she represents.

(5) Upon the completion of the hearing, the administrative hearing judge shall afford the interested party the opportunity to present a written brief and arguments to be included as part of the record. TRS shall be provided an equal opportunity to respond to the interested party's written brief and arguments. Once all evidence, arguments and briefs are received by the administrative hearing judge, the record shall be closed.

(6) After the record is closed and as soon as practical, the administrative hearing judge shall prepare a proposed order to be delivered to the Executive Director. This proposed order shall include findings of fact, based exclusively on the evidence and on matters officially noted in the record of the hearing, conclusions of law and a recommendation to the Board of Trustees. A copy of the proposed order shall be served upon all parties by the Executive Director.

(7) The interested party shall have the right to file a written statement outlining any objections, exceptions and/or arguments for the Board of Trustees to consider. This statement must be filed with TRS within twenty (20) days of receipt of the hearing judge's proposed order. No additional evidence or materials may be introduced with the interested party's written statement. TRS may

file a written response to the interested party's statement. TRS will provide a copy of its written response to the interested party at least ten (10) days prior to the time the appeal is scheduled for consideration by the Board of Trustees. The interested party may waive the ten (10) day limit if it would delay scheduling the matter before the Board.

(8) Prior to submitting the hearing judge's proposed order to the Board of Trustees, the Executive Director may settle any grievance or complaint in a manner agreeable to the interested party. In settling any grievance or complaint, the Executive Director shall not exceed the authority previously granted to him or her by the Board of Trustees. The Executive Director shall report to the Board of Trustees any settlement which occurs after the hearing judge's proposed order has been received.

(9) The interested party's appeal will be scheduled for consideration by the Board of Trustees as soon as possible after the proposed order has been received and any additional written materials have been filed with TRS. No hearing before the Board will be scheduled within ten (10) business days of such filings unless mutually agreed to by all parties.

(10) At the meeting at which the Board of Trustees will consider the proposed order, the interested party will be afforded an opportunity to make a brief statement to the Board concerning the facts and any arguments he or she wishes to present and will be allowed to respond to questions from Trustees. Failure of an interested party to appear at the Board hearing without prior notification will result in the interested party relinquishing his or her right to be heard by the Board. If such absence was unavoidable, the interested party may petition the Board for a rehearing within ten (10) days of the scheduled hearing. The Board Chair will have final authority to set the amount of time any party may have to present information to the Board.

(11) After consideration of all evidence and arguments, both oral and written, the Board will make a final determination on the proposed order and issue a final agency order. The Board of Trustees may accept, reject or accept as-modified the proposed order. The Board may make its own conclusions and issue a final agency order in concert with those findings; or re-open the case and hear evidence themselves. If the Board decides to hear the case, it will determine whether to review the complete record, including a transcript of the original hearing conducted by the administrative hearing judge and all documentary evidence, or open the case to receive new evidence and testimony. As in all matters before the Board, a quorum, as required by 70 O.S. §17-106, is necessary to approve any motion, resolution or order under consideration. A copy of the Board's final agency order will be delivered by TRS via certified mail to the interested party and their representatives.

(12) An interested party receiving an adverse ruling from the Board retains certain rights under the Administrative Procedures Act. The interested party may file an action for judicial review in District Court in Oklahoma County. Such action must be filed within thirty (30) days after the interested party receives the Board's final agency order. The interested party may also petition the Board for a rehearing, reopening or reconsideration of the appeal. Such petition must be filed with the Executive Director of TRS within ten (10) days from the date of the Board's decision and must be based on 75 O.S. §317.

(13) The Administrative Procedures Act prohibits direct or indirect communications by interested parties and their representatives with the Board of Trustees in connection with any issue of fact or law regarding an appeal before the Board, except upon notice which provides an opportunity for all parties to participate. The Board of Trustees will not consider any evidence or statements made to them by interested parties in connection with a pending appeal in violation of this subsection.

715:1-1-11. Information requests

From time to time, many professional organizations seek information from the Teachers' Retirement System for improving benefits. It is the desire of the Board of Trustees that the staff work with groups in an advisory capacity or to supply factual data. Requests for technical data that would require the services of the Board's consulting actuary are to be made in writing and will be reviewed by the Board before appropriate action is taken. Because there are a large number of professional organizations and affiliate groups which represent various segments of the teacher retirement membership, the Board encourages organizations to coordinate their efforts through their parent organization.

715:1-1-12. Public participation in adoption of rules

The Board encourages members to participate in the review and promulgation of rules governing the Teachers' Retirement System.

(1) Any interested person may informally request adoption of a rule by correspondence or conference with Teachers' Retirement System staff members. If satisfactory results cannot be achieved in this manner, any interested person may petition the Teachers' Retirement System to adopt, amend, or repeal a rule by filing a clear, written request to initiate rulemaking procedures with the executive director. The petition shall set forth the exact text of the proposed rule and the petitioner's name and address, and the name, business address, and telephone number of petitioner's counsel, if any. The petition may also include written documents in support of the petition.

(2) "Interested person" means any member of the Teachers' Retirement System; any beneficiary of a member; any retiree of the Teachers' Retirement System; any guardian, administrator, or executor of a member, retiree, or beneficiary; or any public school.

(3) The executive director shall grant or deny the petition within 60 days of its receipt. The executive director may consult informally with staff members and the petitioner in reaching a decision. The petition may be amended with consent of the petitioner at any time before a final decision is rendered.

(A) Upon granting the petition in writing, the executive director shall inform the Board and request authority to initiate rulemaking proceedings pursuant to the Administrative Procedure Act and the rules and regulations of the Teachers' Retirement System.

(B) Denial of the petition by the executive director, and reasons therefore, shall be in writing. The petitioner may appeal this decision to the Board of Trustees provided that a written notice of appeal is filed with the executive director within sixty (60) days after the decision of the executive director is issued. If no such notice of appeal is timely filed, or if the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Trustees will occur more than sixty (60) days after receipt of the petition by the executive director, and the petitioner is unwilling to waive the deadline for a final decision until that meeting, the decision of the executive director shall be the final decision of Teachers' Retirement System. The final decision of the Board shall be based on the written petition and written decision of the executive director unless the Board orders a hearing on the petition. If the Board approves the petition, the executive director shall initiate rulemaking proceedings pursuant to the Administrative Procedure Act and the rules and regulations of the Teachers' Retirement System.

(4) Oral and written data, views, and arguments on a proposed rule may be submitted informally to the executive director by informal conference or correspondence within twenty (20) days after publication of notice of the proposed rule is filed with the Department of Libraries.

(5) A written request for a public hearing on a proposed substantive rule may be submitted to the executive director within ten (10) days after publication of notice of the proposed substantive rule provided that the request is made by 25 persons, a governmental subdivision or agency, or an association having at least 25 members. The request shall contain the name and address of each person requesting the hearing and shall clearly specify the proposed rule for which a hearing is requested.

(6) The executive director shall schedule the proposed rule for hearing on a date no earlier than seven days after notice of the hearing date is published and no later than 20 days after receipt of the written request. The executive director or the Board of Trustees may reschedule the hearing in the interest of justice or administrative necessity or for good cause; however, the proposed rule shall not be adopted prior to the requested hearing.

(7) The executive director shall designate himself, a Teachers' Retirement System employee, or a specially appointed person as hearing officer to take the testimony of any interested person in support of or in opposition to the rule. The hearing officer shall designate the order of taking testimony and may establish reasonable time limits on oral testimony, provided that reasonable opportunity is given to amplify oral testimony in writing. All hearings will be held in the offices of Teachers' Retirement System, unless for good cause Teachers' Retirement System shall designate another place of hearing.

715:1-1-13. Change of address, name or district

For active members, to document a new address, a change of name, or a change of employer, TRS should be notified of such change by the member's employer via the TRS Employer Reporting Portal. Active members can update their email address via the myTRS Member Portal. For retired members, changes of address or name shall be documented on the Personal Data Form 1R (Retired) or via the myTRS Member Portal.

715:1-1-14. Definition of IRS Code

The retirement system shall satisfy the applicable qualification requirements for governmental plans as specified in Sections 401 and 414(d) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 or 1986, as amended from time to time and as appropriate for a governmental plan (hereinafter referred to as the "Internal Revenue Code").

715:1-1-15. Distribution rules

(a) Notwithstanding any other provision of the administrative code, all benefits paid from the retirement system shall be distributed in accordance with the requirements of Section 401(a)(9) of the Internal Revenue Code and Treasury Regulations § 1.401(a)(9)-1 through § 1.401(a)(9)-9, even if the member has not submitted the appropriate notice. These provisions override any distribution options that are inconsistent with Internal Revenue Code Section 401(a)(9).

(b) In furtherance of this section, the Board of Trustees and its designee will apply the following provisions:

(1) The entire interest of each member:

(A) will be distributed to such member not later than the required beginning date; or

(B) will be distributed beginning not later than the required beginning date, in accordance with Treasury regulations over the life of such member or over the lives of such member and a designated beneficiary (or over a period not extending beyond the life expectancy of such member or the life expectancies of such member and a designated beneficiary).

(2) If distribution of the member's interest has begun in accordance with subparagraph (1)(B) and the member dies before his or her entire interest has been distributed to the member, the remaining amount shall be distributed at least as rapidly as under the method of distribution being used under subparagraph (1)(B) as of the date of the member's death.

(3) If a member dies before distribution of the member's benefits begins under subparagraph (1)(B), and if any portion of the member's interest is payable to or for the benefit of a designated beneficiary for the beneficiary's lifetime or for a period not to exceed the beneficiary's life expectancy, the distribution must begin no later than December 31 of the calendar year immediately following the calendar year in which the member died. However, if the designated beneficiary is the surviving spouse of the member:

(A) the date on which the distribution is required to begin shall not be earlier than the date on which the member would have attained

(i) age 70 1/2 for distributions required to be made with respect to a member who was born on or before June 30, 1949, or

(ii) age 72 for distributions required to be made with respect to a member who was born on July 1, 1949, through December 31, 1950

(iii) age 73 for distributions required to be made with respect to a member who was born after December 31, 1950, and before January 1, 1959.

(B) if the surviving spouse dies before the distribution to such spouse begins, subparagraph (1)(B) shall be applied as if the surviving spouse were the member.

(4) For benefit payments to beneficiaries that are not covered by paragraph (3), if the member dies before distribution of the member's interest has begun in accordance with subparagraph (1)(B), the member's entire interest must be distributed within 5 years after the member's death.

(5) For purposes of this section, the term "required beginning date" means April 1 of the calendar year following the later of:

(A) the calendar year in which the member reaches

(i) age 70 1/2 (i) age 70 1/2 for distributions required to be made with respect to a member who was born on or before June 30, 1949, or

(ii) age 72 for distributions required to be made with respect to a member who was born on July 1, 1949, through December 31, 1950,

(iii) age 73 for distributions required to be made with respect to a member who was born after December 31, 1950, and before January 1, 1959.

(iv) the applicable age as set forth in Internal Revenue Code Section 401(a)(C)(v).

(B) the calendar year in which the member retires or separates employment from a TRS covered employer.

(6) For purposes of determining benefits, the life expectancy of a member, a member's spouse or a member's beneficiary shall not be recalculated after benefits commence.

(7) The amount of benefits payable to a member's beneficiary may not exceed the maximum determined under the incidental death benefit requirement of Internal Revenue Code Section 401(a)(9)(G).

715:1-1-16. General IRS qualification rules

In addition to other Code provisions otherwise noted, and in order to satisfy the applicable requirements under the Code, the retirement system shall be subject to the following provisions, notwithstanding any other provision of the retirement system law:

(1) The Board of Trustees shall distribute the corpus and income of the retirement system to the members and their beneficiaries in accordance with the retirement system law.

- (2) Forfeitures arising from severance of employment, death, or for any other reason may not be applied to increase the benefits any member would otherwise receive under the retirement system law.
- (3) The Board of Trustees or its designee may not:
 - (A) determine eligibility for benefits,
 - (B) compute rates of contribution, or
 - (C) compute benefits of members or beneficiaries in a manner that discriminates in favor of members who are considered officers, supervisors, or highly compensated, as prohibited under Code Section 401(a)(4)
- (4) The Board of Trustees may not engage in a transaction prohibited by Code Section 503(b).
- (5) Compliance with Code Section 401(a)(2) for exclusive benefit and nondiversion of trust funds:
 - (A) The assets of the Plan shall never inure to the benefit of an employer and shall be held for the exclusive purpose of providing benefits to members and their beneficiaries and defraying reasonable expenses of administering the Plan.
 - (B) The trust fund must not revert, and no contributions shall be permitted to be returned, to the employers, except due to a mistake of fact as permitted by Revenue Ruling 91-4.

715:1-1-17. Inspection, copy and/or reproduction fees

- (a) Any request for a copy of a record not deemed confidential under 70.O.S. §17-109.1 from the Teachers' Retirement System of Oklahoma shall be granted upon payment of the following fees:
 - (1) First six (6) pages - Free
 - (2) Additional pages - \$0.25 per page
 - (3) Certified Copies - \$1.00 per page
 - (4) Facsimiles (Fax) - \$1.00 per page
 - (5) Magnetic tapes or other electronic media - Actual cost
- (b) These fees shall not apply to copies of the System's Rules and Laws books, Annual Reports, Plan Summaries or other publications sent to System members, scholars, authors, news media, or taxpayers seeking to determine whether those entrusted with the affairs of the government are honestly, faithfully, and competently performing their duties as public servants. These fees shall not be used for the purpose of discouraging requests for information or as obstacles to disclosure of requested information. If the request for a record is solely for commercial purposes or clearly causes excessive disruption of the System's essential functions, the Teachers' Retirement System of Oklahoma may charge a reasonable fee to recover the direct cost of the document search, as provided by 51 O.S., §24A.5 (3). Said reasonable fee shall be the equivalent of the applicable pro rata hourly wage of the System employee who performs the search multiplied by the total search time expended by that employee.

715:1-1-18. Retirement benefit reduction to pay a judgment or settlement as an offset

The Board of Trustees may approve an offset of a member's benefit to pay a judgment or settlement against the member for a crime involving the System, for a breach of the member's fiduciary duty to the System, or for funds or monies incorrectly paid to a member or a beneficiary by mistake. Such offsets will be made in accordance with any applicable state statutes and requirements of Section 401(a)(13) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

715:1-1-19. Appointment of Non-voting Trustee

- (a) The Board of Trustees is composed of fourteen (14) voting members and one (1) non-voting member who is to be selected by a statewide organization representing retired educators under Section 17-106 of Title 70 of the Oklahoma Statutes. As there is the possibility that more than one statewide organization representing retired educators exists, TRS shall employ an annual process to determine which such organization has the ability to make the non-voting trustee appointment.
- (b) The term "statewide organization representing retired educators" shall mean an entity primarily organized for the purpose of representing the interests of retired educators in this state and providing member benefits, as is defined in Section 17-122.1 of Title 70 of the Oklahoma Statutes. Furthermore, the entity must have at least two hundred (200) retired educators in its membership who are also members of TRS.
- (c) Any organization that asserts that it meets the definition of a statewide organization representing retired educators shall make application to TRS to be recognized as the organization to make this selection. The application shall be submitted with documentation that shows the legal status of the organization (corporation, association, other). The material submitted shall also provide documentation formally adopted by the organization demonstrating the organization meets the definition of a statewide organization representing retired educators and documentation formally adopted by the organization detailing the internal procedure by which the organization will select the candidate to be appointed to the Board of Trustees.
- (d) The Board of Trustees shall decide which organization(s) meet the definition of an eligible organization.
- (e) Should more than one organization meet the definition of an eligible organization, the Board of Trustees shall maintain a register of eligible organizations and shall place the organizations meeting the definition on the initial register according to the membership number of the organizations, with the organization with the most members being listed first on the register, and the organization with the lowest number of members being listed last. The organization listed first on the register shall follow its own governing documents to make the selection of the non-voting trustee, and provide notification of the appointment to TRS in writing by December 10, 2014. By September 30 of every year thereafter every organization on the register must re-certify to the System that it continues to meet the definition of statewide organization representing retired educators, and that it has at least two hundred (200) members who are retired educators. Any organization that fails to re-certify its eligibility or fails to meet the eligibility shall be stricken from the register by the System. By November 1 of every year the System shall notify the next organization listed on the register of its entitlement to make the non-voting member appointment for the next calendar year, with notification to TRS of the name of the appointed non-voting member in writing by December 10 of that year. This yearly procedure shall continue through the register sequentially until all organizations on the register have made an appointment to the Board of Trustees. Entitlement to make the appointment shall then return to the first organization listed on the register, and the procedure shall continue yearly in the same manner sequentially through the register.
- (f) Any organization making application for eligibility and addition to the register after September 15, 2014, shall make application to TRS in the same manner described above. The Board shall decide by November 1 of the year in which the application is made if the organization meets the definition of an eligible organization. The organization shall then be added to the end of the register. In any year in which more than one organization is added to the register, it shall be added according to the membership number of the organizations, with the organization with the most members being listed first on the register, and the organization with the lowest number of members being listed last.
- (g) The term of the non-voting Trustee appointment made hereunder shall be one (1) calendar year, from January 1 to December 31.

715:1-1-20. Electronic Signatures

TRS may accept electronic signatures in accordance with the Uniform Electronic Transaction Act [12A O.S. §101 et. seq.] and the Electronic Signatures in Global and National Commerce Act (E-SIGN) when conducting business. This provision does not require TRS to conduct business electronically nor prohibit TRS from requiring original or wet ink signatures.

- (1) “Electronic signature” means an electronic sound, symbol, or process attached to or logically associated with a record and executed or adopted by a person with the intent to sign the record.
- (2) TRS will use available technology for adequate preservation, disposition, integrity, security, confidentiality, and auditability of electronic records.
- (3) Electronic signatures may be accepted where TRS provides for the means of electronic submission of an electronic signature and if the electronic signature and document to which it is affixed:
 - (A) identifies the individual signing the document by name,
 - (B) is attributable to the individual signing the document. An electronic record or signature is attributable to a person if it was the act of the person which may be shown in any manner, including the security procedure applied to determine the person to which the election record of electronic signature was attributable,
 - (C) cannot be altered after the electronic signature has been affixed, and
 - (D) otherwise meets any technical requirements of TRS and provisions of the Uniform Electronic Transaction Act.
- (4) The provisions of the Uniform Electronic Transaction Act apply to the time and place of sending and receipt. Should a power failure, internet interruption or internet virus occur, confirmation by the receiving party will be required to establish receipt.
- (5) Any TRS form which requires a notarized signature, may be satisfied if the electronic signature of the person authorized to perform those acts pursuant to the Remote Online Notary Act [49 O.S. §201 et. seq.] or similar law of another state, together with all other information required to be included by other applicable law, is attached to or logically associated with the signature or record.
- (6) Any person who fraudulently represents facts in an electronic transaction, acts without authority, or exceeds their authority to perform an electronic transaction may be prosecuted under all applicable criminal and civil laws.

Title 715 - Teachers' Retirement System

Chapter 10 - General Operations

Subchapter 1 - Membership Provisions

715:10-1-2.	TRS membership eligibility
715:10-1-3.	Mandatory TRS membership
715:10-1-4.	Optional TRS membership
715:10-1-5.	Ineligible for TRS membership
715:10-1-6.	Date of Membership
715:10-1-7.	Membership in education associations
715:10-1-8.	Membership of Employees of Charter Schools
715:10-1-9.	Definitions
715:10-1-15.	Salary limitations for certain returning classroom teachers [EXPIRED]

715:10-1-1. Purpose

The rules of this Chapter have been adopted for the purpose of complying with and implementing the provisions of 70 O.S., Section 17-102 et seq, which establish the Teachers' Retirement System of Oklahoma and place it under the management of the Board of Trustees.

715:10-1-2. TRS membership eligibility

TRS membership eligibility shall be governed by Title 70, Oklahoma Statutes, Section 17-103 [70 O.S. 17-103] and OAC 715:10-1-3, OAC 715:10-1-4 and OAC 715:10-1-5.

715:10-1-3. Mandatory TRS membership

Except as provided in the Alternate Retirement Plan for Comprehensive Universities Act, all classified employees are required by 70 O.S. 17-103 to be members of the Teachers' Retirement System as a condition of employment.

715:10-1-4. Optional TRS membership

The following employees are eligible to be members of TRS at their option:

(1) "Non-classified optional personnel" regularly employed by the public, state-supported educational institutions in Oklahoma for twenty (20) hours or more per week at a rate of compensation comparable to other persons employed in similar positions and receive payment for service by a school or state warrant, recorded on a warrant register with standard payroll deductions, and receive benefits generally provided to regular employees provided,

(A) A non-classified optional employee shall have thirty (30) days from the date of hire or initial eligibility to join the System, whichever is later, to make a one-time written irrevocable election to opt out of the System on a form provided by TRS. If an eligible employee fails to make an election within the thirty-day period, the eligible employee shall be deemed to participate in the System.

(B) A non-classified optional employee who opts out of participation in the System shall be ineligible for future participation in the System; provided, however, that if the employee is hired for a classified position, he or she shall become a member of the System but shall not be eligible for prior service credit for service performed while employed in a non-classified position during which time the employee opted out of participation in the System.

(2) Any member absent from the teaching service who is eligible to continue membership under special provisions of 70 O.S. 17-116.2, provided that such employee continues to be employed by a governmental agency.

(3) A visiting professor from another state or nation.

(4) Classified and Non-Classified members employed after retirement. (See OAC 715:10-17-13).

715:10-1-5. Ineligible for TRS membership

The following employees are ineligible to be members of the Teachers' Retirement System. (Note: Ineligible employment cannot be combined with eligible employment.)

(1) A non-classified employee working less than 20 hours per week.

(2) A substitute, irregular, seasonal, graduate assistant, fellowship recipient, adjunct supplemental or temporary employee. This provision does not apply to adjunct teachers as described in 70 O.S. § 6-122.3 who shall be considered non-classified employees and who may qualify for membership pursuant to OAC 715:10-1-4. (Note: Certain substitute and adjunct employment may qualify for service credit. See OAC 715:10-5-2 and OAC 715:10-5-34).

- (3) Persons employed as a consultant or persons contracting with a public school to transport students, to provide food service, or to provide any other services, who are not "regular" employees of the school. (NOTE: School bus drivers or food service personnel who are regular employees of the school are eligible for membership, subject to the requirements of OAC 715:10-1-2, 10-1-4, 10-1-5.)
- (4) An employee whose primary function at a school or institution is that of a student. If both the following conditions apply, a person employed in an Oklahoma public school, college or university shall be considered to be a student employee.
- (A) The employment is conditional upon the employee's being enrolled as a student at the same institution; and
 - (B) The employee has no other employment during the same payroll period which is eligible for membership in TRS.
- (5) Any persons whose employment compensation comes from federal or other funds and is not administered by an Oklahoma public education employer. (Note: If the employee is not paid by the school on a state warrant, the employee is not considered to be an employee of the school or the State of Oklahoma. Regular employees whose salaries are paid in part or in whole by federal or other funds are eligible for membership if they were hired by the school and paid by the school.)
- (6) Any person employed by the public schools of Oklahoma after July 1, 1991, who is covered by another federal, state, county or local public retirement plan which will provide benefits on the employment service covered by the Teachers' Retirement System.
- (7) Employees of employers that are not governmental employers within the definition of Internal Revenue Code Section 414 and 70 O.S. 17-116.2J.
- (8) Any person employed by the University of Oklahoma or Oklahoma State University or the entities of either comprehensive university who elects to participate in an alternative retirement plan provided by the comprehensive university as provided by the Alternate Retirement Plan for Comprehensive Universities Act.

715:10-1-6. Date of Membership

Date of membership is the date the initial contribution is made to TRS under the current membership account. Any former member of TRS who has previously withdrawn contributions and who redeposits said withdrawn contributions as permitted by law shall have his or her initial date of membership reinstated. Any person who transfers service from the Oklahoma Public Employees Retirement System in accordance with 70 O.S., Section 17-116.2(L), shall be eligible to use his or her initial entry date into the Oklahoma Public Employees Retirement System as his or her date of membership in TRS for all purposes except the member shall not be considered an "eligible participant" under OAC 715:10-15-27 unless the member first joined TRS prior to July 1, 1996. If a current member purchases non-contributory service for those years of qualified employment prior to the current date of membership, the official date of membership will remain the date the member's current membership account was opened. If a member purchases adjunct service that was performed prior to current date of membership, such purchased service shall be considered contributing service for purposes of vesting and membership date.

715:10-1-7. Membership in education associations

(a) Pursuant to Title 70 O.S. §17-116.2, a member absent from employment in the public schools of Oklahoma because of election or appointment as a local, state or national education association officer prior to January 1, 2011, shall be allowed to retain membership in TRS by making the contribution required of such member by 70 O.S. §17-116.2 and any other applicable statute. For purposes of this section the following shall apply:

- (1) An education association is defined as an organization of educators established for the sole purpose of promoting the advancement of educational goals in Oklahoma or at the national level. A local or state association must be duly organized under the laws of the state of Oklahoma with a charter or articles of incorporation filed with the appropriate state agency and must comply with all applicable laws of the state of Oklahoma. A national association must be duly registered or chartered for the purpose of furthering educational goals at the national level.
 - (2) An "officer in an association" is a current member of TRS who is elected or appointed to an employment position within the association commensurate with a position in the public schools of Oklahoma defined as "classified" personnel by 70 O.S. 17-101. The officer must receive compensation for services rendered commensurate with compensation received for similar services in the public schools of Oklahoma.
 - (3) A member must notify TRS in writing on the form provided by TRS, the member's intent to elect to continue membership in TRS within thirty (30) days of becoming employed by an eligible association. In making this election the member shall agree to make payment in accordance with 70 O.S. 17-116.2 for the period of employment that qualifies for continued membership and to comply with all statutes and rules of TRS in maintaining membership.
 - (4) The maximum years of creditable service a member may receive for one such absence shall not exceed twelve (12) continuous years. A member may again qualify for creditable service in an educational association provided that the member returns to employment in the public schools of Oklahoma for a minimum of the same number of years received as credit in the former education association.
 - (5) On the recommendation of the Executive Director, the Board of Trustees may deny eligibility to any local state or national association, when it is judged not to conform with the intent of 70 O.S. 17-116.2 or when it is determined that the association was not established for the sole purpose of promoting the advancement of education.
 - (6) Effective July 1, 1994, a member may elect to continue membership as provided in paragraph (3) above only if the member has ten (10) years of contributory Oklahoma service prior to July 1, 1994.
- (b) Except as provided in the subsection above, election or appointment to a local, state or national education organization shall not qualify any person to accumulate service credit in TRS. Specifically, pursuant to 70 O.S. §509.12, a school employee who takes a leave of absence to hold office as an officer, director, trustee, or agent of a national, statewide, or school district employee association shall not be eligible to accumulate service credit during their period of absence.

715:10-1-8. Membership of Employees of Charter Schools

Employees of charter schools created pursuant to 70 OS § 3-130 et seq. are eligible for membership in the Teachers' Retirement System providing the governing board of the charter school applies for membership for its regular employees. Upon approval of the application for membership by the Board of Trustees all employees of the charter school shall join the Teachers' Retirement System under the same membership eligibility rules applying to employees of other public schools. Employees of charter schools shall in all circumstances follow the rules applicable to other members of the Teachers' Retirement System. Employees of charter schools that do not apply or are not approved for membership in the Teachers' Retirement System shall not be eligible for retirement service credit for years of employment performed in a non-member status and such employees shall not be eligible to purchase service at any time subsequent to such employment.

715:10-1-9. Definitions

The following words and terms, when used in this Chapter, shall have the following meaning, unless the context clearly indicates otherwise. To the extent definitions are not otherwise set out in these rules, this section will provide them.

"Active contributing member" or **"active contributory employment"** or **"active member"** means a TRS member has active contributory employment or is an active or active contributing member when that member:

- (A) is otherwise participating in TRS as classified or nonclassified personnel;
- (B) is providing Oklahoma public education service within the applicable date range of an employment contract or employment term at a participating TRS employer during such time member and employer contributions are being remitted to TRS related to the member's employment;
- (C) the employer has not reported a termination date to TRS for the member; and
- (D) provided, this definition will not include any TRS retiree who has returned to postretirement employment at a TRS employer.

715:10-1-15. Salary limitations for certain returning classroom teachers [EXPIRED]

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Subchapter 3 - Service Eligibility

- 715:10-3-1. Requirements for creditable service
- 715:10-3-2. Requirements for fulltime service
- 715:10-3-3. Requirements for halftime service
- 715:10-3-4. Combining fractional years of service
- 715:10-3-5. Minimum compensation requirements

715:10-3-1. Requirements for creditable service

(a) All members of TRS must be employed a specified amount of time as related to their educational employment position, and earn a minimum salary, before creditable service will be awarded. A school\employment year typically falls between July 1 and June 30 of any year. No service performed as an unpaid volunteer shall be counted as service credit. For service performed on or after July 1, 2013, creditable service will be awarded based upon the information provided by each employer certifying full-time equivalent for each position, subject to approval by TRS. No member shall receive one (1) year of service credit for less than 960 hours of employment. (This does not mean that a member working 960 hours is automatically entitled to receive one (1) year of creditable service.) No more than one (1) year of creditable service shall be awarded for all service in any one (1) school year. For service performed on or after July 1, 2013, fractional service will be awarded for less than full-time employment performed during the contract year.

(b) For service performed from July 1, 2016, through June 30, 2019, service credit will be the result of the days the employee worked during the employment year divided by the number of days the full-time equivalent for that position would be required to work during the entire employment year. A member employed in a position where the full-time equivalent is required to work at least 6 hours per day, 30 hours per week, and 8 months per year shall be considered a full-time employee.

(c) For service performed from July 1, 2016, through June 30, 2019, the fractional service credit awarded for part-time employment will be based on the number of hours the employee works per week divided by the number of hours the full-time equivalent for that position would be required to work per week. A member employed less than 6 hours per day, 30 hours per week, or 8 months in a year shall be considered a part-time employee. If the employee works less days per week or employment year than the full-time equivalent fractional service will also be awarded based on the number of days the employee works in the employment year divided by the number of days the full-time equivalent works during the employment year.

(d) For service performed on or after July 1, 2019, the formula used to calculate service credit will be applied in the same manner for both full-time and part-time employment. The minimum requirement for full-time employment is 6 hours per day, 30 hours per week, and 8 months per year. Service credit will be reduced if the employee works less than the minimum requirement for full-time employment or less than the full-time equivalent for the position worked. Service credit will be calculated by multiplying the full-time equivalent percentage by the employment year percentage as follows:

(1) Full-time equivalent percentage is calculated by dividing the number of hours per week the member was employed by the number of hours per week for the full-time equivalent position.

(2) Employment year percentage is calculated by dividing the number of days the member was employed by the number of days required for the full-time equivalent position for the full employment year.

(e) For service performed on or after July 1, 2016, service credit of less than 1.0 shall be rounded to the nearest tenths (4 hundredths and lower will round down, and 5 hundredths and higher will round up).

715:10-3-2. Requirements for fulltime service

(a) For service performed prior to July 1, 2013, a member employed at least six (6) hours per day (30 hours per week) shall be considered a full-time employee.

(1) A full-time employee may receive one (1) year of creditable service after completing six (6) months or more of employment in a school year.

(2) No member shall receive one (1) year of service credit for less than 720 hours of employment. (This does not mean that a member working 720 hours is automatically entitled to one (1) year of creditable service.)

(b) For service performed on or after July 1, 2013, creditable service will be awarded as outlined in 715:10-3-1.

715:10-3-3. Requirements for halftime service

(a) For service performed prior to July 1, 2013, a member employed at least four (4) but less than six (6) hours per day (at least 20 but less than 30 hours per week) shall be considered a half-time employee.

(1) A half-time employee may receive one-half (1/2) year of creditable service after completing six (6) months or more of employment in a school year.

(2) No member shall receive one-half (1/2) year of service credit for less than 480 hours of employment. (This does not mean that a member working 480 hours is automatically entitled to one-half (1/2) year of creditable service.

(3) A member who is employed one-half (1/2) the standard workload of other persons employed in similar positions shall not receive more than one-half (1/2) year of service credit even if total hours worked exceed 720 hours.

(4) Members who joined TRS prior to July 1, 1991, may receive one-half (1/2) credit for a minimum of three (3) hours per day (540 hours per school year) as long as they remain employed in the same or similar position for the same employing school. Any break in employment shall end this special provision and the member will be required to qualify for full-time or half-time credit as provided for in Subchapters 1 and 3 of this chapter.

(b) For service performed on or after July 1, 2013, creditable service will be awarded as outlined in 715:10-3-1.

715:10-3-4. Combining fractional years of service

(a) For service performed prior to July 1, 2013, fractions of school terms performed as an active contributing member of TRS of at least one (1) school month, in different school years, may be combined to make a total of six (6) months for one (1) year of creditable service. It is not permissible to divide service rendered in one (1) year into fractional parts and combine these fractions with service rendered in two (2) or more years in order to gain additional years of service. All fractional service must be combined together before days of unused sick leave are applied to fractional service to obtain service credit. No more than one (1) year of credit will be given for all employment in any one (1) school year. However, if the member has one hundred twenty (120) or more days of unused sick leave and has ninety (90) or more days of combined work experience at the end of the school year when the member retires, TRS will grant one (1) year of service credit for the 120 days of unused sick leave and round the 90 days of work experience to count as one (1) year of service.

(b) For service performed on or after July 1, 2013, fractional service credit will be added together, and the resulting sum value shall be included in the retirement formula calculations.

715:10-3-5. Minimum compensation requirements

In addition to the above, the following chart outlines the minimum salary levels which constitute membership service credit for the time periods indicated:

Period	Minimum Time Worked	Required Annual Salary	Allowable Credit	
			Monthly	Annually
07/01/43-06/30/61	9 months	\$900	--	1 year
07/01/61-06/30/64	10 months	Less than \$1,000 \$1,000	Not Eligible --	1 year
07/01/64-06/30/84		Less than \$1,000	Not Eligible	
		\$1,000-\$1,500	1-1/2 months	1/4 year
		\$1,501-\$1,750	3 months	1/2 year
		\$1,751-\$1,999	4-1/2 months	3/4 year
		\$2,000 and over	6 months	1 year
07/01/84-06/30/13		Less than \$2,000	Not Eligible	
		\$2,000-\$3,000	1-1/2 months	1/4 year
		\$3,001-\$3,500	3 months	1/2 year
		\$3,501-\$3,999	4-1/2 months	3/4 year
		\$4,000 and over	6 months	1 year
07/01/13-Present			All fractional service eligible	

Subchapter 5 - Establishing Other Service Credits

- 715:10-5-1. Oklahoma service credit after July 1, 1943
- 715:10-5-2. Employment as a substitute teacher in Oklahoma schools
- 715:10-5-3. Official sabbatical leave from an Oklahoma school
- 715:10-5-4. Cost to purchase Oklahoma service
- 715:10-5-4.1. Payment of Contribution Deficit for Education Employees Service Incentive Plan
- 715:10-5-5. Oklahoma service performed prior to July 1, 1943 [REVOKED]
- 715:10-5-6. Verification of Oklahoma service before membership
- 715:10-5-7. Credit for service in other Oklahoma public retirement systems
- 715:10-5-7.1. Transfer of service credit from the Oklahoma Public Employees Retirement System
- 715:10-5-7.2. Transfer of service credit to the Oklahoma Public Employees Retirement System
- 715:10-5-7.3. Service credit transfers for TRS members who are CLEET-certified employees of the University of Oklahoma and Oklahoma State University
- 715:10-5-8. Revocation of \$7,800 waiver
- 715:10-5-9. Re-establishing withdrawn service
- 715:10-5-10. Military service credit
- 715:10-5-11. Military service limited to maximum of five years
- 715:10-5-12. Military service performed prior to July 1, 1943 [REVOKED]
- 715:10-5-13. Military service performed after July 1, 1943
- 715:10-5-14. Military service combined with Oklahoma service
- 715:10-5-15. Application for military service credit
- 715:10-5-16. Cost to purchase military service
- 715:10-5-17. Adjustment for military service after retirement
- 715:10-5-18. Other restrictions on military service
- 715:10-5-19. Out-of-state service credit
- 715:10-5-20. Out-of-state service performed prior to July 1, 1943 [REVOKED]
- 715:10-5-21. Out-of-state service performed after July 1, 1943
- 715:10-5-22. Out-of-state service limited to maximum of five years
- 715:10-5-23. Out-of-state service combined with Oklahoma service
- 715:10-5-24. Continuous, consecutive out-of-state service
- 715:10-5-25. Application for out-of-state service credit
- 715:10-5-26. Cost to purchase out-of-state service
- 715:10-5-27. Other restrictions on out-of-state service
- 715:10-5-28. Sick leave service credit
- 715:10-5-29. Verification of accumulated sick leave
- 715:10-5-30. Ten-year averaging of sick leave
- 715:10-5-31. Documentation of service
- 715:10-5-32. Roll-overs from other qualified plans or conduit IRAs
- 715:10-5-33. Credit for family leave
- 715:10-5-34. Credit for adjunct service in Higher Education
- 715:10-5-35. Employer pick-up of service credit purchase
- 715:10-5-36. Compliance with USERRA and Code Section 414(u), including applicable HEART Act provisions
- 715:10-5-37. Incentive service credit
- 715:10-5-38. Credit for prior service as an optional employee

715:10-5-1. Oklahoma service credit after July 1, 1943

Members may purchase credit for years of employment from July 1, 1943, to date of membership in the public schools of Oklahoma on which contributions were not remitted. One (1) full year (twelve calendar months) as a contributing member of TRS must be completed before a member may make such purchases. All purchased service must meet Teachers' Retirement System minimum requirements for eligibility, in effect at the time of purchase, and be properly documented before purchase is allowed. Payment shall not be allowed for any employment during a school year that was less than one-half (1/2) time, and no credit is allowed for periods of employment when a member participated in an alternate retirement plan as provided for by the Alternate Retirement Plan for Comprehensive Universities Act. All requests for billings to make payment for past service must be made while an active contributing member of the Teachers' Retirement System or within sixty (60) days of termination of employment in the public schools of Oklahoma. Payment for service credit must be completed 90 days prior to the effective date of retirement and a billing request cannot be initiated by any person after the death of the member. (See OAC 715:10-5-4 for cost and method of payment)

715:10-5-2. Employment as a substitute teacher in Oklahoma schools

A member of Teachers' Retirement System who was employed as a substitute teacher may purchase credit for such employment provided they were employed for 120 days in one school year. Such service shall be considered the equivalent of one (1) year of service. Members claiming credit for such service, and who have such service documented through Teacher Personnel, State Department of Education, must pay the actuarial cost of such service as defined by OAC 715:10-5-4. The maximum creditable service granted for substitute teaching shall be five (5) years. Under no condition may substitute teaching service from one school year be combined with substitute teaching service or any other employment from another school year to obtain 120 days of substitute teaching credit. The payment for such service credit may be made in one lump sum or in equal monthly installments up to sixty (60) months, as provided in OAC 715:10-5-4(9).

715:10-5-3. Official sabbatical leave from an Oklahoma school

(a) A member may purchase credit for an official sabbatical leave performed prior to July 1, 1990, provided the member received at least one-half (1/2) pay from the employing school and the governing Board of the employing school or institution granted such leave in its official records or minutes as an "official sabbatical". Payment shall be based on the actuarial cost of such service as defined by OAC 715:10-5-4.

(b) A member may receive credit for an official sabbatical leave performed after July 1, 1990, providing the member receives at least one-half (1/2) pay from the employing school, the governing Board of the employing school or institution designates such leave as an "official sabbatical," and the member notifies the Teachers' Retirement System in writing of his or her intent to make contributions for sabbatical leave credit. To qualify, the member must receive at least one-half pay from the employing school. Compensation from other entities will not qualify in meeting the one-half pay requirement. Contributions for such employment shall be at a rate commensurate with the salary earned as a regular full-time employee in the last preceding school year. "Official sabbatical" means paid leave granted by the governing board of the employing school or institution. The member must elect to participate and make contributions to TRS at the time of the sabbatical. Sabbatical leave cannot be purchased by the member at a later date.

715:10-5-4. Cost to purchase Oklahoma service

The purchase price for each year of Oklahoma service, unless otherwise specified, shall be based on the actuarial cost of the incremental projected benefits being purchased.

(1) The actuarial cost and any tables formulated for the purpose of determining such cost shall be based on the actuarial assumptions adopted by the Board of Trustees to be utilized in the actuarial valuation report for the Fiscal Year beginning each July 1. New actuarial assumptions approved by the Board subsequent to January 1, 1991, shall be incorporated into such tables with an effective date of the next January 1.

(2) The actuarial value shall be based upon the member's age, full-time equivalent salary and contribution level at the time of purchase (or the annual salary of the previous year, if greater), together with the earliest age for retirement with maximum benefits and actuarially assumed salary at time of retirement. If purchase is not made by the due date on the billing statement, the purchase must be recalculated, and the actuarial cost may increase.

(3) For purposes of this actuarial cost, the member's age shall be determined as the age of last birthday.

(4) For purposes of this actuarial cost, the mortality tables shall be based upon mortality tables adopted by the Board of Trustees.

(5) The actuarial cost shall not be less than the contributions required of the member at a rate commensurate with the salary earned as a regular full-time employee the last preceding school year prior to the purchase. Individuals employed on a less than full-time basis shall have their salary adjusted upward, in a prorata manner, to the amount that would be earned if employed full-time.

(6) Payment may be made in a lump sum for all eligible years of service or in installments equal to establishing one (1) year of creditable service.

(7) A billing statement will be issued at the request of the member. The due date of payment shall be the date prior to the member's next birthday or June 30, whichever occurs first.

(8) A member may request payment of past service credits billed in accordance with provisions of 70 O.S. §17-116.8, as amended, to be amortized in monthly installments of not more than sixty (60) months. A payment schedule may be established allowing the member to make monthly payments directly to Teachers' Retirement or through payroll deductions by the member's employer if the employer agrees to make the deductions and remit payments to Teachers' Retirement. Payments remitted by an employer for its employees must be kept separate from the employer's regular retirement contributions. Effective January 1, 2002, installment payments made through employer payroll deductions qualify for special tax treatment. (See OAC 715:10-5-35)

(9) The installment payment schedule provided for in this section must be in equal monthly increments of twelve-month periods not to exceed sixty (60) months. The member shall be responsible for maintaining the payment schedule. Payments are due on the first day of each month. A monthly installment not paid within sixty (60) days of the due date will result in termination of the installment payment schedule with the member given the option of paying the balance of the actuarial cost or receiving partial credit for payments made under the installment schedule as provided for in paragraph (11) of this section.

(10) The monthly payment will be determined by amortizing the total amount due for the service to be purchased over the period of the installment schedule using an interest rate equal to the actuarially assumed interest rate adopted by the Board of Trustees for investment earnings each year.

(11) If the installment payment is terminated for any reason, including termination of employment, death of the member or by cessation of payments, the member or his beneficiary will have the option of paying the remaining balance within six (6) months. If the balance is not

paid, the member will receive credit for service prorated in whole years for only the principal amount paid. Any payment balance that is not used in crediting whole years will be refunded to the member.

(12) Credit will not be awarded for partial years of service unless the member's employment record is such that one-half (1/2) year of credit is included in the original service to be purchased.

(13) Credit for service purchased on an installment schedule will not be added to the member's account until the entire balance is paid, except as provided for in paragraph (11) of this section. All payments must be completed ninety (90) days prior to the effective retirement date of the member.

715:10-5-4.1. Payment of Contribution Deficit for Education Employees Service Incentive Plan

(a) A member whose Regular Annual Compensation, as defined in 70 O. S. § 17-101, was greater than \$40,000 during the school years 1987-88 through 1994-95, must make an additional contribution based on his or her Regular Annual Compensation in excess of \$40,000 to qualify for the provisions of OAC 715:10-15-7.2. A member who chooses not to make the additional contribution payment will not qualify for the EESIP formula.

(b) The payment required for any school year between 1987-88 and 1994-95 is the contribution rate in effect for each year applied to the difference between the member's total Regular Annual Compensation and the amount contributed by or on behalf of the member during the school year. This may include compensation in excess of \$25,000, when the member elected not to contribute on earnings between \$25,000 and \$40,000 for these school years or when the school failed to contribute on the member's total compensation up to \$40,000 for any school year during this period. In addition to the contribution balance, compound interest of ten percent (10%) per annum will be included in the balance due for each year. The interest rate will be applied from June 30 of the school year to the date payment is made to the Teachers' Retirement System.

(c) To qualify for the movement of the first two (2) years of service credits performed before July 1, 1995, the member must make any payment due for the 1993-94 and 1994-95 school years. To qualify for the next two (2) years of service performed prior to July 1, 1995, the member must make any payment due for the 1991-92 and 1992-93 school years. Payment for additional years of service performed prior to July 1, 1995, will be required in descending order back to the 1987-88 school year.

(d) Payment must be made in accordance with existing Internal Revenue Service regulations in effect at the time of payment. TRS will accept after-tax contributions and pre-tax direct or indirect rollovers and transfers from 401(a), 401(k), 403(b), 457 and IRA plans, when allowed by IRS regulations, and installment payment arrangements as provided under OAC 715:10-5-35. Payments may be a combination of any of the available payment methods. (Also see OAC 715:10-5-32. Roll-overs from other qualified plans or conduit IRAs)

(e) Any payment balance(s) required for a member to qualify for the EESIP formula must be completed at least ninety (90) days before the member's retirement date.

(f) TRS staff will calculate each member's contribution deficit for any year(s) based on payroll records as reported by the employing school. When existing payroll records are not sufficient to accurately determine the member's contribution deficit, TRS has the right to request additional information from the member and/or the employing school. If additional records are required, it is the member's responsibility to obtain or cause records to be forwarded to TRS from the employing school.

(g) If a member retires on or after July 1, 2006, and before June 30, 2007, the member will be required to pay 50% of the total contribution deficit balance.

(h) If a member retires on or after July 1, 2007, and before June 30, 2008, the member will be required to pay 75% of the total contribution deficit balance.

- (i) If the member retires on or after July 1, 2008, the member will be required to pay 100% of the total contribution deficit balance.
- (j) TRS will accept EESIP contribution deficit payment(s) from the member at any time prior to the member's retirement. However, if at retirement it is determined that an additional balance is due, the member will be required to make the additional payment, including interest, before his or her first retirement benefit payment is due. If it is determined the member has paid more than the required balance, any difference will be refunded to the member, but no interest will be paid by TRS on the deposits, regardless of the length of time such deposits have been held by the Teachers' Retirement System.

715:10-5-5. Oklahoma service performed prior to July 1, 1943 [REVOKED]

715:10-5-6. Verification of Oklahoma service before membership

All requests for previous or prior Oklahoma service must be properly documented. Verification of such service is the responsibility of the member. Teachers' Retirement System "Verification of Oklahoma Service" form must be completed by the current superintendent, business manager, secretary of the school board or treasurer of the school board of the school where the service was performed.

- (1) An application for past Oklahoma service must be accompanied by documentation consisting of one of the following:
 - (A) Actual Payroll Registers - which must show names of employer/employee; employee's Social Security Number; and monthly salary.
 - (B) A Social Security Detailed Earnings Information Record - which must include employer and salary by calendar year.
 - (C) W-2 Tax Records - Actual copies for each calendar year needed or photocopies of state income tax returns.
- (2) Teachers' Retirement System will review and consider other supporting documentation in conjunction or in lieu of the above. The executive director will rule on the acceptability of all documents presented by members or employing schools in determining credit for past service.
- (3) Under no circumstance will TRS accept affidavits from school officials, co-workers or third parties to attest service performed by a member.

715:10-5-7. Credit for service in other Oklahoma public retirement systems

A member of TRS may receive credit for employment covered by the following Oklahoma public retirement systems: the Oklahoma Firefighters Pension and Retirement System, the Oklahoma Police Pension and Retirement System, the Uniform Retirement System for Justices and Judges, the Oklahoma Law Enforcement Retirement System, Oklahoma Department of Wildlife, and the Oklahoma Public Employees Retirement System (OPERS). Such service must meet the minimum TRS membership requirements. (See Subchapter 3)

- (1) After one full year (twelve calendar months) of TRS contributory service, a member is eligible to purchase service credited in another State retirement system. A certification of service form must be completed by the member's former State retirement system. The certification must show: the date of withdrawal, the salary by fiscal school year, and the total amount of credited service. It shall be the responsibility of the member to notify TRS of intent to claim such service and obtain proper documentation from the member's former State retirement system.
- (2) Employment which did not qualify for membership in the former State retirement system shall not qualify for credit in TRS.
- (3) Employment performed prior to the establishment of the State retirement system for the employment class shall not cause membership in TRS to be denied, however, the type of service

rendered must be accepted by the appropriate State retirement system if the member were now enrolled in that retirement system.

(4) The purchase price for each year of such service shall be based on the actuarial cost of the incremental projected benefits being purchased (see OAC 715:10-5-4).

(5) Under no circumstances can the purchased creditable service exceed the total service verified or the amount of credit given by the former retirement system.

(6) Once purchased, the other State service counts towards eligibility for retirement. Notwithstanding, the Internal Revenue Code Section 401(a)(17) limits shall apply and the member shall not be considered an "eligible participant" under OAC 715:10-15-27 unless the member first joined TRS prior to July 1, 1996. However, the last year in the member's account immediately preceding retirement must be with a public education employer that participates in Teachers' Retirement System.

(7) The member shall not be receiving, or be eligible to receive, retirement credit or benefits from said service in any other public retirement system.

715:10-5-7.1. Transfer of service credit from the Oklahoma Public Employees Retirement System

(a) An active member TRS may receive credit for those years of service accumulated by the member while a member of the Oklahoma Public Employees Retirement System (OPERS), provided the member is not receiving or eligible to receive retirement credit or benefits from said service in any other public retirement system, notwithstanding the years of service sought to be transferred under this section. The member must be an active contributing member of TRS at the time application is made.

(b) A member of OPERS who becomes a member of TRS because of employment by an entity or institution within the Oklahoma State System of Higher Education, State Board of Education, Oklahoma Department of Career and Technology Education, Oklahoma School of Science and Mathematics, Oklahoma Center for the Advancement of Science and Technology, State Department of Rehabilitation Services, Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education, Department of Corrections, State Department of Education, Oklahoma Board of Private Vocational Schools, Board of Regents of Oklahoma Colleges, Oklahoma Student Loan Authority, or the Teachers' Retirement System of Oklahoma may transfer to TRS credit for years of service accumulated in the OPERS.

(c) The member must file a notice with OPERS of the member's election to transfer service credit. The notice must include a list of the years to be transferred and other information as required by OPERS. Notwithstanding the provisions of OAC 715:10-3-4, qualifying service accumulated as a member of OPERS shall be accepted as service credit in TRS, subject to any statutory limitations. Provided no member, including those who transport qualifying service from OPERS, may be awarded more than one (1) year of service credit in any school year.

(d) Except for members transferring credit as provided in subsection (b) of this section, TRS, within thirty (30) days of receipt of notification from OPERS of an intent to transfer service to the member's account, shall determine the present value of the member's incremental projected benefit discounted according to the member's age at the time of the transfer. This determination shall be computed at the earliest age at which the member would be able to retire and calculated in accordance with OAC 715:10-5-4 and 70 O.S. §17-116.8. Said computation shall assume an unreduced benefit and be computed using interest, salary projections and mortality assumptions consistent with the actuarial assumptions adopted by the Board of Trustees for purposes of preparing the annual actuarial evaluation.

(e) Upon completion of the computation provided for in subsection (d) of this section, TRS shall notify the member and OPERS of the cost to transfer service. No retirements funds shall be transferred

to TRS from OPERS until TRS has notified OPERS that all necessary documentation from the member has been received by TRS and OPERS has received its signed final election form.

(f) If the cost to TRS of the actuarial value of the incremental benefit is greater than the cost as calculated for the same years of service in OPERS, the member, except as provided in subsection (b) of this section, shall elect to pay any difference to receive full credit for the years sought to be transferred, or receive prorated service credit for only the amount received from OPERS. Such an election shall be made in writing, be received by TRS prior to receiving the credit provided for in this section, and shall be irrevocable.

(g) For members not required to make an election provided in subsection (f), including those as provided in subsection (b), the member must notify TRS to complete the transfer of service credit provided for in this section. Such notification must be made in writing and received by TRS prior to receiving the credit provided for in this section.

(h) Upon receipt of the written election provided in subsection (f) or the notification required in subsection (g) in this section, TRS shall notify OPERS that the necessary documentation has been received.

(i) Within sixty (60) days of the member's successful completion of the requirements in this section, OPERS shall transfer the retirement funds for transported service to TRS.

(j) Upon receipt of all monies transferred by OPERS, TRS shall credit the member's account for the deposit. Except as provided in subsection (b) of this section, the member is required to pay any difference between the amount determined in subsection (d) of this section and the amount received from OPERS within sixty (60) days of notification by TRS unless the member elects monthly installments and pays the balance due in accordance with OAC 715:10-5-4.

(k) Except as provided by subsection (b) of this section, any member who ceases to make payment, terminates employment, retires or dies before completing the payments provided for in this section shall receive prorated service credit for only those payments made, unless the unpaid balance is paid by the member, the member's estate or beneficiary within six (6) months after the member's death, termination of employment or retirement, provided no retirement benefits shall be payable until the unpaid balance is paid, unless the member or beneficiary affirmatively waives the additional six-month period in which to pay the unpaid balance.

(l) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (k) of this section, if any member fails for any reason to satisfy the requirements of this rule, the election to transfer service credit shall be void and of no effect, and any service credited as a result of this transfer shall be canceled. TRS shall return to OPERS any monies transferred for the canceled service.

(m) Years of service transferred pursuant to this section shall be used in determining the member's retirement benefit. Participating service, as defined by OPERS, shall be credited to the member's account for purposes of vesting in accordance with OAC 715:10-7-1. A member who joined TRS on or after July 1, 1992, and transfers service credit for employment performed as a member of OPERS on or before July 1, 1992, shall receive credit for such service as if the service were performed as a member of TRS, and the member's eligibility for retirement shall be determined as if the member had been a member of TRS from the date of such service. Notwithstanding, the Internal Revenue Code Section 401(a)(17) limits shall apply and the member shall not be considered an "eligible participant" under OAC 715:10-15-27 unless the member first joined TRS prior to July 1, 1996.

715:10-5-7.2. Transfer of service credit to the Oklahoma Public Employees Retirement System

(a) Any member of the Teachers' Retirement System, who is an active member of the Oklahoma Public Employees Retirement System, may file a notice of election to transfer credit for those years of service accumulated by the member while a member of the Teachers' Retirement System.

(b) A member of the Teachers' Retirement System whose last qualifying employment was with an entity or institution within the Oklahoma State System of Higher Education, State Board of Education, Oklahoma Department of Career and Technology Education, Oklahoma School of Science and Mathematics, Oklahoma Center for the Advancement of Science and Technology, State Department of Rehabilitation Services, Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education, Department of Corrections, State Department of Education, Oklahoma Board of Private Vocational Schools, Board of Regents of Oklahoma Colleges, Oklahoma Student Loan Authority, or the Teachers' Retirement System of Oklahoma may transfer to the Oklahoma Public Employees Retirement System credit for years of service accumulated in the Teachers' Retirement System.

(c) The member must file a notice with the Teachers' Retirement System and the Oklahoma Public Employees Retirement System of the member's election to transfer service credit. The notice must include a list of the years to be transferred and the member's social security number or other identifying information that may be required by either retirement system to locate and evaluate the member's service credit.

(d) Within thirty (30) days of receipt of notification of the member's intent to transfer service to the Oklahoma Public Employees Retirement System, the Teachers' Retirement System shall:

- (1) determine the sum of the employee and employer contributions applicable to the years of service sought to be transferred plus interest consistent with the actuarial assumptions adopted by the Board of Trustees for purposes of preparing the annual actuarial evaluation, and
- (2) if the member has a vested account with the Teachers' Retirement System, calculate the present value of the service to be transferred, discounted according to the member's age at the time of transfer.

(e) For purposes of this section, employer contributions apportioned to each member for each fiscal year shall be determined as a percentage of revenue received from the tax on natural gas and contributions from local employers required by 70 O.S. 17-108.1 divided by the annual payroll of active members of the Teachers' Retirement System. Total revenue from the tax on natural gas and local employers shall be apportioned to active members as a percentage of the actuarial present value of future benefits for active members divided by the actuarial present value future benefits for all members of the Teachers' Retirement System. The Board of Trustees shall approve a separate schedule using this computation for each fiscal year.

(f) The computation defined in paragraph (2) of subsection (d) of this section shall assume an unreduced benefit and be computed using interest and mortality assumptions consistent with the actuarial assumptions adopted by the Board of Trustees for purposes of preparing the annual actuarial evaluation but shall not make any projections regarding future salary.

(g) Upon completion of the computation(s) defined in subsection (d) of this section, the Teachers' Retirement System shall notify the member and the Oklahoma Public Employees Retirement System of the amount to be transferred. Except as provided in subsection (b) of this section, said amount shall be the greater of the product of paragraphs (1) and (2) of subsection (d) of this section. For those members included in subsection (b) of this section, the Teachers' Retirement System shall transfer to the Oklahoma Public Employees Retirement System is amount as calculated in paragraph (d)(1) of this rule.

(h) Upon notification from the Oklahoma Public Employees Retirement System that the requirements of the transfer have been completed, the Teachers' Retirement System shall, within sixty (60) days, remit to the Oklahoma Public Employees Retirement System the lesser of the amount calculated under subsection (f) of this section, or the amount certified by the Oklahoma Public Employees Retirement System that is necessary to effect said transfer.

(i) A former member of the Teachers' Retirement System may redeposit any previously withdrawn account for the purpose of transferring the former member's service credit to the Oklahoma Public Employees Retirement System. The former member shall remit to the Teachers' Retirement System the amount of accumulated contributions the member has withdrawn plus simple interest of ten

percent (10%) per annum prior to making the election. The deposits made by the former member will reestablish his or her account in the Teachers' Retirement System and that amount will become part of the amount to be transferred as determined in subsection (d) of this section. If the election is deemed invalid and the transfer is canceled, the accumulated contributions plus interest remitted to the Teachers' Retirement System shall be returned to the member. No additional interest will be paid by the Teachers' Retirement System in such cases.

(j) All service credit accumulated by the member in the Teachers' Retirement System shall be canceled upon the transfer of any service credit. The member shall forfeit all rights to retirement benefits or service credits in the Teachers' Retirement System, and shall be considered to have withdrawn from the Teachers' Retirement System.

(k) If for any reason the member fails to satisfy the requirements of this transfer, the election to transfer service credit shall be void and of no effect, and the Oklahoma Public Employees Retirement System shall return all monies previously remitted in the member's behalf. The member's account in the Teachers' Retirement System will be reestablished at the same level as before the transfer was initiated.

715:10-5-7.3. Service credit transfers for TRS members who are CLEET-certified employees of the University of Oklahoma and Oklahoma State University

The statutory authority for this service credit transfer is outlined in Title 47, Oklahoma Statutes, Section 2-314 [47 O.S. 2-314].

715:10-5-8. Revocation of \$7,800 waiver

Any member who elected to contribute on \$7,800 prior to January 1, 1978, whose salary was more than \$7,800 during the school years 1974-75 through 1978-79, may elect to make back contributions on the difference between \$7,800 and the member's actual salary, not to exceed \$10,000 for each applicable school year, plus interest compounded annually at ten percent (10%) per annum. Such payment shall be made prior to the official retirement date of the member.

715:10-5-9. Re-establishing withdrawn service

After re-establishing participation in TRS, a member may redeposit a withdrawn account to re-establish service previously withdrawn from the system. For purposes of this section the following shall apply:

- (1) A "classified" or "non-classified" member (except as noted in paragraph 2 of this section) who has returned to public education employment and has established one full year (twelve calendar months) of creditable Oklahoma service, is eligible to redeposit withdrawn contributions. A redeposit of withdrawn contributions must include all applicable interest, which shall be computed at a simple interest rate of ten percent (10%) per annum from the date of the withdrawal to the date repayment is made.
- (2) Non-classified members who voluntarily withdrew from membership in TRS without terminating employment in the public schools of Oklahoma, are not eligible to redeposit or purchase past service for any period of employment between the date of the membership period covered by the withdrawn account and the date of return to membership in TRS.
- (3) Prior to July 1, 2021, non-classified members who voluntarily ceased monthly contributions to TRS while continuing to be employed in an eligible position shall be considered to have withdrawn from membership. On or after July 1, 2021, non-classified members who irrevocably elected out of TRS membership while continuing to be employed in an eligible position shall be considered to have withdrawn from membership. Members with withdrawn accounts under this subsection are not eligible to redeposit or purchase past services for any period of employment

between the date of the membership period covered by the withdrawn account and any future date of return to membership to TRS, if any.

(4) Requests for redeposits should be made to TRS in writing. The request must include the name in which the service was rendered, the TRS Member ID number or Social Security number, and the number of years withdrawn.

(5) Documentation of this service is on file with TRS and will be verified by the staff. Service that cannot be verified must be purchased under the rule for establishing service prior to membership.

(6) Repayments of withdrawn accounts may be made by active contributing members of TRS in a single lump sum, which includes the withdrawn contributions and all applicable interest, or in installment payments. Such installment payments may be paid in 12-month increments, but shall be completed within 60 months. The member shall be responsible for maintaining the payment schedule. Payments are due on the first day of each month. A monthly installment not paid within sixty (60) days of the due date will result in termination of the installment payment schedule. The member will be given the option of paying the remaining balance within six (6) months. If the balance is not paid in full in the remaining six (6) month period, the redeposit will be canceled. Installment payments shall include interest based upon actuarial assumptions adopted by the TRS Board of Trustees. No proration is allowed for partial payments. For any incomplete redeposit, the amount paid by the member shall be refunded without interest.

(7) Redepositing of withdrawn accounts in a lump sum or on an installment plan basis must be completed, and all payments received by TRS, ninety (90) days prior to the member's effective retirement date.

(8) No person may make a redeposit to a member's account after the death of the member.

715:10-5-10. Military service credit

An active contributing member of TRS may purchase credit for active duty service in the Armed Forces of the United States of America. The member must have received an honorable discharge from the Armed Services to qualify for military service credit. Active duty is defined as that time a member served in the Armed Forces of the United States of America from the date inducted to the date of separation. (Time spent between enlistment and induction, or other time spent as a civilian between military service periods, will not be counted as military service.) Credit for military service shall not exceed the number of years obtained when the total months of service are applied to calendar years (January 1 to December 31 periods). Therefore, thirty-six (36) months of military service cannot count for more than three (3) years of TRS membership; forty-eight (48) months cannot count for more than four (4) years; etc.

715:10-5-11. Military service limited to maximum of five years

Credit for military service may be purchased and is limited to a maximum of five (5) years. This includes service both before and after July 1, 1943. No credit may be given for any year of military duty which duplicates any other credit already granted or in which a year of creditable service is available for service in the public schools of Oklahoma. The member must have two (2) years of creditable Oklahoma service after the years of military service credit for each year to be purchased. Out-of-state service credit cannot be counted as employment in obtaining military service credit. The purchase of military service must be completed, and payment made to TRS, no later than 90 days prior to the effect date of a member's official retirement date.

715:10-5-12. Military service performed prior to July 1, 1943 [REVOKED]

715:10-5-13. Military service performed after July 1, 1943

Military service performed after July 1, 1943, may be purchased for any school year in which the member served on active duty for a minimum of six (6) months or 180 days, whichever affords the maximum benefit to the member. Time spent as a reservist at summer camps, or weekend-duty obligations, shall not be counted.

715:10-5-14. Military service combined with Oklahoma service

Active duty service after July 1, 1943 can be combined with Oklahoma service performed in the same school year to obtain one year of service. The combined service must total one hundred eighty (180) days. If the Oklahoma service to be combined with military service was not as an active contributing member of TRS, the member must have worked a minimum of ninety (90) school days in Oklahoma public schools. Any military service combined with Oklahoma service counts as one (1) year toward the maximum service allowed for military service credit.

715:10-5-15. Application for military service credit

Members desiring to obtain credit for military service credit should request in writing to be billed for the cost of the credit. Included with the request should be a certified copy of the member's service record showing the dates and nature of the member's active military duty [Form DD-214, Form DD-217 or VA Certification of Active Duty]. TRS may require the member to provide such other evidence as may be required to establish the member's eligibility for military service. When the system determines the duty eligible for credit, it shall bill the member for the years of eligible credit. If the member becomes eligible for additional credit after the billing by TRS it shall be the responsibility of the member to request a second billing. Payment must be made by the date shown on the billing statement to avoid additional charges that may be required after the expiration of the billing date.

715:10-5-16. Cost to purchase military service

- (a) The purchase price for each year of military service defined in OAC 715:10-5-13 shall be based on the actuarial cost as defined in OAC 715:10-5-4, except as provided in paragraph (b) of this rule. All requests for billings to make payment for such service must be made while an active contributing member of TRS, or within sixty (60) days of termination of employment in the public schools of Oklahoma, but must be completed 90 days prior to the effective date of retirement. No person may request a billing to initiate the purchase of military service credit after the date of death of the member.
- (b) In the event an active contributing member is called to active military duty, he or she shall be allowed to make contributions for benefits and service credits with respect to "qualified military service", in accordance with Section 414(u) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 and the Uniformed Services Employment and Re-employment Rights Act of 1994.

715:10-5-17. Adjustment for military service after retirement

All credit for active military duty performed after July 1, 1943, must be purchased prior to the official retirement date of the member. No credit or adjustment will be made to a member's account after retirement unless evidence points to a clear and convincing error on the part of TRS staff. The Executive Director will rule on the circumstances when such cases arise. Credit for active military duty will be accepted for eligible service prior to July 1, 1943, when evidence of such service is provided to TRS. An adjustment in the monthly retirement benefits of the member will be made beginning with the next check due if proper documentation is received by TRS by the 15th of the month. The adjustment in benefits shall not be retroactive.

715:10-5-18. Other restrictions on military service

Military service performed after the last year of Oklahoma membership service shall not qualify as military service. A member who returns to Oklahoma public education employment after serving in the military shall purchase that military service in the same manner as a new member of TRS: i.e., the member must have two (2) years of Oklahoma service after the military service for each year of military service purchased. No military service can be used to meet the minimum requirement of five (5) full years of employment in the public schools of Oklahoma to qualify for vesting and retirement benefits.

715:10-5-19. Out-of-state service credit

An active, contributing member of TRS may obtain out-of-state service credit for qualified employment in public educational institutions outside the State of Oklahoma which are maintained in whole or in part by one of the states of the United States of America, the territories of the United States of America, or by a Military Dependent School operating under the Department of Defense of the United States of America, or while in the Peace Corps, providing he or she is not receiving and is not eligible to receive retirement credit or benefits from said service in any other public retirement system of this state, or any other state or territory of the United States. Qualifying employment requirements shall be the same as in the public schools of Oklahoma. Employment service deemed ineligible for membership service in Oklahoma shall not qualify for out-of-state service credit under any conditions. Time of employment and salary requirements for service credit for out-of-state shall be the same as membership service and prior service credit in Oklahoma (see subchapter 3 of this chapter). The member's out-of-state service must have been covered by and credited in the employing state's public retirement system to be eligible for service credit in TRS.

715:10-5-20. Out-of-state service performed prior to July 1, 1943 [REVOKED]

715:10-5-21. Out-of-state service performed after July 1, 1943

Qualifying out-of-state service credit performed after July 1, 1943 may be purchased by any member of TRS where the member was employed as a full-time employee for a minimum of six (6) months or more during any one (1) school year, subject to the restrictions in OAC 715:10-5-19.

715:10-5-22. Out-of-state service limited to maximum of five years

Credit for out-of-state service is limited to a maximum of five (5) years. This includes credit for service both before and after July 1, 1943. No credit may be given for any year of out-of-state service which duplicates any other credit already granted or in which a year of creditable service is available for service in the public schools of Oklahoma. The member must have two (2) years of creditable Oklahoma service after each year of out-of-state service purchased. Military service credit cannot count as employment in obtaining credit for out-of-state service credit.

715:10-5-23. Out-of-state service combined with Oklahoma service

Qualifying out-of-state service after July 1, 1943 can be combined with Oklahoma service performed in the same school year to obtain one year of service. The combined service must total one hundred twenty (120) days of employment, excluding preschool conference, holidays or other days when the member was not required to report to work. If the Oklahoma service to be combined with out-of-state service was not as an active contributing member of TRS, the member must have worked a minimum of ninety (90) days in Oklahoma public schools. Under no condition may out-of-state service performed in one school year be combined with Oklahoma service in a different school year. Any service combined with Oklahoma service counts as one (1) year toward the maximum service allowed for out-of-state service credit.

715:10-5-24. Continuous, consecutive out-of-state service

Continuous consecutive out-of-state service performed in two (2) school years may be combined to receive a year of out-of-state service credit. Continuous consecutive service shall mean service performed as a full-time employee of a public school of another state without any break in employment between one school year and the next. A member employed the second semester of one school year and the first semester of the next school year may qualify for one (1) year of out-of-state credit. Under no condition shall a member receive more credit for out-of-state service than the member would have accrued had the service been performed in the public schools of Oklahoma.

715:10-5-25. Application for out-of-state service credit

Members desiring to obtain credit for out-of-state service credit should submit to TRS a Verification of Out-of-State Service form. Included with the verification should be a list of all employment in the public schools of other states. Verification forms must be completed by the state retirement system for the employing state. TRS may require the member to provide such other evidence as may be required to establish the member's eligibility for out-of-state service. When the system determines the service eligible for credit, it shall bill the member for the years of eligible credit. If the member becomes eligible for additional credit after the billing by TRS it shall be the responsibility of the member to request a second billing. Payment must be made by the date shown on the billing statement to avoid additional charges that may be required after the expiration of the billing date.

715:10-5-26. Cost to purchase out-of-state service

The purchase price for each year of out-of-state service defined in OAC 715:10-5-21 shall be based on the actuarial cost as defined in OAC 715:10-5-4. All requests for billings to make payment for such service must be made while an active contributing member of TRS, or within sixty (60) days of termination of employment in the public schools of Oklahoma, but must be completed 90 days prior to the effective date of retirement. No person may request a billing to initiate the purchase out-of-state service credit after the date of death of the member.

715:10-5-27. Other restrictions on out-of-state service

Out-of-state service performed after the last year of Oklahoma membership service shall not qualify as out-of-state credit. A member who returns to Oklahoma public education employment after working out-of-state shall purchase that out-of-state service in the same manner as a new member of TRS: i.e., the member must have two (2) years of Oklahoma service after the out-of-state service for each year of out-of-state service purchased. No out-of-state service or salaries shall be utilized for the calculation of a member's final average salary at retirement. No out-of-state service can be used to meet the minimum requirement of five (5) full years of employment in the public schools of Oklahoma to qualify for vesting and retirement benefits.

715:10-5-28. Sick leave service credit

(a) A member who has unused sick leave days at retirement may receive up to one (1) additional year of service credit. The additional service credit for sick leave days shall be equal to the number of unused sick leave days divided by one hundred twenty (120) days. Such service shall be added to other service credit earned while employed by the public schools of Oklahoma. It is the responsibility of the member to obtain verification of sick leave from the employing school prior to the member's official retirement date. No adjustment in retirement benefits shall be made for sick leave documented after the member's retirement date.

(b) Sick leave cannot be combined with out-of-state, military service or any non-public Oklahoma school employment to obtain additional credit toward retirement. Service credit obtained by unused sick leave may be used in qualifying for retirement benefits under the "Combination of 80," "Combination of 90," and "Rule of 90/Minimum 60." For any member who joined TRS prior to July 1, 1995, the year of credit received for sick leave shall be treated as service earned prior to July 1, 1995. Unused sick leave may not be used to meet any vesting requirement nor can it be used to meet the requirement for 10 years of contributory service for disability retirement or 10 years of creditable service for a monthly annuity in lieu of death benefit.

(c) Sick leave accumulated while employed by any employer other than a public school as defined by 70 O.S. §17-101 shall not be counted for purposes of obtaining additional retirement credit under this rule.

715:10-5-29. Verification of accumulated sick leave

Sick leave can only be verified on termination of employment, or when filing a retirement contract. The verification must be made by the superintendent, financial officer, clerk of the board of education, or treasurer of the school district who must attest to the accuracy of the records used to make the verification. The verification must be based on records maintained and available at the local school and must be in keeping with local board policy. TRS will accept the employer's sick leave policy of awarding sick leave, however, in no instance will TRS accept more than fifteen (15) days of unused accumulated sick leave for any one (1) school year. An employer may not grant additional sick leave for the purpose of establishing, or adding to, the member's total service credit. Sick leave donated by other employees cannot be added to a member's sick leave record for purposes of this rule. The System may require the employing school to make available to it such other evidence as may be required to establish the member's eligibility for sick leave credit. Unused sick leave can be accumulated from the date of employment in the public schools of Oklahoma, or August 1, 1959, whichever occurred last, to the date of termination of employment in the public schools of Oklahoma. Reimbursements received by a member for unused sick leave accumulated prior to retirement shall not be considered as "regular annual compensation" as defined in OAC 715:10-13-1 and not subject to TRS contributions as provided for in Subchapter 13 of this chapter. (NOTE: Employers are encouraged to establish a system of tracking total days earned and used, even when the total days credited exceed the maximum limit set for local policy.)

715:10-5-30. Ten-year averaging of sick leave

When a member cannot obtain documentation of accumulated sick leave because records at the employing school(s) are not available, TRS will calculate an average using the last ten (10) years of employment. The number of days absent each year during the last ten (10) years shall be averaged to determine the average number of sick leave days used each year. The average sick leave used will be subtracted from a standard ten (10) days per school year and the difference multiplied by the total years of creditable Oklahoma membership service.

715:10-5-31. Documentation of service

TRS reserves the right to require documentation of all service years credited to a member's account.

- (1) Members who are claiming eligible service after the school year in which it was actually rendered must verify the claim on the appropriate Teachers' Retirement System form. The specific documentation required will depend on the type of service being purchased. Under no circumstances will affidavits be accepted as documentation.
- (2) The ultimate responsibility for obtaining verification of service is that of the member.
- (3) The correctness of the service must be certified on the appropriate form by an official of the school where the service was rendered. This can be done by the superintendent, business manager, secretary of the school board, or treasurer of the school board at the time the certification is made. The certification must be based upon existing records maintained by the school and certified copies of these records must be attached to the application.
- (4) TRS will also accept federal or state tax records, or Detailed Earnings Information records from the Social Security Administration, as supporting documentation of employment where records cannot be obtained from the employing school, or where the records available are not deemed to be conclusive.
- (5) No credit may be granted unless clear and convincing proof of eligible service has been provided from a source other than the applicant member. A conclusion that clear and convincing

proof has not been provided should in no way be construed as a challenge to the member's or any other affidavit's truthfulness and integrity.

(6) The executive director of TRS shall be empowered to determine the completeness of documents submitted by a member in establishing service credit.

715:10-5-32. Roll-overs from other qualified plans or conduit IRAs

Credit for past service, including redeposits of withdrawn Oklahoma service, defined in this subchapter, contribution deficit payments provided for by 70 O.S. § 17-116.2C or balances due as authorized under 70 O.S. §17-116.2, may be purchased with roll-overs from another retirement plan if allowed by the Internal Revenue Code. This includes "conduit IRAs" which have been established with funds received from a 401(a) plan distribution for the purpose of holding the funds separate until a rollover can be consummated, traditional IRAs, 403(b) tax-deferred annuity plans, 401(k) and 457 deferred compensation plans. For a roll-over payment to be accepted by Teachers' Retirement the following conditions must be met:

- (1) The member should contact Teachers' Retirement to obtain a billing statement for the service to be purchased and convey the intent to make total or partial payment by a roll-over.
- (2) The member must obtain written documentation from the originating institution verifying the amount of the distribution and that the monies came from a qualified plan under the Internal Revenue Code.
- (3) The roll-over check from the qualified plan must be made payable to the Oklahoma Teachers' Retirement System, For Benefit Of and the member's name. The member must deliver the check to Teachers' Retirement with the required documentation and the billing statement for the service to be purchased. Teachers' Retirement will only accept payment for the amount of the billing statement. If the distribution from the originating institution is greater than the billing, the originating institution must be willing to generate a check payable to Teachers' Retirement for the exact amount of the billing statement. If the distribution from the originating institution is less than the billing, a personal check or cashier's check must accompany the roll-over proceeds, or the member may pay the balance through an installment payment plan. Payments in excess of the billing will not be accepted.
- (4) A receipt for the payment will be issued after Teachers' Retirement has determined all documentation and the appropriate amount of funds have been received.
- (5) Roll-overs must comply fully with the Internal Revenue Code and applicable Internal Revenue Service regulations.

715:10-5-33. Credit for family leave

(a) Pursuant to 70 O.S. §6-104.1, a full-time teacher who takes ninety (90) or fewer days of leave without pay to care for the teacher's child during the first year of the child's life shall receive retirement service credit for the days taken as leave without pay if:

- (1) the employing district certifies to TRS that the employee's leave without pay was taken with the proper approval of the employing district's Board of Education; and
 - (2) TRS receives payment for the actuarial cost of the service credit for the days taken as leave without pay;
- (b) The teacher shall notify their employer and TRS in writing within thirty (30) days from the date the teacher returns to work that the teacher will pay the actuarial cost of the service credit for the days taken as leave without pay.
- (c) The teacher shall have up to twelve (12) months from the date they return to work to pay the actuarial cost for the days taken as leave without pay.

715:10-5-34. Credit for adjunct service in Higher Education

- (a) Pursuant to 70 O.S. §116.16, a TRS member who was employed in an adjunct position in an institution under The Oklahoma State System of Higher Education before joining the Retirement System may purchase service credit for that employment.
- (b) The member may purchase one year of service credit for each school year in which he or she worked a minimum of eighteen (18) credit hours in such an adjunct position, up to a maximum five (5) years. Such purchased service credit shall be considered contributing service for vesting and retirement.
- (c) The purchase price for eligible adjunct service credit shall be based upon actuarial cost as defined in OAC 715:10-5-4. All requests for billings to make payment for such service credit must be made while the member is an active contributing member or within sixty (60) days after the end of the member's employment in the public schools in Oklahoma and must be completed 90 days prior to the member's effective retirement date. No person may request a billing to initiate the purchase of service credit for such adjunct employment after the member's death.
- (d) The payments for such service credit may be made in one lump sum or in equal monthly installments for up to sixty (60) months, as provided in OAC 715:10-5-4 (9).

715:10-5-35. Employer pick-up of service credit purchase

- (a) The purpose of OAC 715:10-5-35 is to provide a pick-up of employee contributions by participating employers under Section 414(h)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 for contributions that are made for the purpose of purchasing service credit or re-establishing withdrawn service under Chapter 10, Subchapter 5 of these Rules, and for contribution deficit payments provided for by 70 O.S. §17-116.2C or balances due as authorized under 70 O.S. §17-116.2. Employers may elect to participate in the pick-up of employee contributions made for the purpose of purchasing service credits or re-establishing withdrawn service by a resolution adopting the provisions of this regulation.
- (b) An active member of TRS who elects to purchase or re-establish service credit under any applicable provision of Chapter 10, Subchapter 5 of these Rules, or to make contribution deficit payments provided for by 70 O.S. §17-116.2C or balances due as authorized under 70 O.S. §17-116.2 through installments may elect to do so through a binding, irrevocable payroll reduction authorization established by TRS.
- (c) An active member of TRS, having executed a binding, irrevocable payroll reduction authorization with respect to any such contributions, shall not be entitled to receive the contributed amounts directly instead of having them paid by the employer to TRS. Such contributions shall be remitted to the TRS and credited to the member in the same manner as all other employee contributions. Such contributions, although designated as employee contributions, will be paid by the employer in lieu of contributions by the employee. The contributions so assumed shall be treated as tax-deferred employer "pick-up" contributions pursuant to the United States Internal Revenue Code Section 414(h)(2), as authorized in a favorable letter ruling by the Internal Revenue Service.
- (d) An active member of TRS may elect to pay all or part of any contribution to purchase or re-establish service credit or to make contribution deficit payments provided for by 70 O.S. §17-116.2C or balances due as authorized under 70 O.S. §17-116.2 through such payroll reduction. The amount by which an employee's compensation will be reduced and the duration of the reduction shall be specified on the authorization form prescribed by TRS and the amounts and duration shall be irrevocable and binding once made. Prepayment of amounts covered by the authorization is not permitted. However, nothing herein shall prevent a member from paying any amounts not covered by the authorization with after-tax dollars, provided that any such after-tax payments by an employee of a participating employer shall be paid directly by the employee to TRS, as opposed to being paid to

or withheld by the participating employer. An employee of non-participating employer may purchase service credit or re-establish withdrawn service by making after-tax payments directly to TRS.

(e) No such payroll reduction shall begin unless and until the member executes the payroll reduction authorization described below on a form prescribed by TRS and delivers the form to the treasurer or other disbursing officer of the participating employer. After receiving the binding, irrevocable payroll reduction authorization, the treasurer or other disbursing officer of each participating employer shall reduce the member's regular annual compensation by the authorized amount and remit these contributions to TRS, in addition to (but separate from) the mandatory contributions from the member's regular annual compensation pursuant to 70 O.S., §17-116.2 and OAC 715:10-13-3. The participating employer shall continue to make such reductions for the number of months specified on the form and shall treat these reductions as picked-up contributions.

(f) All such payroll reductions, including the amounts and the duration specified, shall be binding and irrevocable upon the member's execution of the prescribed form.

(g) Notwithstanding the above, such reductions will cease only after the authorization has expired by its terms or upon any of the following events:

(1) The member's death. In the event of a member's death, the designated beneficiary shall have the option of paying the remaining amount owed (using after-tax dollars) regarding the purchase of service credit, payments for contribution deficits provided for by 70 O.S. §17-116.2C or balances due as authorized under 70 O.S. §17-116.2 within six (6) months of the member's death. If the balance is not paid, the beneficiary shall be entitled to prorated credit for that portion of the additional contributions actually made prior to the member's death. At the time of the member's termination, if there is any remaining amount owed with respect to a redeposit of contributions, the designated beneficiary will be reimbursed for those redeposits which had already been paid at the time of the member's death. A beneficiary may not make payments for a purchase of service credit if such a purchase had not been initiated by the member prior to the member's death.

(2) The termination of the member's employment. In this event, the member shall have the right to pay the remaining amount owed (using after-tax dollars) regarding the purchase of service credit, payments for contribution deficits provided for by 70 O.S. §17-116.2(C) or balances due to authorized under 70 O.S. §17-116.2 within six (6) months of the member's termination of employment, but payment must be completed 90 days prior to the effective retirement date of the member. If the entire remaining amount is not paid, the member shall be entitled to prorated service credit for those payments actually made. At the time of the member's termination, if there is any remaining amount owed with respect to a redeposit of contributions, the member shall be reimbursed for those redeposits which had already been paid at the time of the member's termination. In the situation where a terminated member becomes employed by another employer participating in TRS, the member may elect to reinstate or not reinstate his authorization with the new employer.

(3) For purposes of (1) and (2) above, after-tax contributions shall only be received to the extent allowed by section 415 of the Internal Revenue Code.

(h) In no event shall the member receive a return of the payroll reductions made hereunder, except as a refund together with all other contributions, as provided in OAC 715:10-11-1 et seq. or as a refund of a redeposit of contributions as provided in subsection g(2) above.

(i) Payroll reductions and installment agreements hereunder shall last no longer than sixty (60) months.

715:10-5-36. Compliance with USERRA and Code Section 414(u), including applicable HEART Act provisions

(a) Effective with respect to deaths occurring on or after January 1, 2007, while a member is performing USERRA-qualified military service (as defined in Internal Revenue Code Section 414(u),

to the extent required by Internal Revenue Code Section 401(a)(37), survivors of a member are entitled to any additional benefits that TRS would provide if the member had resumed employment and then died, such as survivor benefits that are contingent on the death of an in-service member (as defined in OAC 715:10-9-2). For benefit accrual purposes, a member who dies while performing qualified military service will be treated as if the member had resumed pre-service employment in accordance with USERRA on the day preceding the date of death and then terminated employment on the actual date of death.

(b) Beginning January 1, 2009, to the extent required by Internal Revenue Code Sections 3401(h) and 414(u)(12), an individual receiving differential wage payments from an employer while the individual is performing qualified military service (as defined in Internal Revenue Code Section 414(u)) shall be treated as employed by that employer and the differential wage payment shall be treated as earned compensation.

(c) Upon the member's timely reemployment with the pre-service employer, the member shall be treated as not having a break in employment and may elect to make-up contributions attributable to the rate of pay the employee would have received but for the member's period of qualified military service, including any differential wage payments.

(d) The member's make-up contributions may only be made during a time period starting with the date of reemployment and continuing for a period of up to three times the length of the member's immediate past period of qualified military service, not to exceed five (5) years.

(e) The pre-service employer will not make contributions until the member is reemployed and elects to make-up his or her contributions. The member may elect to pay the make-up employee contributions through a written salary reduction agreement with the pre-service employer for the applicable time period. In that case, the employer would remit its share of the make-up employer contributions each time it remits a make-up employee contribution for the member. If the member elects to make up his or her contributions in a lump sum instead of a written salary reduction agreement with the pre-service employer, the make-up employer contributions are due in a lump sum within 90 days of TRS determining the applicable contributions due by the employer.

(f) If the member chooses not to or fails to repay all of his or her makeup contributions, fractional service credit can be awarded pursuant to OAC 715: 10-3-1 and 715:10-3-4, and credit for any make-up employer contributions paid in excess of the make-up employee contributions will be given to the pre-service employer pursuant to OAC 715:10-11-4.

(g) Make-up contributions made by the member and pre-service employer pursuant to this section shall not be charged interest, so long as repayment is made within the time period set forth in subsection (d).

715:10-5-37. Incentive service credit

(a) Pursuant to 70 O.S. §17-116.2B, an active member of TRS who is employed and participating with an entity or institution within The Oklahoma State System of Higher Education may purchase not to exceed two (2) years of incentive credit if:

(1) the member has reached his or her normal retirement date or is within two (2) years of reaching the member's normal retirement date as authorized in Section 17-105 of this title, or

(2) the member is eligible for or is within two (2) years of being eligible for early retirement pursuant to paragraph 1 of subsection A of Section 17-116.2 of this title.

(b) Purchased incentive credit may only be used as participation service to qualify the member for normal or early retirement or as additional participation service if the member is already eligible for normal or early retirement, and in the same period of time and with the same service credit which would have otherwise accrued if the purchase had not occurred.

(c) The member shall notify TRS no later than sixty (60) days after the date of last employment indicating an intent to purchase the incentive credit.

- (d) Upon receipt of notice of the member's intent to purchase incentive service credit, TRS shall calculate the purchase price for eligible incentive credit based upon actuarial costs as defined in OAC 715:10-5-4 (subparagraphs 1-5) and notify the member, in writing, of the cost to purchase the credit.
- (e) The member must make payment to TRS of the cost to purchase the credit. Full or partial payments made pursuant to this section shall not be refundable under any circumstances.
- (f) Complete payment for such service must be made ninety (90) days prior to the member's effective retirement date.
- (g) A member cannot purchase both credit for termination due to reduction in force and incentive credit.

715:10-5-38. Credit for prior service as an optional employee

Members may obtain service credit for qualified employment in public educational institutions in the State of Oklahoma for work performed prior to July 1, 2021, as an optional, non-classified employee under certain circumstances.

- (1) The member shall not be eligible to purchase withdrawn service as described in OAC 715:10-5-9(2) or service for which the member had ceased monthly contributions on at any prior date as described in OAC 715:10-5-9(3).
- (2) The member is not receiving and is not eligible to receive retirement credit or benefits from the service in any other public retirement system of this state, the United States government, or any other state or territory of the United States.
- (3) The purchase price for eligible non-classified optional service credit shall be based upon actuarial costs as defined in OAC 715:10-5-4. All requests for billings to make payment for such service credit must be made while the member is an active contributing member or within sixty (60) days after the end of the member's employment in the public schools in Oklahoma. No person may request a billing for the purchase of service credit for such employment after the member's death.
- (4) The payments for such service credit may be made in one lump sum or in equal monthly installments for up to sixty (60) months, as provided in OAC 715:10-5-4 and may be made as a picked-up service credit purchase in compliance with OAC 715:10-5-35.
- (5) The purchase of service must be completed, and payment received by TRS, no later than ninety (90) days prior to the effective date of a member's official retirement date.

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Subchapter 7 - Membership Vesting and Termination

- 715:10-7-1. Vesting of membership in TRS
- 715:10-7-2. Limitation of benefits to an inactive, vested member
- 715:10-7-3. Termination of non-vested membership accounts because of absence
- 715:10-7-4. Extension of TRS membership for non-vested members after absence
- 715:10-7-5. Retired members
- 715:10-7-6. Termination of a non-eligible person [REVOKED]

715:10-7-1. Vesting of membership in TRS

- (a) Individuals who became members of TRS after July 1, 1967 through October 31, 2017 and who have accumulated five (5) or more years of creditable membership service pursuant to OAC 715:10-3-1 et seq. in the public schools of Oklahoma on which retirement contributions have been remitted and whose account had not closed prior to July 1, 2003, in accordance with 70 O.S. § 17-103(E) or OAC 715:10-7-3, shall be granted an indefinite extension of membership in TRS.
- (b) Individuals who become members of TRS on or after November 1, 2017, and who have accumulated seven (7) or more years of membership service pursuant to OAC 715:10-3-1 et seq. in the public schools of Oklahoma on which retirement contributions have been remitted and whose account has not closed in accordance with 70 O.S. § 17-103(E) or OAC 715:10-7-3 shall be granted an indefinite extension of membership in TRS.
- (c) Such membership is vested and shall remain open until the member retires or the contributions are withdrawn.
- (d) Military and out-of-state service shall not be included in the years required for vesting.
- (e) Any year of service obtained by the use of accumulated unused sick leave shall not be included in the years required for vesting.
- (f) For members who join after July 1, 1991, Oklahoma service purchased after membership shall not be included in years required for vesting.
- (g) Adjunct service in Higher Education performed prior to the date of the current membership account which is purchased under OAC 715:10-5-34 shall be considered membership service for purposes of vesting.
- (h) Credit for service transferred under OAC 715:10-5-7.1 shall be considered membership service for purposes of vesting.
- (i) Credit for service in other Oklahoma public retirement systems which is purchases pursuant to OAC 715:10-5-7 shall not be included in years required for vesting.

715:10-7-2. Limitation of benefits to an inactive, vested member

A member who has a vested account, but who terminates employment and no longer remits contributions, has an "inactive-vested" account. An inactive-vested member is not entitled to the following:

- (1) Statutory death benefit payable to the beneficiaries of an active member.
- (2) Participation in the Teachers' Retirement System tax-sheltered annuity program.
- (3) Option to elect, by the member's spouse, retirement benefits in lieu of a lump sum payment of account balance at the member's death.
- (4) The purchase of any additional past service credits.
- (5) Insurance coverage from the State and Education Employees Group Health Insurance Program, unless proper application is made for such coverage within thirty (30) days of termination of employment. (See Subchapter 23 of this chapter for more information about group health insurance)

715:10-7-3. Termination of non-vested membership accounts because of absence

Membership in TRS for non-vested members shall terminate when the non-vested member ceases to be an active contributing member for any period of five (5) consecutive school years in a six (6) consecutive school year period.

- (1) If employment terminates with the close of the school term, the five (5) year period of absence shall begin with the next fiscal year. If employment ends during the school term, the period of absence shall begin the first day of the month that follows termination.

(2) After a non-vested member is absent from employment in the public schools of Oklahoma for five (5) years during any period of six (6) consecutive years, the member's TRS account shall be closed with no rights to monthly retirement benefits. The member's contributions should be withdrawn as no interest accrues on accounts closed because of absence from employment.

(3) A member whose absence exceeds five (5) years due to military service shall be granted an eighteen (18) month extension, from date of discharge, to re-enter Oklahoma public education employment in order to retain membership in TRS.

715:10-7-4. Extension of TRS membership for non-vested members after absence

A non-vested member who has been absent from active contributing service for less than five (5) years during any period of six (6) consecutive years, may extend TRS membership by returning to fulltime employment for one (1) school year.

(1) If a five (5) year period of absence ends with the close of a school year, membership shall terminate June 30 of the corresponding fiscal year. Except that, membership shall not terminate if the member returns to fulltime Oklahoma public schools employment no later than September 30 the same calendar year.

(2) If the five (5) year period of absence terminates at any other time during the school year, membership shall terminate the last day of the last month of employment. Membership shall not terminate if the member returns to employment in the Oklahoma public schools no later than the last day of the succeeding calendar month.

(3) Unless otherwise specified, a ten (10) month school term shall be considered a school year. When adding fractions to equal a year of employment, membership shall extend five (5) years from the close of the school year during which the member worked the first fractional part.

(4) A member whose account has closed, but has not withdrawn contributions, may apply for reinstatement after returning to employment in the public schools of Oklahoma and completing one (1) full year (twelve calendar months) as a contributing member of TRS. Upon completion of one (1) full year the member's account will be restored to full status with all rights provided to other members.

715:10-7-5. Retired members

A retired member receiving a service retirement annuity may not be reinstated to active membership, which was terminated as a result of retirement, nor receive credit for additional membership service, except as provided in OAC 715:10-17-13. Disability retirement may be reinstated under certain conditions (see OAC 715:10-15-21).

715:10-7-6. Termination of a non-eligible person [REVOKED]

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Subchapter 9 - Survivor Benefits

- 715:10-9-1. Return of contributions when death occurs before retirement
- 715:10-9-2. Death benefit when death occurs before retirement
- 715:10-9-3. Monthly annuity in lieu of death benefit
- 715:10-9-4. Death Benefit when death occurs after retirement [REVOKED]
- 715:10-9-5. Payments to beneficiaries of deceased members
- 715:10-9-6. Probate waivers
- 715:10-9-7. Beneficiary designation following a divorce
- 715:10-9-8. Beneficiary Designation for Death Benefit

715:10-9-1. Return of contributions when death occurs before retirement

Upon the death of a member, who has not retired, the designated beneficiary on file with TRS prior to the member's death, or estate (if there is no designated beneficiary, or if the designated beneficiary predeceases the member) shall receive the member's total contributions, plus one hundred percent (100%) of all interest earned through the end of the fiscal year. Interest shall cease to accumulate with the payment of any portion of the member's contributions and interest to any beneficiary. Interest on death claims shall bear a rate equivalent to that of the actuarially assumed rate of return for the System as determined by the Board of Trustees from time to time, calculated according to the following schedule:

- (1) July 1, 1968, through June 30, 1977, four and one-half percent (4 1/2%), compounded annually.
- (2) July 1, 1977, through June 30, 1981, seven percent (7%), compounded annually.
- (3) July 1, 1981, through June 30, 2019, eight percent (8%), compounded annually.
- (4) July 1, 2019 to present, through June 30, 2020, seven and one-half percent (7 1/2%), compounded annually.
- (5) July 1, 2020 to present (until changed by the Board of Trustees), seven percent (7%), compounded annually. See OAC 715:10-9-7, if the member and beneficiary were divorced before death.

715:10-9-2. Death benefit when death occurs before retirement

(a) A death benefit of \$18,000 shall be paid by TRS to the designated beneficiary upon the death of an in-service member. If there is no designated beneficiary, or if the designated beneficiary predeceases the member, the member's estate shall receive the death benefit.

(b) "In-service" membership shall include:

- (1) Employees in an active-member status within the Oklahoma public education system at the time of death.
- (2) Members who have been, or would have been rehired, automatically or otherwise, for the next school year when death occurs during the summer break.
- (3) Members on sick leave, for up to one (1) full year, who would be returned to employment by the employer upon satisfactory recovery.

(c) "In-service" membership shall not include:

- (1) Employees who are not eligible for TRS membership.
- (2) Any member in an in-active employment status except as noted above in paragraph (b).
- (3) Any member who resigned as an employee of the public schools of Oklahoma.

715:10-9-3. Monthly annuity in lieu of death benefit

The designated beneficiary of an in-service member, who qualified for service retirement, and had ten (10) years or more of creditable service may elect to receive in lieu of the return of contributions and the \$18,000 death benefit the retirement benefit to which the deceased member would have been entitled at the time of death under the Option 2 retirement plan. To qualify for this option, the designated beneficiary must have been named as the sole beneficiary at the time of the member's death (see OAC 715:10-15-1 and 10-15-2 and 70 O.S. §17-105(11)). This option is only available when the beneficiary is the member's spouse, another person, or the beneficiary of a Discretionary and Special Needs Trust, provided if the designated beneficiary is not the member's spouse, IRS Regulations require that the adjusted member/beneficiary age difference cannot be more than ten (10) years. [See OAC 715:10-15-10, to determine the adjusted member/beneficiary age difference]. [See also OAC 715:10-9-7, if the member and beneficiary were divorced before death].

715:10-9-4. Death Benefit when death occurs after retirement [REVOKED]

715:10-9-5. Payments to beneficiaries of deceased members

Death benefit payments will be made by TRS to the beneficiary(s) of each deceased member as expeditiously as possible. The following documents must be provided to TRS before payment can be made.

- (1) The designated beneficiary(s) must provide a certified copy of the death certificate and complete a Claimant's Affidavit Form.
- (2) When no designated beneficiary has been named or the designated beneficiary(s) predeceases the member, and no waiver is sought, permitted or allowed pursuant to OAC 715:10-9-6, the executor/administrator of the member's estate must provide a certified copy of the death certificate, complete Claimant's Affidavit Form, and provide Letters of Testamentary or other documentation of court appointment.
- (3) Payments to minor children named as beneficiaries shall be made in accordance with applicable Oklahoma statutes. However, all such payments shall be distributed in accordance with the requirements of Section 401(a)(9) of the Internal Revenue Code and any regulations under that section. (See OAC 715:10-9-7, if the member and beneficiary were divorced before death)
- (4) Prior to accepting the death benefit, the beneficiary(ies) of the \$5,000 or \$18,000 death benefit may timely sign a Qualified Disclaimer of Death Benefit to directly transfer all or a portion of the death benefit to a licensed funeral director or facility.

715:10-9-6. Probate waivers

(a) In the event a member dies, leaving no living beneficiary or having designated his estate as beneficiary, the System shall require the judicial appointment of an administrator or executor for the member's estate prior to payment of any benefits or unpaid contributions. However, this requirement may be waived by the System for any benefits or unpaid contributions in the amount of \$25,000.00 or less, upon presentation of:

- (1) the member's valid Last Will and Testament
 - (2) an Affidavit of Heirship naming all heirs to the member's estate which must state:
 - (A) that the value of the deceased member's entire estate is subject to probate, and that the entire estate wherever located, less liens and encumbrances, does not exceed the amount permitted by law, including the payment of benefits or unpaid contributions from the System;
 - (B) a description of the personal property claimed (including the death benefit or unpaid contributions or both), together with a statement that such personal property is subject to probate; and
 - (C) a claim by each individual claiming heir identifying the amount of personal property that the heir is claiming from the System, and that the heir has been notified of, is aware of and consents to the identified claims of all the other claiming heirs of the deceased member pending with the System.
 - (3) a Hold Harmless Agreement signed by all heirs;
 - (4) a Corroborating Affidavit from someone other than an heir who is familiar with the deceased member; and
 - (5) proof of payment of expenses of last sickness, death and burial, including all medical, hospital and funeral expenses.
- (b) The Executive Director of TRS shall retain complete discretion in determining which requests for probate waiver may be granted or denied, for any reason. If there is any question as to the validity of any document herein required, the judicial appointment requirement shall not be waived.

(c) After paying any death benefits or unpaid contributions to any claiming heirs as provided by this section, TRS is discharged and released from any and all liability, obligation and costs to the same extent as if the System had dealt with a personal representative of the deceased member. The System is not required to inquire into the truth of any matter specified in this section or into the payment of any estate tax liability.

715:10-9-7. Beneficiary designation following a divorce

Following a divorce between an active or retired member and his or her spouse whom the member had designated as a beneficiary, the former spouse shall be treated as having predeceased the member for purposes of the death benefit payment and/or a return of contributions from the deceased member's Teachers' Retirement System account, unless the member has renamed the former spouse as a designated beneficiary. (Note: The beneficiary designation is voided by this section and 15 O.S. §178, only if the member's designation of beneficiary was signed and dated after November 1, 1987).

715:10-9-8. Beneficiary Designation for Death Benefit

A member may change or update his or her beneficiary designation for the statutory death benefit at any time in the manner prescribed by TRS. A beneficiary designation is valid for TRS purposes when properly executed and on file with TRS prior to the death of the member. TRS shall not be responsible for determining the competency of a member to designate a beneficiary except as otherwise provided by Oklahoma law.

Subchapter 11 - Withdrawal From Membership and Refund of Deposits

- 715:10-11-1. Withdrawal from membership by an eligible person
- 715:10-11-2. Withdrawal of optional membership while still employed [REVOKED]
- 715:10-11-3. False affidavits
- 715:10-11-4. Correcting mistakenly paid contributions
- 715:10-11-5. Termination of rights to benefits
- 715:10-11-6. Reinstatement of an account
- 715:10-11-7. Rollovers from TRS to other eligible retirement plans

715:10-11-1. Withdrawal from membership by an eligible person

Any member who terminates employment in the public schools of Oklahoma may voluntarily withdraw from membership in TRS under the following conditions:

- (1) 70 O.S. §17-105 provides that members who leave Oklahoma public education employment are eligible to withdraw the contributions made to their TRS account four (4) months after termination. A former employee may submit application for the proceeds of the account after the last day physically worked. There are no exceptions to this waiting period.
- (2) Written verification from the school's payroll department of a member's termination of employment and/or non-resumption of teaching contract must be on file before processing the Application for Withdrawal. The requirement for written verification from the school's payroll department may be waived by written request to the Executive Director of TRS for good cause shown. Good cause may be shown through undue hardship in obtaining the verification due to length of time that has passed since the employment ended (typically greater than 12 months), unavailability of employee records by the school's payroll department or other circumstances deemed as good cause by the Executive Director.
- (3) The years of membership shall be calculated as follows:
 - (A) For withdrawal purposes - from the date of the first contribution of the current membership to the date of withdrawal, except that member accounts closed in compliance with OAC 715:10-7-3 will be from the date of the first contribution to the date the account is closed.
 - (B) For payment of interest purposes - from the date of the first contribution of the current membership to the date of withdrawal, except that member accounts closed in compliance with OAC 715:10-7-3 will be from the date of the first contribution to the date the account is closed.
- (4) Interest on withdrawals shall bear a rate equivalent to that of the actuarially assumed rate of return for the System as determined by the Board of Trustees from time to time, calculated according to the following schedule:
 - (A) July 1, 1968 through June 30, 1977 - four and one-half percent (4 1/2%), compounded annually.
 - (B) July 1, 1977 through June 30, 1981 - seven percent (7%), compounded annually.
 - (C) July 1, 1981 through June 30, 2019 - eight percent (8%), compounded annually.
 - (D) July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2020 – seven and one-half percent (7 1/2%), compounded annually.
 - (E) July 1, 2020 to present (until changed by the Board of Trustees), seven percent (7%) compounded annually.
- (5) Interest payment on withdrawals shall be paid as follows:
 - (A) If termination occurs within sixteen (16) years from the date membership began, fifty percent (50%) of the total accrued interest shall be paid.
 - (B) For members with at least sixteen (16) but less than twenty-one (21) years of membership, sixty percent (60%) of the total accrued interest shall be paid.
 - (C) For members with at least twenty-one (21) years but less than twenty-six (26) years of membership, seventy-five percent (75%) of the total accrued interest shall be paid.
 - (D) For members with at least twenty-six (26) years of membership, ninety percent (90%) of the total accrued interest shall be paid.
- (6) A person whose membership has not terminated due to five (5) years of absence from Oklahoma public education employment, but who has applied to withdraw all accumulated contributions, shall not have membership terminated until the withdrawal payment has been processed.

(7) Effective July 1, 1990, no member is eligible to withdraw contributions made on a pre-tax basis, unless the employee has terminated employment in the public schools for a period of four months.

715:10-11-2. Withdrawal of optional membership while still employed [REVOKED]

715:10-11-3. False affidavits

A member who makes affidavit that he has permanently terminated his employment in state-supported public education in Oklahoma but who is so employed, or who contracts for such employment before he receives the refund of his TRS account, shall not be entitled to the refund. If the refund is made in error because the Teachers' Retirement System is not aware of the continued employment, necessary steps will be taken to secure the redeposit of the withdrawn account with interest compounded annually at ten percent (10%) per annum. No benefits subsequently earned will be paid until this withdrawn account is returned to the Teachers' Retirement System.

715:10-11-4. Correcting mistakenly paid contributions

- (a) TRS shall correct employer contributions and employee contributions if the payment of contributions was made in error.
- (b) The amount to be returned to the employer and the employee is excess employer contributions or excess employee contributions. These contributions are defined as the excess of the amount contributed or paid over the amount that would have been contributed or paid had no mistake of law or fact been made.
- (c) Excess employer contributions shall be returned as follows:
 - (1) When the return of employer contributions occurs within 12 months of the payment of excess contributions, TRS may provide a refund or credit to the employer provided, a refund shall only be given to the requesting employer when such refund occurs within 12 months of the overpaid contribution. No interest shall be paid by TRS on refunds or credits for this purpose.
 - (2) When the return of employer contributions occurs after 12 months of the payment of excess contributions, TRS shall only provide a credit to the employer against future employer contributions due with appropriate interest under OAC 715:10-11-1 consistent with the interest factor applied to the corresponding excess employee contributions.
- (d) Excess employee contributions shall be returned as follows:
 - (1) When the return of employee contributions occurs in the current calendar year, TRS shall credit the employer for the excess employee contributions against future employee contributions due. No interest shall be paid by TRS on the credited amount. The employer shall then provide a corresponding refund to the employee through its payroll ensuring the employee's W-2 pay is correct for the calendar year.
 - (2) When there are multiple calendar years' worth of employee contributions being corrected or when the excess contributions are attributable to other than the current calendar year, TRS will distribute the excess employee contributions to the member or individual in a refund as soon as practical through a lump sum payment for all past overpayments with appropriate interest under OAC 715:10-11-1. The distribution shall be reported on IRS Form 1099-R for the year of the distribution.

715:10-11-5. Termination of rights to benefits

Withdrawal of an account terminates the right to benefits for all service prior to the date of withdrawal unless credit is reinstated by subsequent service and repayment as provided by the statutes.

715:10-11-6. Reinstatement of an account

A member who has withdrawn an account may reinstate the account, and receive credit for the service, by meeting the requirements of OAC 715:10-5-9.

715:10-11-7. Rollovers from TRS to other eligible retirement plans

(a) Notwithstanding any other provision of the administrative code that otherwise would limit a distributee's election to make a direct rollover, a distributee may elect at the time and in the manner prescribed by the Board of Trustees to have all or a portion of an eligible rollover distribution paid directly to another eligible retirement plan as a direct rollover as required under Internal Revenue Code Section 401(a)(31) and the regulations thereto.

(b) The following definitions shall apply for purposes of the words and phrases used in this Section:

(1) An "eligible rollover distribution" includes any distribution of all or any portion of the balance to the credit of the distributee, except that an eligible rollover distribution does not include the following:

(A) any distribution that is one of a series of substantially equal periodic payments, paid not less frequently than annually, made for the life or life expectancy of the distributee or the joint lives (or joint life expectancies) of the distributee and the distributee's designated joint annuitant.

(B) any distribution that is one of a series of substantially equal periodic payments for a specified period of ten years or more.

(C) any distribution to the extent such distribution is required under Internal Revenue Code Section 401(1)(9).

(D) the portion of any distribution that is not includable in gross income.

(E) any distributions during a year that are reasonably expected to total less than \$200.

(F) Effective January 1, 2002, the definition of eligible rollover distribution also includes a distribution to a surviving spouse, or to a spouse or former spouse who is an alternate payee under a qualified domestic relations order, as defined in Internal Revenue Code Section 414(p) and OAC 715:10-25-1.

(G) Effective January 1, 2002, a portion of a distribution will not fail to be an eligible rollover distribution merely because the portion consists of after-tax employee contributions that are not includible in gross income. However, such portion may be transferred only

(i) to an individual retirement account or annuity described in Internal Revenue Code Section 408(a) or (b) or to a qualified defined contribution plan described in Internal Revenue Code Section 401(a) that agrees to separately account for amounts so transferred (and earnings thereon), including separately accounting for the portion of the distribution that is includible in gross income and the portion of the distribution that is not so includible;

(ii) on or after January 1, 2007, to a qualified defined benefit plan described in Internal Revenue Code Section 401(a) or to an annuity contract described in Internal Revenue Code Section 403(b), that agrees to separately account for amounts so transferred (and earnings thereon), including separately accounting for the portion of the distribution that is includible in gross income and the portion of the distribution that is not so includible;

or

(H) on or after January 1, 2008, to a Roth IRA described in Internal Revenue Code Section 408A.

(2) An "eligible retirement plan" includes any of the following that accepts the distributee's eligible rollover distribution:

(A) an individual retirement account described in Internal Revenue Code Section 408(a);

- (B) an individual retirement annuity described in Internal Revenue Code Sections 408 (b);
 - (C) an annuity plan described in Internal Revenue Code Section 403(a);
 - (D) a qualified trust described in Internal Revenue Code Section 401(a);
 - (E) effective January 1, 2002, an annuity contract described in Internal Revenue Code Section 403(b);
 - (F) effective January 1, 2002, a plan eligible under Internal Revenue Code Section 457(b) that is maintained by a state, political subdivision of a state, or any agency or instrumentality of a state or a political subdivision of a state that agrees to separately account for amounts transferred into that plan from the retirement system; or
 - (G) effective January 1, 2008, a Roth IRA described in Internal Revenue Code Section 408A.
- (3) A "distributee" means a member, a member's spouse, or a member's former spouse who is the alternate payee under a qualified domestic order, as defined in Internal Revenue Code Section 414(p) and OAC 715:10-25-1. Before January 1, 2002, in the case of an eligible rollover distribution to the member's spouse, an eligible retirement plan only includes an individual retirement account or an individual retirement annuity described in Internal Revenue Code Sections 408(a) or (b). Effective January 1, 2007, a distributee further includes a nonspouse beneficiary who is a designated beneficiary as defined by Internal Revenue Code Section 401(a)(9)(E). However, a nonspouse beneficiary may rollover the distribution only to an individual retirement account or individual retirement annuity (or, effective January 1, 2008, a Roth IRA) established for the purpose of receiving the distribution, and the account or annuity will be treated as an "inherited" individual retirement account or annuity.
- (4) "Direct rollover" means a payment by the plan to the eligible retirement plan specified by the distributee.
- (c) Eligible rollover distributions may be paid to not more than two eligible retirement plans, as selected by the distributee, when a direct rollover is elected.

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Subchapter 13 - Contributions for Membership Service

- 715:10-13-1. Regular annual compensation requirements
- 715:10-13-2. Contributions required on all regular annual compensation from all employers
- 715:10-13-3. Employee contribution rates
- 715:10-13-3.1. Employer contribution rates [REVOKED]
- 715:10-13-3.2. Employer contribution rates for employers other than comprehensive and regional four-year universities beginning July 1, 2007 [EXPIRED]
- 715:10-13-3.3. Employer contribution rates for comprehensive and regional four-year universities beginning July 1, 2007 [EXPIRED]
- 715:10-13-4. Maximum compensation level election for years prior to July 1, 1995
- 715:10-13-4.1. Maximum compensation level election for the 1995-96 school year [REVOKED]
- 715:10-13-5. Compensation corrections
- 715:10-13-6. Employee contributions paid by the employer
- 715:10-13-7. Matching funds
- 715:10-13-8. Procedure for making contribution deductions
- 715:10-13-9. Monthly remittance report of contributions [REVOKED]
- 715:10-13-10. Annual report of employment
- 715:10-13-11. Percentage limits on compensation increases
- 715:10-13-12. Contracts bought up by employer
- 715:10-13-13. Contributions while receiving workers' compensation payments
- 715:10-13-14. Termination credit for state agency employees who are members of the Teachers' Retirement System of Oklahoma
- 715:10-13-15. Waiver of employer late fees

715:10-13-1. Regular annual compensation requirements

(a) Each member of the Teachers' Retirement System is required to make monthly contributions that are a set percentage of "regular annual compensation." Regular annual compensation is defined as wages plus fringe benefits, excluding the flexible benefit allowance provided by 70 O.S. §26-105, and shall include payments as provided in 70 O.S. §17-116.2, subsection D.

(1) Wages and fringe benefits for retirement purposes are defined as payment for service the right to which accrues on a regular basis in proportion to the service performed.

(A) Payment for service performed shall include payment made for participation in or attendance of staff development or payments for performance of assigned extra duties, and additional payments that are given across the board to qualifying members.

(B) Fringe benefits shall include employer-paid group health and disability insurance, group term life insurance, annuities and pension contributions and IRS Code Section 125 cafeteria benefits provided to all qualified members of the employer, which qualify as fringe benefits under the United States Internal Revenue Code. Provided, however, fringe benefits do not include the flexible benefit allowance provided by 70 O.S. §26-105.

(C) A qualified member is any eligible employee who is currently contributing to the System.

(2) Excluded from regular annual compensation are:

(A) employer contributions to a deferred compensation plan that is not provided to all qualified members of the employer

(B) expense reimbursement payments; office, vehicle, housing or other maintenance allowances;

(C) the flexible benefit allowance provided pursuant to 70 O.S. §26-105;

(D) payment for unused vacation and sick leave;

(E) any payment made for reason of termination or retirement unrelated to service performed by the member;

(F) maintenance or other non-monetary compensation;

(G) payment received as an independent contractor or consultant pursuant to an agreement approved by TRS under OAC 715:10-17-5;

(H) any benefit payments not made pursuant to a valid employment agreement; stipends that are not given across the board to all employees;

(I) payment received for obtaining national board certification;

(J) compensation received from the Teacher Shortage Employment Incentive Program; and

(K) any payment that is not included within subsection 1 above.

(b) Contributions can only be remitted on actual wages and fringe benefits. No individual can contribute on unearned or non-existent compensation. Under no circumstances can members pay retirement contributions on more than they actually earn.

715:10-13-2. Contributions required on all regular annual compensation from all employers

(a) Contributions shall be made on all regular annual compensation, as defined in OAC 715:10-13-1, received by a member from any participating employer, including federally-subsidized programs under the direct administration of a public school.

(b) For employees who are participating in TRS at one employer while maintaining employment in an ineligible position at the same or another employer: the employer that employs the member in the ineligible position must remit contributions on the regular annual compensation of that employee. This is generally known as contributing on secondary employment. This includes pay to a teacher who also drives a school bus, members of TRS who are working part-time for another school and members employed on a regular basis who are employed by the same or different school in a summer school or night school program.

(c) All public schools shall treat the employee contributions as being picked-up under the provisions of Section 414(h)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code.

(d) Individuals who join the Teachers' Retirement System during the school year and who have been employed prior to becoming a member must make retroactive contributions from the date their qualifying employment began. The membership date of such a member is the date the first payment is received, not the beginning of the school year. The member shall not receive full service credit until the balance of contributions, including any contributions required by the employer, are received by TRS.

715:10-13-3. Employee contribution rates

(a) Beginning with the 1996-97 school year, the maximum compensation level for all members, other than those members employed by a comprehensive university on or before June 30, 1995, shall be the member's regular annual compensation. This includes any employee of a comprehensive university who transfers to another school or university after June 30, 1996, or who terminates paid employment status with a comprehensive university and returns to employment at a later date.

(b) Beginning with the 1996-97 school year, the maximum compensation level for those employees of a "comprehensive university", defined in statutes as the University of Oklahoma and all of its constituent agencies, including the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center, the University of Oklahoma Law Center and the Geological Survey, and Oklahoma State University and all of its constituent agencies, including the Oklahoma State Agricultural Experiment Station, the Oklahoma State University Agricultural Extension Division, the Oklahoma State University College of Veterinary Medicine, the Oklahoma State University Center for Health Sciences, the Technical Branch at Oklahoma City the Technical Branch at Okmulgee and Oklahoma State University-Tulsa, who were employed on or before June 30, 1995, shall contribute the following:

(1) for members who, prior to June 30, 1995, elected to contribute on a maximum compensation level not to exceed \$25,000:

- (A) \$32,500 for service between July 1, 1996 and June 30, 1997,
- (B) \$37,500 for service between July 1, 1997 and June 30, 1998,
- (C) \$42,500 for service between July 1, 1998 and June 30, 2000,
- (D) \$47,500 for service between July 1, 2000, and June 30, 2001,
- (E) \$52,500 for service between July 1, 2001, and June 30, 2002,
- (F) \$57,500.00 for service between July 1, 2002, and June 30, 2003,
- (G) \$62,500.00 for service between July 1, 2003, and June 30, 2004,
- (H) \$67,500.00 for service between July 1, 2004, and June 30, 2005,
- (I) \$72,500.00 for service between July 1, 2005, and June 30, 2006,
- (J) \$77,500.00 for service between July 1, 2006, and June 30, 2007, and
- (K) the full amount of regular annual compensation for service authorized and performed after June 30, 2007, and

(2) for members who, prior to June 30, 1995, elected to contribute on a maximum compensation level in excess of \$25,000, or who did not make an election prior to June 30, 1995, because their annual salary was less than \$25,000:

- (A) \$49,000 for service between July 1, 1996 and June 30, 1997,
- (B) \$54,000 for service between July 1, 1997 and June 30, 1998,
- (C) \$59,000 for service between July 1, 1998 and June 30, 2000,
- (D) \$64,000 for service between July 1, 2000, and June 30, 2001,
- (E) \$69,000 for service between July 1, 2001, and June 30, 2002,
- (F) \$74,000 for service between July 1, 2002, but not later than June 30, 2003,
- (G) \$79,000 for service between July 1, 2003, and June 30, 2004,
- (H) \$84,000 for service between July 1, 2004, and June 30, 2005,

- (I) \$89,000 for service between July 1, 2005, and June 30, 2006,
 - (J) \$94,000 for service between July 1, 2006, and June 30, 2007, and
 - (K) the full amount of regular annual compensation for service authorized and performed after June 30, 2007.
- (c) A person employed by any school district or technology center school district who holds a valid certificate issued by the State Department of Education or the State Board of Career and Technology Education and is employed on a full-time basis as a teacher, principal, supervisor, administrator, superintendent, counselor, librarian, or certified or registered nurse shall have a specific amount credited against the employee's contribution amount to TRS. The State of Oklahoma shall pay an annual amount as set forth in 70 O.S. §17-108.2 for each fiscal (or plan) year.
- (d) Each school district or technology center school district shall adjust each eligible employee's monthly contribution to TRS in accordance with statutory provisions and shall cause the annual amount paid by the State of Oklahoma as provided in the preceding paragraph to be deducted from the monthly remittance to each eligible employee's retirement account and a like amount added to the gross pay of the eligible employee.
- (1) If the school district pays the retirement contribution in addition to the employee's total compensation, the employer must reduce the employee's annual retirement contribution which the school pays to TRS by the appropriate amount and add that amount to each eligible employee's gross pay.
 - (2) If the school district deducts the retirement contribution from each employee's total compensation, whether as a salary reduction to pay the retirement contribution as a fringe benefit or as a deduction on an after-tax basis, the employer must adjust the employee's annual retirement deduction in accordance with the amount to be paid by the State. The adjustment in the retirement deduction will result in an increase to the eligible employee's gross pay.
 - (3) The State contribution to each eligible employee's retirement account is determined by the total experience of each employee as verified by the State Department of Education or the Oklahoma Department of Career and Technology Education.
 - (4) The State contribution must be calculated and paid in equal monthly installments as determined by the eligible employee's contract, i.e., ten months, eleven months or twelve months. Eligible employees who work full-time for less than a full contract year shall have the prescribed State contribution prorated proportionately based on the employee's full-time employment during the relevant contract period.

715:10-13-3.1. Employer contribution rates [REVOKED]

715:10-13-3.2. Employer contribution rates for employers other than comprehensive and regional four-year universities beginning July 1, 2007 [EXPIRED]

715:10-13-3.3. Employer contribution rates for comprehensive and regional four-year universities beginning July 1, 2007 [EXPIRED]

715:10-13-4. Maximum compensation level election for years prior to July 1, 1995

- (a) Any member, except for employees of institutions of higher education as provided in 70 O.S. § 17-116.2A, who was a contributing member of the Retirement System between July 1, 1987, and June 30, 1995, who elected to limit contributions to the first \$25,000 of annual compensation, may elect to contribute on annual compensation up to a maximum of \$40,000. may elect to
- (b) If no election was made within the time provided by statute, the member was deemed to have elected the \$25,000 compensation level.

(c) Except as provided in subsection (a) of this rule, a member may change the \$25,000 election at any time prior to his or her official retirement date.

(d) If a member elects to change his or her election as provided by this rule, the member must remit to the Teachers' Retirement System the difference between the amount contributed and that which would have been contributed had a \$40,000 maximum been elected when the member was first eligible to do so. This additional payment shall include any contribution that the law requires from the member's employer, and interest compounded annually at ten percent (10%) per annum on the balance due. The balance due may be made in a single lump sum or in installments as provided in OAC 715:10-5-4. However, the total balance must be paid prior to the effective date of retirement and cannot be purchased by any person after the death of the member.

715:10-13-4.1. Maximum compensation level election for the 1995-96 school year [REVOKED]

715:10-13-5. Compensation corrections

The statutes provide that any member whose regular annual compensation was not determined as provided by law may pay the contribution on such amount not included in the member's regular annual compensation and receive credit for such amount in the calculation of the member's benefit. The member must also pay any employer contributions due TRS which are not paid by the employer. The intent of this provision and the provisions outlined above is to enable members to receive credit for their total contract salary up to applicable limits. Therefore, members' retirement contributions should be based on the gross salary before fringe benefits are subtracted, not after. No adjustments can be made until the corrections are documented as outlined in OAC 715:10-5-6. Any loss incurred by the Retirement System as a result of the failure of a school to comply with existing statutes or TRS Rules shall be paid by the member or school to the Retirement Fund. Interest compounded annually at ten percent (10%) per annum shall be charged on all balances due Teachers' Retirement because of failure to remit the proper contribution. In cases where a compensation correction should have been identified by TRS staff but was not, interest may be adjusted to correct for the error in accordance with TRS procedures.

715:10-13-6. Employee contributions paid by the employer

Any school may, for and on behalf of any Teachers' Retirement System member, pay all or any portion of the membership contribution required by statutes.

715:10-13-7. Matching funds

Employers of TRS members whose compensation is paid from federal funds or externally sponsored agreements such as grants, contracts, and cooperative agreements shall match the contributions of these members on all, or that portion of, compensation paid from these funds. Matching funds shall be paid in addition to employer and employee contributions and shall be transmitted at the same time and in the same manner as the members' contributions. Matching contributions shall be required on all salaries funded from revenues other than funds generated from local taxes or revenues originating from the State of Oklahoma. No later than April 1, each year, the TRS Board of Trustees shall set two contribution rates to be paid by employers.

- (1) Traditional Matching Rate: The first rate shall be applied to all services paid by federal funds or externally sponsored grants or agreements performed by members except those services that are included in the definition of "Summer School Program," as defined in subsection 2 below. This contribution rate shall be determined using cost principles established by federal regulations and shall be consistent with generally accepted accounting principles.

(2) Summer School Matching Rate: The second rate shall be applied to service performed by members during a Summer School Program. "Summer school program" is defined as a program offering academic enrichment for students from Pre-K through 12th grades during the summer term after the close of the school year. Members shall only be considered as providing service to a summer school program if such service is provided pursuant to a separate summer school contract between the member and the participating employer. The term "Summer School Program" does not include services performed at a participating employer offering an extended school year pursuant to 70 O.S. § 1-109.1 or services performed pursuant to a twelve-month contract with the employer. The contribution rate shall be determined using cost principles established by federal regulations and shall be consistent with generally accepted accounting principles. The Summer School Matching Rate may take into consideration whether, or to what extent, such service is likely to add to members' service credit or final average salary; however, this rate shall not exceed one-half (1/2) of the Traditional Matching Rate.

715:10-13-8. Procedure for making contribution deductions

The Teachers' Retirement System contribution deduction shall start with the payment for the first month of a "classified" employee's contract, or the first month of membership for an optional "non-classified" member. This contribution shall be based on the total compensation for the month but shall not apply to the compensation of a substitute teacher or any employee working on a less than one-half time basis. Individuals who join the System during the school year, and who have been employed prior to becoming a member, must make retroactive contributions from the beginning of that school year. The membership date of such a member is the date of first payment not the beginning of the school year. The member shall not receive credit for a year of service until the balance of contributions, including any contributions required by the employer, are received by TRS. Interest compounded annually at ten percent (10%) per annum shall be levied against the balance due until paid.

- (1) The total deductions in any one school year shall not exceed the maximum limit prescribed by statutes as defined in OAC 715:10-13-3.
- (2) In determining the amount of the contribution for a member in any payroll period, the employer shall consider the total compensation earned from all sources. The contribution shall be calculated on the gross compensation before any deductions, such as tax-sheltered annuity, income taxes, Social Security, etc. Deductions shall be made at the statutory contribution rate on each month's compensation until the maximum annual compensation level is reached. Total monthly compensation shall be reported in the monthly salary column of the remittance report. Monthly compensation includes gross wages and fringe benefits paid or provided by the remitting agency.
- (3) Monthly contributions for employees of a comprehensive university, whose maximum compensation level is less than the member's regular annual compensation, may be remitted in twelve equal payments to the member's account during the school year. It shall be the responsibility of the employer to ensure any required adjustment in contributions is made if a member terminates employment or the member's salary changes during the school year.
- (4) Required contributions shall be remitted monthly.
- (5) As of July 1, 1979, members who signed a waiver to contribute on a maximum annual salary of \$7,800 are required by law to contribute on their total compensation not to exceed any current maximum contribution level.
- (6) The Department of Corrections shall contribute the employer's share to the Teachers' Retirement System. The contribution shall be the same dollar amount required of the member.

715:10-13-9. Monthly remittance report of contributions [REVOKED]

715:10-13-10. Annual report of employment

At the close of each fiscal year but prior to November 1, the payroll office of each employer shall file a report with Teachers' Retirement System that certifies the number of hours worked that year by each less-than-full-time employee. The report shall also include the names and total number of hours worked by any employee receiving Teachers' Retirement System retirement benefits. This report shall be known as the Employment Year End Report.

715:10-13-11. Percentage limits on compensation increases

The average of a member's aggregate compensation for the last three creditable years of service before retirement may not exceed the credited compensation of the immediately preceding creditable year for service in the same or similar positions by more than 20%. When appropriate, Teachers' Retirement System may convert salary for part-time employment to its full-time equivalent in determining the permissible increases in annual compensation.

- (1) Teachers' Retirement System will adjust a member's annual compensation at the time of retirement to comply with the limits of this rule and will refund excess deposits to the member after the effective date of retirement.
- (2) Increases due to a change in employment responsibilities or adjustments in salary schedules for the employees of school district shall be excluded by TRS in determining if an employee exceeds the 20% level. TRS retains the right to require individuals and the employing school to provide documentation to satisfy questions that may arise from increases in compensation in excess of 20% for any school year.

715:10-13-12. Contracts bought up by employer

Teachers' Retirement System will not accept contributions on contract buyouts or grant creditable service, unless approved by the Board of Trustees resolution before the fact or when so ordered by a court of competent jurisdiction. Any payments for accumulated annual leave in excess of sixty (60) days or reimbursement for unused sick leave in excess of the daily amount paid to the teaching staff shall be considered a contract buy out.

715:10-13-13. Contributions while receiving workers' compensation payments

Any member who is an active contributing member and receives temporary total disability benefits during the period of absence from a public school due to a work-related injury or illness and qualifies for payment pursuant to the Workers' Compensation Act shall receive credit for said period of absence, if contributions were not remitted on the member's regular annual compensation while the member is receiving temporary total or partial disability benefits, subject to the following requirements:

- (1) the member was employed by the public school immediately prior to and during the period of absence,
- (2) the member must notify the System in writing not later than four (4) months after the member's return to his or her job duties with the public school, or termination of the temporary total disability benefits, whichever is earlier, of the member's desire to receive service credit for the period of absence,
- (3) the public school employer must certify to the System in writing the dates during which temporary total disability benefit payments were paid to the member, and

- (4) the member and the public school employer shall each pay the respective contributions required for the period of absence without interest within sixty (60) days of billing by the System, or with interest at a rate consistent with the actuarial assumed earnings rate adopted by the Board of Trustees, compounded annually if paid after said sixty (60) days. Employee and employer contributions will be based on the member's regular annual compensation the member would have earned had the injury or illness not occurred.
- (5) All balances due must be paid in full at least thirty (30) days prior to termination of employment or ninety (90) days prior to the effective date of a member's official retirement date.

715:10-13-14. Termination credit for state agency employees who are members of the Teachers' Retirement System of Oklahoma

(a) An employee of a state agency or other governmental entity participating in the Teachers' Retirement System of Oklahoma, other than an employee of an Oklahoma public school, who has completed at least ten (10) years of full-time equivalent employment for that employer, and who is terminated because his or her position is eliminated through a reduction-in-force after July 1, 1998, and who is within three (3) years of becoming eligible for retirement, may purchase up to three (3) years of service credit in the Teachers' Retirement System if:

- (1) the member, within six (6) months of his or her termination, files an election with the Teachers' Retirement System indicating an intent to purchase the termination credit;
- (2) the Teachers' Retirement System is paid the full amount of both the employer and employee contributions that would have been paid to the System, based upon the maximum compensation level received by the member in the last full month he or she was employed by the state agency or governmental entity, multiplied by the number of months required for the member to qualify for retirement with an unreduced benefit had the member not been terminated; and
- (3) full payment for the cost of the termination credit is made within sixty (60) days of filing the election to purchase the credit.

(b) If the member fails to pay the full amount of the required contribution amounts to the System within 60 days of filing the election to purchase the termination credit, the termination credit shall be cancelled, and the Teachers' Retirement System shall return the purchase amount to the member, without interest.

(c) The purchased termination credit may be used only as service credit to qualify the member for normal retirement.

(d) If the member chooses to retire before his or her normal retirement date, or returns to employment with a participating employer before retirement, the member will not receive the termination credit, and the System will return to the member the purchase amount that has been paid, without interest.

(e) If the member dies before retirement, his or her spouse, if eligible to receive benefits, may elect to receive the benefit at the time the member would have become eligible to retire, or receive a return of the purchase amount that has been paid, without interest.

715:10-13-15. Waiver of employer late fees

(a) TRS statutes provide that all employer and employee contributions must be remitted to TRS within 30 days after the end of the month in which the work was performed. If they are remitted after the deadline they are assessed a 1 ½% late charge, compounding monthly. The Board of Trustees may waive the late fee for good cause shown but may delegate this authority to staff. The Executive Director is authorized to waive these late fees. Good cause is generally shown in cases of an unforeseen circumstance such as a death or illness, acts of nature, or other unforeseen and unavoidable circumstance rendering the timely payment of contributions impossible.

- (b) The System will automatically waive late fees assessed for any contributions received late due to the late receipt of federal funds or workers' compensation payments.
- (c) The System will automatically waive any late fees assessed in the amount of \$50 or less, provided the requesting employer has had one or less late remittances in the past 12 months.
- (d) All other requests for waiver of late fees shall be presented to the System for review and determination of good cause shown for waiver. All waiver requests must be made on district/employer letterhead and signed by the Superintendent, CEO, or CFO.

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Subchapter 15 - Service Retirement

- 715:10-15-1. Eligibility for service retirement
- 715:10-15-2. Age, service requirements for regular retirement
- 715:10-15-3. Date of retirement; making application
- 715:10-15-3.1. Employer's Verification of Retirement Information
- 715:10-15-4. Effective date of retirement contract
- 715:10-15-5. Date of retirement contract is binding; revocation of contract
- 715:10-15-6. Verification of date of birth
- 715:10-15-7. Standard retirement formula
- 715:10-15-7.1. Retirement formula for members employed by a comprehensive university [REVOKED]
- 715:10-15-7.2. Retirement formula for members retiring under provisions of the Education Employees Service Incentive Plan ("EESIP")
- 715:10-15-8. Age, creditable service determination
- 715:10-15-9. Minimum service retirement benefits
- 715:10-15-10. Retirement plans
- 715:10-15-10.1. "Pop-up" of Option 2 or Option 3 retirement plans
- 715:10-15-10.2. Partial lump-sum payments
- 715:10-15-10.3. Partial Lump-sum Option Factors
- 715:10-15-11. Designation of beneficiaries or joint annuitant for retirement options
- 715:10-15-11.1. Designation of trustee of Oklahoma discretionary and special needs trust as joint annuitant or beneficiary
- 715:10-15-12. Spousal consent
- 715:10-15-13. Survivor benefits when death occurs after retirement [REVOKED]
- 715:10-15-14. Actuarial tables
- 715:10-15-15. Disability retirement; application; effective date
- 715:10-15-16. Review by Medical Board and Recommendation of Permanent Disability Retirement or Temporary Disability Retirement
- 715:10-15-17. Additional medical evidence can be required
- 715:10-15-18. Suspension, termination, or reduction of disability retirement benefits
- 715:10-15-19. Disability retirement payments
- 715:10-15-20. Conversion of disability retirement to retirement option 2
- 715:10-15-21. Return to employment by a disabled retiree [REVOKED]
- 715:10-15-22. Reporting of gainful earnings for disability retirees
- 715:10-15-23. Special \$150 per month plan; application; effective date
- 715:10-15-24. Due-date of retirement benefit payments
- 715:10-15-25. Changes and corrections to retirement benefit payments
- 715:10-15-26. Code Section 415 limits as applied to TRS
- 715:10-15-27. Code Section 401 (a) (17) limits as applied to TRS
- 715:10-15-28. Waiver of retirement application deadline
- 715:10-15-29. Suspension of Retirement Benefit Pending Proof of Life

715:10-15-1. Eligibility for service retirement

Service retirement requirements shall be administered as outlined in Title 70, Oklahoma Statutes, Section 17-105 [70 O.S. 17-105].

715:10-15-2. Age, service requirements for regular retirement

Service retirement requirements shall be administered as outlined in Title 70, Oklahoma Statutes, Section 17-105 [70 O.S. 17-105].

715:10-15-3. Date of retirement; making application

The earliest effective date of retirement for any eligible member is the first day of the month following the one in which a bona fide separation of service as defined in OAC 715:10-15-4 occurs, with the first annuity payment to be paid on the first day of the month following the effective date of retirement.

- (1) It is the member's responsibility to notify, by filing a retirement contract as outlined in paragraphs 4 and 5 of this section, the TRS Board of Trustees of the date on which retirement is to begin.
- (2) Payments for all years of service, for which a member wants to receive credit, must be received by TRS no less than 90 days prior to the date of retirement provided however that the ordinary remission of contributions by employers shall not be considered as payments for years of service. This paragraph shall not apply to disability retirement under OAC 715:10-15-15 or make-up contributions made pursuant to OAC 715:10-5-36; however payment for all years of service under those sections for which a member wants to receive credit must comply with the requirements of those sections and, in all cases, be received prior to the member's effective retirement date.
- (3) State law does not permit TRS to make retroactive retirement payments. Members should ensure that their creditable service record is up-to-date and accurate before they retire.
- (4) Not less than ninety (90) days prior to retirement, TRS must receive from the member a Pre-Retirement Information Verification, copy of the member's proof of birth, copy of marriage certificate or license if married to joint annuitant, and verification of 120 days of accrued/unused sick leave for calculation of sick leave credit. The Pre-Retirement Information Verification and support pre-retirement documentation must be on file with TRS to enable TRS to prepare a complete Application to Retire.
- (5) After submitting all required pre-retirement documentation, the member will receive an Application to Retire. TRS must receive this completed Application to Retire from the member no less than sixty (60) days prior to the effective date of retirement. Upon receipt of the completed Application to Retire the member will receive a final contract for retirement.
- (6) The Final Contract for Retirement must be properly executed before a notary and pursuant to 70 O.S. §17-101, must be filed with TRS no less than thirty (30) days before the effective date of retirement. Therefore, the Final Contract for Retirement must be completed and received by TRS by the first day of the month immediately preceding the retirement date. The first retirement benefit payment will be made on the first day of the month following the effective date of retirement.
- (7) For example, a retirement contract must be on file by May 1, for a retirement date of June 1, in order to process the first retirement benefit payment on July 1.

715:10-15-3.1. Employer's Verification of Retirement Information

Employers of members actively employed during the school year of retirement must submit to TRS information on the member's final year of employment to complete the member's retirement.

(1) Upon receipt of the Application to Retire from a member, TRS shall notify the employer that final employment information is needed from the employer. The employer shall submit the required employment information via TRS' online Employer Portal not less than sixty (60) days prior to the member's date of retirement. Information submitted by the employer shall include, but not be limited to: last day the member is expected to be physically on the job; last day the member is expected to be on the payroll, the member's expected final annual compensation for that employment year, and an expected balance of accrued/unused sick leave.

(2) No later than the 15th day of the month of the member's retirement the employer shall confirm via the TRS Employer Portal the information provided to TRS in subsection (1) above, making any changes to the final information as is necessary. Failure to submit this information by the deadline or errors in submitted information that result in a disqualification of retirement eligibility shall be the responsibility of the employer as is provided in 70 O.S. § 17-105(1)(a)(2).

715:10-15-4. Effective date of retirement contract

(a) The effective date of retirement can be the first of any month specified by the member, provided the effective retirement date cannot be earlier than the member's bona fide separation from service, except as provided in paragraph (2) below, from all participating TRS employers. Bona fide separation from service shall be determined based on whether the facts and circumstances indicate that the employee reasonably anticipated that no further services would be performed for any TRS participating employer after the member's separation date. TRS shall apply the following:

(1) The last day on which service is rendered shall be accepted as the last day of employment, when so certified by the employer. This is not necessarily the last day for which the member receives pay.

(2) If employment terminates on or before the tenth (10th) day of the month, the effective retirement date can be that same month.

(3) If a member's employment terminates after the tenth (10th) day of the month, the effective retirement date can be the first day of the following month.

(b) The effective date of retirement shall be specified on the final contract for retirement, provided if a bona fide separation from service does not occur, any effective date on a final contract which is in conflict with this section is invalid. Final contracts for retirement with invalid effective retirement dates shall not result in a binding retirement contract for the member. In that case, TRS will delay or cancel the member's retirement, as applicable. If the member goes on to complete a bona fide separation from service, the contract for retirement will be delayed to a date consistent with this section. If the member chooses not to complete a bona fide separation from service, the contract for retirement will be canceled.

715:10-15-5. Date of retirement contract is binding; revocation of contract

The final contract for retirement becomes binding on the effective date shown on the contract, provided such date is valid under OAC 715:10-15-4, and shall be known as the effective retirement date. Any contract with an invalid effective retirement date in violation of OAC 715:10-15-4 may be delayed or canceled by TRS as set out in that section. The contract may be revoked by the member, or the retirement plan changed, before the effective retirement date. Any change or revocation by the member must be in writing, and either received by TRS or postmarked by the United States Postal Service prior to the effective retirement date. After the effective retirement date, the contract cannot be canceled by the member. After the effective retirement date, the retirement plan cannot be changed except as outlined in paragraphs one (1) and two (2) below. If the member elected the Option 2 or Option 3 retirement plan and the member's designated joint annuitant dies before the effective retirement date, the member may select another retirement plan without penalty. If a Maximum Plan of Retirement (hereafter referred to the maximum plan) or Option 1 retiree should die during the month following the effective retirement date and before the first retirement benefit is due, any distribution to beneficiaries designated on the member's retirement contract shall be paid pursuant to OAC 715:10-9-1 and 715:10-9-2.

(1) After the effective retirement date, a member who elected a reduced benefit under Option 1, Option 2, Option 3 or Option 4 may make a one-time irrevocable election to change their retirement plan within sixty (60) days of the effective retirement date. The beneficiary or joint annuitant designated by the member at the time of retirement shall not be changed if the member makes the election provided for in this paragraph. Such election must be made in writing, and received by TRS or postmarked by the United States Postal Service prior to the sixtieth day after the effective retirement date.

(2) A member who elected the maximum plan and marries after the retirement date, may make a one-time election to change to an Option 2 or Option 3 retirement plan and name the member's spouse as the designated joint annuitant. The member shall provide proof of the member's good health before the Board of Trustees will permit a change to either the Option 2 or 3 retirement plan and the naming of a joint annuitant. A medical examination conducted by a licensed physician is required for purposes of determining good health. Such examination must be approved by the Medical Board. The member shall be required to provide proof of age for the new joint annuitant. The Board of Trustees shall adjust the monthly benefit to the actuarially equivalent amount based on the newly designated joint annuitant's age. Such election must be made in writing using the forms prescribed by TRS and received by TRS or postmarked by the United States Postal Service within one (1) year of the date of marriage.

715:10-15-6. Verification of date of birth

The Board of Trustees has ruled that any of the documents listed below shall be acceptable for verification of date of birth:

- (1) Birth Certificate
- (2) Valid state or federal government issued photo identification
- (3) Passport

715:10-15-7. Standard retirement formula

The standard retirement formula will be applied as directed in Title 70, Oklahoma Statutes, Section 17-116.2 [70 O.S. 17-116.2]

715:10-15-7.1. Retirement formula for members employed by a comprehensive university [REVOKED]

715:10-15-7.2. Retirement formula for members retiring under provisions of the Education Employees Service Incentive Plan ("EESIP")

(a) Effective July 1, 2006 the legislature modified the standard retirement formula for TRS members employed by participating remitting entities under 70 O.S. §17-108.1(A), which excludes comprehensive and regional four-year universities.

(b) A member who was employed prior to July 1, 1995, may have service credits performed prior to July 1, 1995, calculated in the member's retirement formula used for service performed after July 1, 1995, when the member's average salary at retirement is greater than \$40,000, and the member works for a participating remitting entity under 70 O.S. §17-108.1(A) beyond the year in which he or she reaches normal retirement age. (The terms "average salary" and "normal retirement age" are defined in 70 O. S. § 17-101.)

(c) A member who works one year beyond the school year in which he or she reaches normal retirement age, and who is employed by a participating remitting entity under 70 O.S. §17-108.1(A), may move two (2) years of service performed prior to July 1, 1995, to the retirement formula used to calculate service performed after July 1, 1995. For each additional year the member works beyond normal retirement age, employed by a participating remitting entity under 70 O.S. §17-108.1(A), he or she may move two (2) additional years of service credit performed prior to July 1, 1995. Only years worked beyond normal retirement and while working for a participating remitting entity under 70 O.S. §17-108.1(A) shall be used to uncap years of service.

(d) For members who retire on or after July 1, 2006, and before June 30, 2007, the maximum average salary that can be used to calculate the benefit for service credits that qualify to be moved under this section is \$60,000. During this one-year period, a member whose average salary at retirement is greater than \$60,000 shall have benefits calculated in three steps: 2% x \$40,000 for service performed prior to July 1, 1995, that does not qualify as moved service; 2% x \$60,000 for service performed prior to July 1, 1995, that qualifies as moved service; and 2% x the member's average salary for service performed on or after July 1, 1995. (Note: The retirement date for each retiring member is always the first day of the month. [See OAC 715:10-15-4.]

(e) For members who retire on or after July 1, 2007, and before June 30, 2008, the maximum average salary that can be used to calculate the benefit for service credits that qualify to be moved under this section is \$80,000. During this one-year period, a member whose average salary at retirement is greater than \$80,000 shall have benefits calculated in three steps: 2% x \$40,000 for service performed prior to July 1, 1995, that does not qualify as moved service; 2% x \$80,000 for service performed prior to July 1, 1995, that qualifies as moved service; and 2% x the member's average salary for service performed on or after July 1, 1995. (Note: The retirement date for each retiring member is always the first day of the month. [See OAC 715:10-15-4.]

(f) For members who retire on or after July 1, 2008, the average salary used to calculate the benefit for service credits that qualify to be moved under this section is the member's average salary at retirement. The member's retirement benefit will be calculated as follows: 2% x \$40,000 for service performed prior to July 1, 1995, that does not qualify as moved service; and 2% x the member's average salary for service performed prior to July 1, 1995, that qualifies as moved service and for service performed on or after July 1, 1995. (Note: The retirement date for each retiring member is always the first day of the month. [See OAC 715:10-15-4.]

(g) A member whose Regular Annual Compensation was greater than \$40,000 during the school years 1987-88 through 1994-95 must make an additional contribution to qualify for movement of service provided for in this section. [See OAC 715:10-5-4.1. Payment of contribution deficit for Education Employees Service Incentive Plan]

(h) A member reaches Normal Retirement Age during the school year he or she reaches age 62, or when the member's age and total service equal 80 or more for those members whose official TRS membership date is prior to July 1, 1992, and when the member's age and total service equal 90 or more for those members whose official TRS membership date is on or after July 1, 1992.

(i) For this section, credit a member may receive for having 120 or more days of unused sick leave at retirement will be used in determining the school year in which a member reaches Normal Retirement Age.

(j) For this section, a member who reaches Normal Retirement Age by the tenth of July of any school year will be considered to have reached Normal Retirement Age at the beginning of that school year. A member who reaches Normal Retirement Age after the tenth of July of any school year will be considered to have reached Normal Retirement Age at the beginning of the next school year in which the member is employed.

(k) To qualify for a year of service beyond Normal Retirement Age, OAC 715:10-3-2 and OAC 715:10-3-3 will be used to determine credited service. However, a fractional year of service performed after reaching Normal Retirement Age cannot be combined with a fractional year of service performed prior to reaching Normal Retirement Age to qualify for a year of service credit under this section. Fractional years of service worked after reaching Normal Retirement Age can be combined to create a full year of credited service. If a member participates in EESIP and wears away at least two (2) years of capped service but has employment at a non-participating entity (comprehensive and regional four-year universities) after reaching Normal Retirement Age, service credit will be awarded for the employment for the non-participating entity, but the salary the member earned at the non-participating entity will not be applied to those years of service which qualify for the Education Employees Services Incentive Plan (EESIP)

(l) The provisions of subsections e and f of this section become effective only if additional employer contributions are funded as required by 70 O.S. § 17-116.2C.

715:10-15-8. Age, creditable service determination

The member's age, and the age of a member's designated beneficiary, at retirement shall be determined as the age attained as of the last birthday. Total creditable service shall be determined to the tenth of a year rounded down. Age shall be determined as of the date of retirement in the following manner:

- (1) If the member's date of birth is on or before the tenth (10th) day of the month of retirement, the age shall be the age of the member on the tenth (10th) day of the month.
- (2) If the member's date of birth is after the tenth (10th) day of the month of retirement, the age shall be the age of the member on the first day of the month.

715:10-15-9. Minimum service retirement benefits

Minimum service retirement benefits are payable as follows:

- (1) If a classified employee's average salary is less than \$6,500, the retirement allowance shall be \$10.83 per month for each year of service.
- (2) If a nonclassified employee's average salary is less than \$5,350, the retirement allowance shall be \$8.91 per month for each year of service.

715:10-15-10. Retirement plans

A member may elect to receive a monthly life annuity under one of the following plans:

- (1) The Maximum Plan of Retirement (hereafter referred to as the maximum plan) provides the greatest monthly lifetime benefit that each individual member's years of creditable service and average salary permit. The maximum plan is the monthly benefit calculated using the standard

retirement formula set by statutes. In the event the total benefit payments made prior to the death of a retired member are less than the member's accumulated contributions (with any interest credited to the account prior to July 1, 1968), the difference shall be paid to the member's designated beneficiary or to the member's estate, whichever is applicable.

(2) Retirement Option 1 provides a slightly reduced lifetime benefit. The monthly benefit is the difference between the annuity portion of the maximum plan and the annuity portion of an Option 1 retirement plan subtracted from the maximum plan. If the retired member dies before receiving in the annuity portion of the monthly payments an amount equal to the member's deposits (with any interest credited to the account prior to July 1, 1968), the remaining balance shall be paid in a lump sum to the member's designated beneficiary or to the member's estate, whichever is applicable. (The member's deposits are "protected" for the member's beneficiary for a longer period of time than under the maximum plan, hence, the monthly benefit is less than the maximum benefit.)

(3) Retirement Option 2 provides a reduced monthly benefit payable to the member for life. At the death of the retired member, the same monthly benefit payable to the member shall continue to the member's joint annuitant, if living. This option is known as a "100% joint survivor annuity." The reduction in the monthly benefit is based on actuarial tables developed for this purpose and approved by the Board of Trustees. The ages of the member and joint annuitant are an important factor in computing this benefit. The joint annuitant for the Option 2 retirement plan may be the member's spouse, another person, or the beneficiary of a Discretionary and Special Needs Trust as provided in 70 O.S. § 17-105(M)(3). If the designated joint annuitant is not the member's spouse, IRS Regulations require that the adjusted member/joint annuitant age difference cannot be more than ten (10) years. The adjusted member/joint annuitant age difference is determined by first calculating the excess of the age of the member over the age of the joint annuitant based on their ages on the date of retirement. If the member is younger than age 70, the age difference determined in the previous sentence is reduced by the number of years that the member is younger than age 70 based on the member's age on the date of retirement. If the adjusted member/joint annuitant age difference is greater than ten (10) years, the Option 2 retirement plan is not available. In the event the member's joint annuitant dies at any time after the member's retirement date but before the death of the member, the member shall return to the retirement benefit, including any post-retirement benefit increases the member would have received, had the member not selected the Option 2 retirement plan. The joint annuitant designation cannot be changed under any circumstance after the date of retirement except as provided in OAC 715:10-15-11. The reduction in the monthly payment is much greater than under all other retirement options because two people are protected for the life of both individuals.

(4) Retirement Option 3 provides a reduced monthly benefit payable to the member for life. At the death of the retired member, one-half (or 50%) of the monthly benefit payable to the member, shall continue to the member's joint annuitant, if living. This option is known as a "50% joint survivor annuity." The reduction in the monthly benefit is based on actuarial tables developed for this purpose and approved by the Board of Trustees. The age of the joint annuitant is an important factor in computing this benefit. The joint annuitant for the Option 3 retirement plan may be any person or the beneficiary of a Discretionary and Special Needs Trust as provided in 70 O.S. § 17-105(M)(3). In the event the member's joint annuitant dies at any time after the member's retirement date but before the death of the member, the member shall return to the retirement benefit, including any post-retirement benefit increases, the member would have received had the member not selected the Option 3 retirement plan. The joint annuitant cannot be changed under any circumstance after the date of retirement except as provided in OAC 715:10-15-11. The reduction in the monthly payment, while not as great as in the Option 2 plan, still requires a substantial reduction because two people are protected for the life of both individuals.

(5) Retirement Option 4 provides a reduced monthly benefit payable to the member for life. In the event the retired member dies within one hundred twenty (120) continuous months from the date of retirement, the balance of the payments is continued to the designated beneficiary until a total of one hundred twenty (120) months have been completed. The actual reduction is based on actuarial tables developed for this purpose and approved by the Board of Trustees. The beneficiary must be designated at the time of retirement. The Option 4 retirement plan is not available for a member whose retirement date is on or after the member reaches age 93. However, if the designated beneficiary is the member's spouse, the Option 4 retirement plan may be selected if the 120-month period does not extend beyond the joint life and last survivor expectancy of the member and the member's spouse. If the beneficiary dies before the total number of "guaranteed" months have been completed, the remaining payments shall be computed at the rate of interest used in determining the original guarantee. The funds remaining shall be paid to the administrators, executors or assigns of the last surviving payee. Option 4 retirement plan will be revoked by the Board of Trustees December 31, 2025. Beginning January 1, 2026, it will no longer be available as a retirement plan option for TRS members.

715:10-15-10.1. "Pop-up" of Option 2 or Option 3 retirement plans

If the designated joint annuitant under the Option 2 or 3 retirement plan dies at any time after the member's retirement date, but before the death of the member, the member shall return to the retirement benefit, including any post-retirement benefit increases the member would have received had the member not selected the Option 2 or 3 retirement plan. In such an event, the member's monthly retirement benefit and any amount due at the death of the member shall be calculated as if the member had selected the Maximum retirement allowance. The increase in the member's monthly benefit becomes effective the first day of the month following the date of death of the designated joint annuitant and shall be payable for the member's remaining lifetime. The member shall notify TRS of the death of the designated joint annuitant in writing by providing a certified copy of the joint annuitant's death certificate. If the joint annuitant's death certificate has not yet been issued by the Medical Examiner, or for other good cause shown, the Executive Director of TRS may accept alternative documentation to establish proof of death for purposes of this section. In the absence of timely notice, TRS shall make retroactive benefit payments to the member, not to exceed six (6) months from the time the member first became eligible for increased benefits to the date notification is received. Notwithstanding any other provision, increased benefits will not be due for any period prior to July 1, 1994.

715:10-15-10.2. Partial lump-sum payments

Any member of the Teachers' Retirement System with 30 or more years of service credit may elect to receive a partial lump-sum payment in exchange for a reduced annuity. The application for a partial lump-sum payment will be added to the retiring member's final contract for retirement on a form prescribed by the Board of Trustees. A beneficiary of a deceased active member is not eligible to select a partial lump-sum payment.

(1) A member may elect to receive a partial lump-sum payment in an amount equal to the unreduced retirement benefit (Maximum Retirement Allowance) which would have been paid over a period of 12, 24 or 36 months, had the lump-sum option not been selected. Once the payout amount is selected, a reduced Maximum Retirement Allowance is then calculated using factors based upon the member's age at retirement and the payout option (12, 24, or 36 months) selected. This reduced Maximum Retirement Allowance then serves as the basis upon which other optional payment alternatives will be calculated pursuant to 70 O.S. § 17-105 and OAC 715:10-15-10.

- (2) The partial lump-sum payment shall be paid in a single check separate from the regular monthly retirement ninety (90) days after the date of the retiring member's first monthly benefit payment. The partial lump-sum payment cannot be returned to the Retirement System once it has been received by the member.
- (3) The partial lump-sum payment shall be subject to federal income tax in accordance with Internal Revenue Code or applicable Internal Revenue Service regulations. In accordance with IRS regulations, the member may elect to roll over the partial lump-sum payment into an eligible individual retirement account (IRA) or other eligible retirement plan, including the Oklahoma Teachers' Retirement System's 403b Tax Sheltered Annuity Plan if you already have an established account prior to expected retirement date.
- (4) The total amount of the partial lump-sum payment shall be deducted from the member's account balance consisting of the employee contributions plus interest posted to the member's account prior to July 1, 1968, for the purpose of determining unused contributions remaining in the account.
- (5) The Partial lump-sum payment will be based on the service credit and average compensation, including projected compensation, at the time of retirement, but may be issued before final compensation and contributions are received and posted to the member's account. TRS reserves the right to correct any overpayment or underpayment discovered after final compensation and contribution postings have been received. Should the member have been overpaid, TRS will collect such overpayment from the member, based on an adjustment to the member's monthly benefit. Should the member have been underpaid, TRS will adjust future monthly benefit payments to compensate the member for the amount of the underpayment.
- (6) A retiree, having received a partial lump-sum payment, who is reemployed and returns to membership contributing status pursuant to OAC 715:10-17-13, shall have his or her subsequent retirement benefit calculated taking into consideration that a partial lump-sum payment has been received.
- (7) Should the retiring member die after the effective date of retirement, but before the partial lump-sum payment is made, the payment will be made to the beneficiary(ies) designated by the retiring member on the final contract for retirement, unless the member filed a separate beneficiary form specifically designating a third party as the beneficiary of the partial lump-sum payment.
- (8) If the retiring member is married at the time of retirement, the member's spouse must sign the member's partial lump-sum application form acknowledging the retiring member's intent to receive a partial lump sum payment.

715:10-15-10.3. Partial Lump-sum Option Factors

Factors have been developed by consulting actuaries and adopted by the Board of Trustees to be used in the calculation of the partial lump-sum payment selected by a member of the Teachers' Retirement System. The Board of Trustees may adopt new tables at any time upon recommendation of the consulting actuaries, when in the opinion of the Board the experience of the System may justify the need for such change. Adoption of new tables will be prospective and shall not affect any partial lump-sum payment selected and paid prior to the adoption of new factors. The reduction factors are provided on the Application to Retire.

715:10-15-11. Designation of beneficiaries or joint annuitant for retirement options

A designation of beneficiary or joint annuitant must be made when the retirement contract is completed. A member who selects the Maximum, Option 1 or Option 4 retirement plan may name more than one beneficiary. Once the member has been retired for more than sixty (60) days or if no change in the member's retirement plan occurs, beneficiaries named for the Maximum, Option 1, or Option 4 retirement plan may be changed by the member at any time in the manner prescribed by TRS. The joint annuitant for the Option 2 or Option 3 retirement plan cannot be changed even if the joint annuitant dies before the member, providing, however, the retired member may designate a beneficiary different from the joint annuitant to receive the \$5,000 death benefit. The member who elects the Option 4 retirement plan must name a beneficiary, who can be any living person or persons, or a trust. The beneficiary does not have to be a spouse or dependent. In the case of a divorce the retirement contract remains in force and the member's joint annuitant (ex-spouse) will receive the member's monthly benefit after the member's death (if named as a joint annuitant) unless a Court, acting through a Qualified Domestic Relations Order, directs otherwise. A beneficiary designation is valid for TRS purposes when properly executed and on file with TRS prior to the death of the member. TRS shall not be responsible for determining the competency of a member to designate a beneficiary except as otherwise provided by Oklahoma law.

715:10-15-11.1. Designation of trustee of Oklahoma discretionary and special needs trust as joint annuitant or beneficiary

(a) 70 O.S. § 17-105(g) provides that any person who is eligible to be named as a beneficiary or joint annuitant, and who is also a beneficiary of a trust created under the Oklahoma Discretionary and Special Needs Trust Act, or comparable Trust Act under another state, may be a beneficiary or joint annuitant of a retired member by having the trustee of the trust established for the benefit of that individual named as the legal beneficiary or joint annuitant. Benefit payments shall be paid to the Trustee for the benefit of the beneficiary.

(b) If a beneficiary or joint annuitant, at the time of or subsequent to being named a beneficiary or joint annuitant of a TRS member, is or becomes the beneficiary of a Special Needs Trust, TRS will acknowledge the trust as the beneficiary or joint annuitant and make payments to the Trustee once the following has been submitted to and approved by TRS:

(1) Trust creation documents which include the following:

(A) Provision that the trust is non-revocable;

(B) Provision for only one beneficiary of the trust which cannot be changed and provision no other beneficiaries may be added; and,

(C) Provision that the beneficiary must hold all interests in the trust except for the remainder interest to be paid in the event of the beneficiary's death;

(2) Signed and notarized acknowledgment from Trustee that he or she will notify TRS within 15 (fifteen) days of the death of the beneficiary, or in the event a new Trustee is appointed, or any other change to the Trust documents that would affect the eligibility of the beneficiary or Trustee from being eligible to be named a beneficiary under subsection (b) such as addition of a beneficiary, etc.; and, the tax identification number of the Trust, as well as the Social Security number of the Trust beneficiary.

715:10-15-12. Spousal consent

When selecting a retirement option, a TRS Acknowledgment of Spousal Consent Form shall be completed. If the member is married at the time of retirement, the retiring member's spouse must acknowledge that the retirement options available to the member have been explained to the spouse and the spouse concurs with the retirement option selected by the retiring member. If the member is unmarried or unable to locate their spouse at the time of retirement, the member must certify that he or she is unmarried or that at the time of retirement the whereabouts of the spouse are unknown and the spouse cannot be located. Spousal Consent is an integral part of the application for retirement and must be on file with TRS before the member's retirement becomes effective.

715:10-15-13. Survivor benefits when death occurs after retirement [REVOKED]

715:10-15-14. Actuarial tables

Actuarial tables, developed by consulting actuaries, have been adopted by the Board of Trustees and will be used for computation of benefits. Factors for ages or types of annuities, which are not included in the tables, will be computed from the same data by the same general formulas. The Board of Trustees may adopt new tables at any time upon recommendation of the consulting actuaries, when in the opinion of the Board the experience of the System may justify the need for such change. New tables shall be published by the Board with an effective date.

715:10-15-15. Disability retirement; application; effective date

(a) Any member who is actively employed in the public schools of Oklahoma and is regularly contributing to TRS may be retired due to a medical disability which renders the member unable to perform regular employment duties provided such member:

- (1) has at least ten (10) years of Oklahoma membership service,
- (2) timely submits a complete application for disability retirement, and,
- (3) is found by the Medical Board of TRS to be medically disabled to continue regular duties, or
- (4) meets the requirements of paragraphs (1) and (2) of this subsection and timely submits to TRS a Social Security Award Notice or other sufficient written documentation from the Social Security Administration certifying the member has been approved for disability benefits by the Social Security Administration, U. S. Department of Health and Human Services,
- (5) however, a member who is eligible for unreduced regular retirement is not eligible for disability retirement benefits.

(b) A member who has terminated employment or is on leave without pay status shall be eligible for disability retirement by meeting the provisions of paragraph (a) of this rule, provided the disability existed at the time the leave without pay status commenced or the termination of employment from the public schools of Oklahoma occurred, and the disability was the reason for the leave status or termination of employment.

(c) The application for disability retirement required in paragraph (2) of subsection (a) of this section must include:

- (1) a detailed statement by the member as to the nature of the disability and how the disability prevents the member from performing the regular duties of the member's current position.
- (2) a detailed statement by the member's employer (chief administrative officer or personnel officer) as to the nature of the member's regular job duties and how the disability prevents the member from performing the regular duties assigned to the position of employment, and
- (3) a detailed report by the member's physician giving the medical nature of the disability. The attending physician's report should certify that the member, in the physician's judgment, is mentally or physically incapacitated from further performance of duty, that such incapacity is

likely to be permanent and that the member should be retired. Any examination required to complete this report must be at the expense of the member. The physician must be a Doctor of Medicine or Doctor of Osteopathy and in good standing. In conditions related to the eye(s), the physician must be an ophthalmologist in good standing. In conditions related to hearing, the physician must be an otolaryngologist or Doctor of Audiology and in good standing. For mental health conditions, the physician must be a Doctor of Clinical Psychology or Doctor of Psychiatry and in good standing.

(d) TRS must receive the complete application for disability retirement along with all supporting documents, such as medical records or a Social Security Award Notice, by the first day of the month in which the Medical Board is scheduled to meet.

(e) The effective date for disability retirement must always be on the first (1st) day of the applicable month. The effective date will be the later of (1) or (2) below, but an effective date can never occur prior to receipt of the complete disability retirement application:

(1) the first day of the month in which the disability application is approved by the Medical Board, provided a bona fide separation of service occurs no later than the 10th of the month the disability application is approved, or

(2) the date determined by the Board of Trustees after an administrative review, if such review is requested by the member pursuant to the Administrative Procedures Act 75 O.S. 250 et seq.

(f) The disability retirement becomes binding on the effective date specified in subsection (e) of this section. Disability retirements cannot be revoked except by written request from the member delivered to TRS or postmarked by the United State Postal System prior to the effective retirement date (see OAC 715:10-15-5) or by returning to active service employment (See OAC 715:10-15-18).

(g) The disability retirement benefit shall be calculated in the same manner as regular retirement benefits described in OAC 715:10-15-7, with the exception that no reduction will be made due to the age of the member. Providing that any member who qualifies for disability benefits after June 30, 2003, who is married at the time his or her disability benefits commence, may elect an actuarially reduced 100% joint survivor retirement benefit based on factors provided by the System's consulting actuary.

(h) The disability retirement benefit is payable under the same provisions as the Maximum Plan of Retirement or Retirement Option 2 explained in OAC 715:10-15-10. Payments are made monthly for the life of the retiree or until the member is able to return to employment (See OAC 715:10-15-18). The only survivor benefits available to a disabled member's beneficiaries or estate are a return of any member contributions not paid to the member in the form of monthly benefits and the \$5,000 death benefit provided per statute, provided the return of member contributions is not available if the disabled member elected the reduced benefit option to provide the spouse a monthly benefit as described in subparagraph (g) of this section.

(i) If the disabled member elects to receive an actuarially reduced 100% joint survivor retirement benefit, the surviving spouse will continue to receive the disabled member's monthly benefit for life. At the death of the disabled member, the member's designated beneficiary for the death benefit, or the member's estate if there is no designated beneficiary, will receive the \$5,000 death benefit provided by statute. If the disabled member's spouse should die before the disabled member, the disabled member's monthly disability benefit will be increased to the amount the disabled member would have been entitled to receive if the disabled member had elected the Maximum Plan of Retirement. The increased monthly benefit will become effective the first day of the month following the death of the disabled member's spouse providing proper notice is received by TRS and will be paid as provided in OAC 715:10-15-10.1.

715:10-15-16. Review by Medical Board and Recommendation of Permanent Disability Retirement or Temporary Disability Retirement

(a) Upon timely receipt of the application for disability retirement under 715:10-15-15(d), the TRS Medical Board will review the application at its next regularly scheduled monthly meeting. The Medical Board may recommend a member for permanent disability retirement. The Medical Board will provide written notification to TRS members of its determination regarding disability retirement, including any applicable reasons for denial. If the denial was due to a lack of information, the Medical Board may request additional evidence from the TRS member, including an additional medical examination as set out in OAC 715:10-15-17. The member may then submit additional evidence for further review within 30 days of receipt of the denial notification from TRS, provided the Medical Board can waive the 30 day deadline for good cause shown. Good cause will include a requested additional medical examination occurring outside the 30 days. If the Medical Board denies disability retirement without requesting additional information, the TRS member may request an administrative hearing pursuant to the Administrative Procedures Act, 75 O.S. Section 250 et seq., and OAC 715:1-1-10 (with the exception of subparagraphs 1 and 2) within sixty (60) days of notification of the Medical Board's adverse recommendation.

(b) When the Medical Board determines disability is of a temporary nature, it may recommend temporary disability retirement. Temporary disability retirement benefits may be provided for six (6) or twelve (12) months. Temporary disability retirement benefits will automatically cease at the end of the prescribed period if additional disability retirement benefits are not awarded through reapplication.

(1) Reapplication means timely providing to TRS a completed disability re-evaluation packet with all associated documents, including the applicable medical records from the member or a Social Security Award Notification or similar documentation. TRS will provide the re-evaluation packet to the member upon the member's request.

(2) Timely reapplication occurs when TRS receives the complete re-evaluation packet with all associated documents at least 30 days before temporary disability retirement expires.

(3) If completed reapplication documents are not timely received by TRS, reapplication for either temporary or permanent disability benefits is considered waived by the member. This terminates the disability retirement process for the associated disabling condition(s), subject to subsection (c) below.

(4) The Medical Board will review all timely and complete reapplication documents at the next regularly scheduled monthly meeting and provide written notification to TRS members of its determination regarding disability retirement, including any applicable reasons for denial. If the denial was due to a lack of information, the Medical Board may request additional evidence from the TRS member, including an additional medical examination as set out in OAC 715:10-15-17. The member may then submit additional evidence for further review within 30 days of receipt of the denial notification from TRS, provided the Medical Board can waive the 30 day deadline for good cause shown. Good cause will include a requested additional medical examination occurring outside the 30 days. If the Medical Board denied disability retirement without requesting additional information, the TRS member may request an administrative hearing pursuant to the Administrative Procedures Act, 75 O.S. Section 250 et seq., and OAC 715:1-1-10 (with the exception of subparagraphs 1 and 2) within sixty (60) days of notification of the Medical Board's adverse recommendation.

(c) In the event the Medical Board denies a request for disability retirement and the TRS member can later document disability rendering the member unable to perform regular employment duties in Oklahoma public education with medical evidence that was not in existence at the time either the Medical Board issued its previous denial or the member waived reapplication for disability retirement benefits, the TRS member may re-apply for disability retirement provided the TRS member can

otherwise satisfy the requirements of OAC 715:10-15-15 at the time the member reapplies, including but not limited to the requirement that the disability existed at the time either leave without pay or termination from employment in public education occurred.

715:10-15-17. Additional medical evidence can be required

If the Medical Board determines additional information is necessary, the Medical Board can request it. If the Medical Board determines additional medical examination by a consulting physician of the Medical Board is necessary, the member shall submit to an examination by a consulting physician designated by the Medical Board. While TRS will seek to secure a consulting physician, generally from the applicant's area of residence, the Medical Board retains the final decision. TRS shall be responsible for the cost charged by the consulting physician for the examination. Personal expenses, including travel by the member, cannot be paid by TRS. Failure to report for an examination without prior arrangement with TRS for an extension shall be deemed cause for rejection of disability retirement, or immediate termination of disability benefits when a member is receiving temporary disability benefits. If the Medical Board disagrees with the opinion of its consulting physician, the Medical Board must specifically state its opinions and conclusions in its recommendation of denial.

715:10-15-18. Suspension, termination, or reduction of disability retirement benefits

(a) Refusal to Undergo Medical Examination: The Medical Board may require any member who has been retired under a disability, and who has not reached age sixty (60), to undergo a medical examination. Refusal to submit to the examination results in temporary suspension of disability retirement benefits until such examination is completed. If the medical report from such examination leads to a recommendation by the Medical Board that a member's disability benefits should be permanently terminated, that information will be provided to the member and the member will be advised of the right to appeal the recommendation under 715:1-1-10. Disability benefits will continue to the member while the appeal is pending before the Board of Trustees. [See 70 O.S. §17-105(H)(3).]

(b) Return to Employment:

(1) Members receiving disability retirement benefits with a membership date before November 1, 2011 who are under age 62, and members receiving disability retirement benefits with a membership date of November 1, 2011 or after who are under age 65 will be referred to hereafter as members retired by disability prior to their normal retirement age.

(2) Members retired by disability prior to their normal retirement age who return to employment must notify TRS and provide documentation in a manner required by TRS of their expected start date, expected duties of employment, number of hours expected to be regularly worked per week, part-time or fulltime employment status, number of days expected to be worked in the fiscal year, and anticipated annual salary. This notification and information must be received by TRS prior to the member's return to employment.

(3) TRS will review the information to determine whether the employment necessitates a reduction of the annual retirement benefit or a determination that the member's disability retirement benefit shall be terminated due to the member's return to active service in TRS. [See 70 O.S. §17-105(H)(4) and (H)(5).]

(A) If the salary in gainful employment is not more than the difference between the member's final average salary and the annual benefit amount being received, no changes will occur to the annual disability benefit, provided if the member returns to employment in active contributory employment in Oklahoma public education earning membership service pursuant to OAC 715:10-13-1, the disability benefit will be assessed as provided in subparagraph (C) below. For clarity, members who return to work at a TRS participating employer without

earning service credit will have the postretirement contributions due to TRS from their TRS participating employer. [See 70 O.S. §17-116.10(B).]

(B) If the salary in gainful employment is more than the difference between the member's final average salary and the annual benefit amount being received, TRS will reduce the annual benefit to an amount which, when added to the salary from employment, equals the member's final average salary, provided if the member returns to active contributory employment in Oklahoma public education earning membership service pursuant to OAC 715:10-13-1, the disability benefit will be assessed as provided in in subparagraph (C) below. For clarity, members who return to work at a TRS participating employer without earning service credit will have the postretirement contributions due to TRS from their TRS participating employer. [See 70 O.S. §17-116.10(B).]

(C) Notwithstanding subparagraph (A) and subparagraph (B) above, for members who return to active contributory employment in Oklahoma public education earning membership service pursuant to OAC 715:10-3-1, TRS will temporarily suspend the disability retirement benefit according to the timeline provided in OAC 715:10-17-14.

(i) If the member continues such employment and completes 6 months of active contributory employment, the member will be restored to active service in TRS. At such time, disability retirement will be permanently terminated. The unused portion of accumulated contributions shall be re-established in the member's account. If the member later completes a service retirement, eligibility to receive a monthly retirement allowance shall be based on total years of creditable service earned.

(ii) If the member terminates such employment before completing 6 months of active contributory employment, TRS will reinstate the monthly disability benefit upon satisfactory proof of termination. Satisfactory proof will be determined in the sole discretion of TRS. The reinstatement date will be determined according to the timeline provided in OAC 715:10-17-14, provided payment of such reinstated benefits may be delayed depending when the member provides notice of the terminated employment to TRS. It is in the member's best interest to provide notice of terminated employment to TRS as soon as possible.

(I) Employee contributions that were remitted will be refunded to the member after termination as soon as practical and will be paid as a lump sum without interest. For clarity, these contributions will be rollover eligible.

(II) Employer contributions that were remitted will not be refunded.

(4) When TRS discovers a member receiving disability retirement benefits has returned to work but failed to provide TRS notice and documentation as set out in paragraph (2) of subsection (b) above, TRS shall temporarily suspend the disability retirement benefit. The member must provide all such required information to TRS, and TRS will conduct the analyses in paragraph (3) of subsection (b) to determine whether and how to reinstate the disability retirement benefit and to determine whether TRS paid out excess disability benefits.

(A) Disability retirement benefits which were suspended but are found to be owed will be paid in a lump sum without interest once TRS confirms such benefits are owed, subject to offset for excess disability benefits recoupment.

(B) Excess disability benefits are those received in violation of subparagraph (B) or (C) in paragraph (3) of subsection (b) above. TRS will notify the member of excess disability benefits due and pursue recoupment. TRS will offset excess disability benefits received against any retirement benefits owed or accumulated contributions due, as applicable, and can pursue other recoupment means available under the law. TRS can also accept payment of the excess disability benefits in a lump sum from the member.

(c) If TRS determines that a member retired by disability prior to normal retirement age is either subject to a reduction in the annual retirement benefit as set out in subparagraph (B) of paragraph (3)

of subsection (b) above or is employed in a position consisting of duties similar to those required in the position held before having been granted disability retirement, TRS may demand a medical re-examination to determine if the retiree remains qualified for disability retirement.

15:10-15-19. Disability retirement payments

The first monthly payment shall be due on the first day of the month that follows the effective date of the disability retirement.

(1) The disability retirement allowance shall be in lieu of any other TRS retirement benefit for which the member might otherwise qualify.

(2) The benefit payment for the month in which the retired member died, if not previously paid, shall be made to the member's beneficiary, or, if the member has no beneficiary, to the member's estate. The amount of the benefit payment for the month in which the member died shall be equal to the full monthly benefit payment, regardless of the day of the month on which the retired member died.

(3) Members who qualify for disability retirement shall have their total monthly benefit payments deducted from their accumulated contributions. Any monies remaining in the member's retirement account at death shall be paid to the beneficiary or the estate in a lump sum.

715:10-15-20. Conversion of disability retirement to retirement option 2

If a deceased disabled retiree had thirty (30) years or more of creditable service, and death occurred after June 30, 1981, but prior to the retiree receiving twelve (12) monthly retirement payments, the surviving spouse may elect to receive a life annuity under the provisions of Retirement Option 2 as the death benefit. Such a benefit shall be based upon the retirement the deceased member would have been entitled to at the time of death under Retirement Option 2. The Retirement Option 2 death benefit shall be in lieu of all other benefits which a surviving spouse or other beneficiary might otherwise be entitled to receive.

715:10-15-21. Return to employment by a disabled retiree [REVOKED]

715:10-15-22. Reporting of gainful earnings for disability retirees

In addition to the requirements of OAC 715:10-15-18(b)(2), TRS may require disabled retirees with a membership date before November 1, 2011 who are under age 62 and disabled retirees with a membership date on or after November 1, 2011 who are under age 65 to make a report of earnings received from gainful employment for the previous calendar year in a manner provided by TRS. Failure to timely submit a required report may result in TRS mandating a medical re-examination or temporary suspension of benefits until the report is filed.

715:10-15-23. Special \$150 per month plan; application; effective date

(a) A former teacher, who taught a minimum of ten (10) years in the public schools of Oklahoma prior to July 1, 1943 shall receive a monthly pension of One Hundred Fifty Dollars (\$150.00). A teacher who taught in the public schools of Oklahoma one (1) year prior to 1934 and thereafter taught a minimum of ten (10) years, or who taught a minimum of thirty (30) years in the public schools of Oklahoma and reached the age of seventy (70) years of age prior to July 1, 1984, shall be eligible for a monthly pension of One Hundred Fifty Dollars (\$150.00). The former teacher must not be otherwise eligible to receive any benefit from TRS to be eligible for this monthly pension.

(b) Anyone who qualifies may apply for the \$150 per month pension by providing verification of the service performed by the member and completing a final contract for retirement. The necessary

verification may be obtained from the Teacher Personnel Section, State Department of Education, records from the schools, the county superintendents or the county treasurers where the school districts are located. The applicant's signature on the final contract must be notarized.

(c) The effective date of retirement shall be the first of the month after all required documentation is received in the Teachers' Retirement office, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. No payments shall be made retroactive.

715:10-15-24. Due-date of retirement benefit payments

(a) Monthly benefit payments are due the first day of each month to all eligible retirees. Payments are deposited in the United States Postal Service, or paid to a designated agent providing electronic fund transfers, on the last day of each month. The benefit payment for the month in which the retired member died, if not previously paid, shall be made to the member's beneficiary, or, if the member has no beneficiary, to the member's estate. The amount of the benefit payment for the month in which the member died shall be equal to the full monthly benefit payment, regardless of the day of the month on which the retired member died. TRS cannot be responsible for payments lost in the mail, except that duplicate payments will be processed after fifteen (15) days.

(b) Effective January 1, 2000, newly retired members shall be required to receive monthly benefit payments via electronic fund transfers to a banking or financial institution designated. The retiree and receiving institution must complete the form prescribed for this purpose by the Teachers' Retirement System. In the event the electronic fund transfer creates an undue hardship on the retiree, the executive director of the Teachers' Retirement System may waive this requirement when it is determined to be in the best interest of the member and the Retirement System.

715:10-15-25. Changes and corrections to retirement benefit payments

Members should promptly notify TRS of any change that affects their monthly retirement payment. Changes in address, banking information affecting direct deposit information, and dependents status for insurance coverage or deductions for state and federal income taxes will be processed and reflected in the next month's payment, if received by TRS on or before the fifteenth (15th) of the month. Changes received after the 15th will not be processed until the following month.

715:10-15-26. Code Section 415 limits as applied to TRS

(a) Notwithstanding any other provision of the administrative code, contributions paid to and benefits paid from the retirement system shall not exceed the maximum contributions and benefits permissible under Internal Revenue Code Section 415. For 415 testing purposes, the limitation year is the calendar year.

(b) Participation in Other Qualified Plans: Aggregation of Limits

(1) The 415(b) limit with respect to any member who at any time has been a member in any other defined benefit plan as defined in Internal Revenue Code Section 414(j) maintained by the member's employer in the retirement system shall apply as if the total benefits payable under all such defined benefit plans in which the member has been a member were payable from one (1) plan.

(2) The 415(c) limit with respect to any member who at any time has been a member in any other defined contribution plan as defined in Internal Revenue Code Section 414(i) maintained by the member's employer in the retirement system shall apply as if the total annual additions under all such defined contribution plans in which the member has been a member were payable from one (1) plan.

(c) Basic 415(b) Limitation

- (1) Before January 1, 1995, a member may not receive an annual benefit that exceeds the limits specified in Internal Revenue Code Section 415(b), subject to the applicable adjustments in that section. On and after January 1, 1995, a member may not receive an annual benefit that exceeds the dollar amount specified in Internal Revenue Code Section 415(b)(1)(A), subject to the applicable adjustments in Internal Revenue Code Section 415(b) and subject to any additional limits that may be specified in the retirement system. In no event shall a member's benefit payable under the retirement system in any limitation year be greater than the limit applicable at the annuity starting date, as increased in subsequent years pursuant to Internal Revenue Code Section 415(d) and the regulations thereunder.
- (2) For purposes of Internal Revenue Code Section 415(b), the "annual benefit" means a benefit payable annually in the form of a straight life annuity (with no ancillary benefits) without regard to the benefit attributable to after-tax employee contributions (except pursuant to Internal Revenue Code Section 415(n)) and to rollover contributions (as defined in Internal Revenue Code Section 415(b)(2)(A)). The "benefit attributable" shall be determined in accordance with Treasury Regulations.
- (d) Adjustments to Basic 415(b) Limitation for Form of Benefit. If the benefit under the retirement system is other than the form specified in subsection (c)(2), then the benefit shall be adjusted so that it is the equivalent of the annual benefit, using factors prescribed in Treasury Regulations.
- (1) If the form of benefit without regard to any automatic benefit increase feature is not a straight life annuity or a qualified joint and survivor annuity, then the preceding sentence is applied by either reducing the Internal Revenue Code Section 415(b) limit applicable at the annuity starting date or adjusting the form of benefit to an actuarially equivalent amount [determined using the assumptions specified in Treasury Regulation section 1.415(b)-1(c)(2)(ii)] that takes into account the additional benefits under the form of benefit as follows:
- (2) For a benefit paid in a form to which Internal Revenue Code Section 417(e)(3) does not apply [a monthly benefit], the actuarially equivalent straight life annuity benefit that is the greater of (or the reduced Limit applicable at the annuity starting date which is the "lesser of" when adjusted in accordance with the following assumptions):
- (A) The annual amount of the straight life annuity (if any) payable to the member under the retirement system commencing at the same annuity starting date as the form of benefit to the member, or
- (B) The annual amount of the straight life annuity commencing at the same annuity starting date that has the same actuarial present value as the form of benefit payable to the member, computed using a 5% interest assumption (or the applicable statutory interest assumption) and
- (i) for years prior to January 1, 2009, the applicable mortality tables described in Treasury Regulation section 1.417(e)-1(d)(2) (Revenue Ruling 2001-62 or any subsequent Revenue Ruling modifying the applicable provisions of Revenue Rulings 2001-62), and
- (ii) for years after December 31, 2008, the applicable mortality tables described in Internal Revenue Code Section 417(e)(3)(B) (Notice 2008-85 or any subsequent Internal Revenue Service guidance implementing Internal Revenue Code Section 417(e)(3)(B)); or
- (3) For a benefit paid in a form to which Internal Revenue Code Section 417(e)(3) applies [a lump sum benefit], the actuarially equivalent straight life annuity benefit that is the greatest of (or the reduced Internal Revenue Code Section 415(b) limit applicable at the annuity starting date which is the "least of" when adjusted in accordance with the following assumptions):
- (A) The annual amount of the straight life annuity commencing at the annuity starting date that has the same actuarial present value as the particular form of benefit payable, computed using the interest rate and mortality table, or tabular factor, specified in the plan for actuarial experience;

- (B) The annual amount of the straight life annuity commencing at the annuity starting date that has the same actuarial present value as the particular form of benefit payable, computed using a 5.5 percent interest assumption (or the applicable statutory interest assumption) and
- (i) for years prior to January 1, 2009, the applicable mortality table for the distribution under Treasury Regulation section 1.417(e)-1(d)(2) (the mortality table specified in Revenue Ruling 2001-62 or any subsequent Revenue Ruling modifying the applicable provisions of Revenue Ruling 2001-62), and
 - (ii) for years after December 31, 2008, the applicable mortality tables described in Internal Revenue Code Section 417(e)(3)(B) (Notice 2008-85 or any subsequent Internal Revenue Service guidance implementing Internal Revenue Code Section 417(e)(3)(B)); or
- (C) The annual amount of the straight life annuity commencing at the annuity starting date that has the same actuarial present value as the particular form of benefit payable (computed using the applicable interest rate for the distribution under Treasury Regulation section 1.417(e)-1(d)(3) (the 30-year Treasury rate (prior to January 1 2007, using the rate in effect for the month prior to retirement, and on and after January 1, 2007, using the rate the in effect for the first day of the plan year with a one-year stabilization period)) and
- (i) for years prior to January 1, 2009, the applicable mortality rate for the distribution under Treasury Regulation section 1.417(e)-1(d)(2) (the mortality table specified in Revenue Ruling 2001-62 or any subsequent Revenue Ruling modifying the applicable provisions of Revenue Ruling 2001-62), and
 - (ii) for years after December 31, 2008, the applicable mortality tables described in Internal Revenue Code Section 417(e)(3)(B) (Notice 2008-85 or any subsequent Internal Revenue Service guidance implementing Internal Revenue Code Section 417(e)(3)(B)), divided by 1.05.
- (e) Benefits Not Taken into Account for 415(b) Limitation. For purposes of this section, the following benefits shall not be taken into account in applying these limits:
- (1) Any ancillary benefit which is not directly related to retirement income benefits;
 - (2) That portion of any joint and survivor annuity that constitutes a qualified joint and survivor annuity;
 - (3) Any other benefit not required under Internal Revenue Code Section 415(b)(2) and Treasury Regulations thereunder to be taken into account for purposes of the limitation of Internal Revenue Code Section 415(b)(1).
- (f) Other Adjustments in 415(b) Limitation.
- (1) In the event the member's retirement benefits become payable before age sixty-two (62), the limit prescribed by this section shall be reduced in accordance with Treasury Regulations pursuant to the provisions of Internal Revenue Code Section 415(b), so that such limit (as so reduced) equals an annual straight life benefit (when such retirement income benefit begins) which is equivalent to a one hundred sixty thousand dollar (\$160,000) (as adjusted) annual benefit beginning at age sixty-two (62).
 - (2) The reductions provided for in (1) above shall not be applicable to pre-retirement disability benefits or pre-retirement death benefits.
- (g) Less than Ten (10) Years of Participation. The maximum retirement benefits payable under OAC 715:10-15-26 to any member who has completed less than ten (10) years of participation shall be the amount determined under OAC 715:10-15-26(c), as adjusted under OAC 715:10-15-26(d) and/or OAC 715:10-15-26(f), multiplied by a fraction, the numerator of which is the number of the member's years of participation and the denominator of which is ten (10). The reduction provided by OAC 715:10-15-26(g) cannot reduce the maximum benefit below 10% of the limit determined without regard to OAC 715:10-15-26(g). The reduction provided for in OAC 715:10-15-26(g) shall not be applicable to pre-retirement disability benefits or pre-retirement death benefits.

(h) Ten Thousand Dollar (\$10,000) Limit; Less than Ten (10) Years of Service. Notwithstanding anything in OAC 715:10-15-26 to the contrary, the retirement benefit payable with respect to a member shall be deemed not to exceed the limit set forth in OAC 715:10-15-26(h) if the benefits payable, with respect to such member under the retirement system and under all other qualified defined benefit pension plans to which the member's employer contributes, do not exceed ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) for the applicable limitation year and for any prior limitation year and the employer has not at any time maintained a qualified defined contribution plan in which the member participated; provided, however, that if the member has completed less than ten (10) years of service with the employer in the retirement system, the limit under OAC 715:10-15-26(h) shall be a reduced limit equal to ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) multiplied by a fraction, the numerator of which is the number of the member's years of service and the denominator of which is ten (10).

(i) Effect of COLA without a Lump Sum Component on 415(b) Testing. Effective on and after January 1, 2009, for purposes of applying the limits under Internal Revenue Code Section 415(b) (the "Limit") to a member with no lump sum benefit, the following will apply:

- (1) a member's applicable Limit will be applied to the member's annual benefit in the member's first limitation year without regard to any cost of living adjustments under Oklahoma statutes;
- (2) to the extent that the member's annual benefit equals or exceeds the Limit, the member will no longer be eligible for cost of living increases until such time as the benefit plus the accumulated increases are less than the Limit; and
- (3) thereafter, in any subsequent limitation year, a member's annual benefit, including any cost of living increases under Oklahoma statutes, shall be tested under the then applicable benefit Limit including any adjustment to the Internal Revenue Code Section 415(b)(1)(A) dollar limit under Internal Revenue Code Section 415(d), and the regulations thereunder.

(j) Effect of COLA with a Lump Sum Component on 415(b) Testing. On and after January 1, 2009, with respect to a member who receives a portion of the member's annual benefit in a lump sum, a member's applicable Limit will be applied taking into consideration cost of living increases as required by Internal Revenue Code Section 415(b) and applicable Treasury Regulations.

(k) Section 415(c) limitations on contributions and other additions. After-tax member contributions or other annual additions with respect to a member may not exceed the lesser of \$40,000 (as adjusted pursuant to Internal Revenue Code Section 415(d)) or 100% of the member's compensation.

- (1) Annual additions are defined to mean the sum (for any year) of employer contributions to a defined contribution plan, member contributions, and forfeitures credited to a member's individual account. Member contributions are determined without regard to rollover contributions and to picked-up employee contributions that are paid to a defined benefit plan.
- (2) For purposes of applying Internal Revenue Code Section 415(c) and for no other purpose, the definition of compensation where applicable will be compensation actually paid or made available during a limitation year, except as noted below and as permitted by Treasury Regulation section 1.415(c)-2, or successor regulation; provided, however, that member contributions picked up under Internal Revenue Code Section 414(h) shall not be treated as compensation.
- (3) Solely for purposes of calculating and complying with the limitations under Internal Revenue Code Section 415, a member's compensation will be defined as wages within the meaning of Internal Revenue Code Section 3401(a) and all other payments of compensation to an employee by an employer for which the employer is required to furnish the employee a written statement under Internal Revenue Code Sections 6041(d), 6051(a)(3) and 6052 and will be determined without regard to any rules under Internal Revenue Code Section 3401(a) that limit the remuneration included in wages based on the nature or location of the employment or the services performed (such as the exception for agricultural labor in Internal Revenue Code Section 3401(a)(2)).

(A) However, for limitation years beginning after December 31, 1997, compensation will also include amounts that would otherwise be included in compensation but for an election under

Internal Revenue Code Sections 125(a), 402(e)(3), 402(h)(1)(B), 402(k), or 457(b). For limitation years beginning after December 31, 2000, compensation shall also include any elective amounts that are not includible in the gross income of the member by reason of Internal Revenue Code Section 132(f)(4).

(B) For limitation years beginning on and after January 1, 2009, compensation for the limitation year shall also include compensation paid by the later of 2½ months after a member's severance from employment or the end of the limitation year that includes the date of the member's severance from employment if:

(i) the payment is regular compensation for services during the member's regular working hours, or compensation for services outside the member's regular working hours (such as overtime or shift differential), commissions, bonuses or other similar payments, and, absent a severance from employment, the payments would have been paid to the member while the member continued in employment with the employer; or

(ii) the payment is for unused accrued bona fide sick, vacation or other leave that the member would have been able to use if employment had continued.

(iii) payments pursuant to a nonqualified unfunded deferred compensation plan, but only if the payments would have been paid to the member at the same time if the member had continued employment with the employer and only to the extent that the payment is includible in the member's gross income.

(iv) Any payments not described in paragraph (B) above are not considered compensation if paid after severance from employment, even if they are paid within 2 ½ months following severance from employment, except for payments to the individual who does not currently perform services for the employer by reason of qualified military service (within the meaning of Internal Revenue Code Section 414(u)(1)) to the extent these payments do not exceed the amounts the individual would have received if the individual had continued to perform services for the employer rather than entering qualified military service.

(v) An employee who is in qualified military service (within the meaning of Internal Revenue Code Section 414(u)(1)) shall be treated as receiving compensation from the employer during such period of qualified military service equal to (i) the compensation the employee would have received during such period if the employee were not in qualified military service, determined based on the rate of pay the employee would have received from the employer but for the absence during the period of qualified military service, or (ii) if the compensation the employee would have received during such period was not reasonably certain, the employee's average compensation from the employer during the twelve month period immediately preceding the qualified military service (or, if shorter, the period of employment immediately preceding the qualified military service).

(C) Back pay, within the meaning of Treasury Regulation section 1.415(c)-2(g)(8), shall be treated as compensation for the limitation year to which the back pay relates to the extent the back pay represents wages and compensation that would otherwise be included under this definition.

(4) For limitation years beginning on or after January 1, 2009, a member's compensation for purposes of subsection (k) shall not exceed the annual limit under Internal Revenue Code Section 401(a)(17).

(l) Service Purchases under Section 415(n). Effective for permissive service credit contributions made in limitation years beginning after December 31, 1997, if a member makes one or more contributions to purchase permissive service credit under the retirement system, then the requirements of Internal Revenue Code Section 415(n) will be treated as met only if:

- (1) the requirements of Internal Revenue Code Section 415(b) are met, determined by treating the accrued benefit derived from all such contributions as an annual benefit for purposes of Internal Revenue Code Section 415(b), or
- (2) the requirements of Internal Revenue Code Section 415(c) are met, determined by treating all such contributions as annual additions for purposes of Internal Revenue Code Section 415(c).
- (3) For purposes of applying this section, the retirement system will not fail to meet the reduced limit under Internal Revenue Code Section 415(b)(2)(C) solely by reason of this subparagraph and will not fail to meet the percentage limitation under Internal Revenue Code Section 415(c)(1)(B) solely by reason of this section.
- (4) For purposes of this section the term "permissive service credit" means service credit
 - (A) recognized by the retirement system for purposes of calculating a member's benefit under the retirement system,
 - (B) which such member has not received under the retirement system, and
 - (C) which such member may receive only by making a voluntary additional contribution, in an amount determined under the retirement system, which does not exceed the amount necessary to fund the benefit attributable to such service credit.
- (5) Effective for permissive service credit contributions made in limitation years beginning after December 31, 1997, such term may include service credit for periods for which there is no performance of service, and, notwithstanding paragraph (4), subparagraph (B), may include service credited in order to provide an increased benefit for service credit which a member is receiving under the retirement system.
- (6) The retirement system will fail to meet the requirements of this section if
 - (A) more than five years of nonqualified service credit are taken into account for purposes of this subparagraph, or
 - (B) any nonqualified service credit is taken into account under this paragraph before the member has at least five years of participation under the retirement system.
- (7) For purposes of paragraph (6), effective for permissive service credit contributions made in limitation years beginning after December 31, 1997, the term "nonqualified service credit" means permissive service credit other than that allowed with respect to
 - (A) service (including parental, medical, sabbatical, and similar leave) as an employee of the Government of the United States, any State or political subdivision thereof, or any agency or instrumentality of any of the foregoing (other than military service or service for credit which was obtained as a result of a repayment described in Internal Revenue Code Section 415(k)(3)),
 - (B) service (including parental, medical, sabbatical, and similar leave) as an employee (other than as an employee described in subparagraph (A)) of an education organization described in Internal Revenue Code Section 170(b)(1)(A)(ii) which is a public, private, or sectarian school which provides elementary or secondary education (through grade 12), or a comparable level of education, as determined under the applicable law of the jurisdiction in which the service was performed,
 - (C) service as an employee of an association of employees who are described in subparagraph (A), or
 - (D) military service (other than qualified military service under Internal Revenue Code Section 414(u)) recognized by the retirement system.
- (8) In the case of service described in paragraph (7), subparagraph (A), (B), or (C), such service will be nonqualified service if recognition of such service would cause a member to receive a retirement benefit for the same service under more than one plan.
- (9) In the case of a trustee-to-trustee transfer after December 31, 2001, to which Internal Revenue Code Section 403(b)(13)(A) or Internal Revenue Code Section 457(e)(17)(A) applies (without regard to whether the transfer is made between plans maintained by the same employer):

- (A) the limitations of paragraph (6) will not apply in determining whether the transfer is for the purchase of permissive service credit, and
- (B) the distribution rules applicable under federal law to the system will apply to such amounts and any benefits attributable to such amounts.
- (10) For an eligible member, the limitation of Internal Revenue Code Section 415(c)(1) shall not be applied to reduce the amount of permissive service credit which may be purchased to an amount less than the amount which was allowed to be purchased under the terms of the retirement system as in effect on August 5, 1997. For purposes of this paragraph an eligible member is an individual who first became a member in the retirement system before January 1, 1998.
- (11) Nothing in this subsection (l) shall provide any additional rights to purchase service credit in the retirement system that are not otherwise expressly provided for under other provisions of these rules or Oklahoma statutes.
- (m) Modification of Contributions for 415(c) and 415(n) Purposes. Notwithstanding any other provision of law to the contrary, the retirement system may modify a request by a member to make a contribution to the retirement system if the amount of the contribution would exceed the limits provided in Internal Revenue Code Section 415 by using the following methods:
- (1) If the law requires a lump sum payment for the purchase of service credit, the retirement system may establish a periodic payment plan for the member to avoid a contribution in excess of the limits under Internal Revenue Code Section 415(c) or 415(n), pursuant to OAC 715:10-5-4.
 - (2) If payment pursuant to subparagraph (1) will not avoid a contribution in excess of the limits imposed by Internal Revenue Code Section 415(c) or 415(n), the retirement system may either reduce the member's contribution to an amount within the limits of those sections or refuse the member's contribution. The rules applicable to picked-up service purchases under OAC 715:10-5-35 are not subject to this subsection.
- (n) Repayments of Cashouts. Any repayment of contributions (including interest thereon) to the retirement system with respect to an amount previously refunded upon a forfeiture of service credit under the retirement system or another governmental plan maintained by the retirement system shall not be taken into account for purposes of Internal Revenue Code Section 415, in accordance with applicable Treasury Regulations.
- (o) Reduction of Benefits Priority Reduction of benefits and/or contributions to all plans, where required, shall be accomplished by first reducing the member's benefit under any defined benefit plans in which the member participated, such reduction to be made first with respect to the plan in which the member most recently accrued benefits and thereafter in such priority as shall be determined by the plan and the plan administrator of such other plans, and next, by reducing or allocating excess forfeitures for defined contribution plans in which the member participated, such reduction to be made first with respect to the plan in which the member most recently accrued benefits and thereafter in such priority as shall be established by the plan and the plan administrator for such other plans provided, however, that necessary reductions may be made in a different manner and priority pursuant to the agreement of the plan and the plan administrator of all other plans covering such member.

715:10-15-27. Code Section 401 (a) (17) limits as applied to TRS

Notwithstanding any other provision of the administrative code, benefit calculations from the retirement system shall not take into account compensation in excess of the amount prescribed by Section 401(a)(17) of the Internal Revenue Code. However, this limit shall not apply to any eligible participant (any member who joined the system prior to July 1, 1996).

715:10-15-28. Waiver of retirement application deadline

70 O.S. § 17-105 provides that the sixty (60) day application for retirement deadline can be waived by application to the Executive Director. The application for waiver must state the reason for the request and the decision to grant or deny the waiver shall be made by the Executive Director. The application for waiver must be received by TRS no less than 15 days prior to the date of retirement. Upon request of the member, the Board may review at its next regular meeting any denial of a waiver by the Executive Director. Members are presumed to be familiar with the plan provisions and aware of the notice requirement and the Executive Director will grant the waiver only for good cause shown. Good cause is generally shown in cases of an unforeseen hardship, such as illness of the member or a member's family, a reduction in force, layoff of employment, or other unexpected change in job status. Good cause is also generally shown in cases of error or delay on the part of the employer and the error or delay is due to no fault of the member.

715:10-15-29. Suspension of Retirement Benefit Pending Proof of Life

TRS has a fiduciary responsibility to ensure retirement benefits are not overpaid upon the death of members or joint annuitants. To that end, TRS may request in writing the return of a Proof of Life Affidavit proving "alive and well" status of members and joint annuitants receiving monthly retirement benefits from TRS as set out below. If a valid Proof of Life Affidavit is not returned to TRS or does not, in the sole discretion of TRS, satisfactorily prove the "alive and well" status of such member or joint annuitant, TRS may suspend the monthly retirement benefit until TRS receives satisfactory proof of life documentation.

(1) TRS will request the Proof of Life Affidavit via a dated letter to the member or joint annuitant requesting the return of the completed Proof of Life Affidavit. TRS must receive a valid Proof of Life Affidavit no later than 8 weeks from the dated letter.

(A) If a valid Proof of Life Affidavit is not received by the 8 week deadline, the retirement benefit will be suspended. If a valid Proof of Life Affidavit is later returned to TRS, TRS will provide in a lump sum without interest any missed monthly retirement benefits and will reinstate the monthly retirement benefit as of the next regular monthly benefit payment date.

(B) A valid Proof of Life Affidavit is one that is correctly completed, fully executed, and correctly notarized.

(C) Due to what can often be an exorbitant cost or the unavailability of a notary, for members or joint annuitants living outside the United States, in its sole discretion and upon good cause shown, TRS may allow an alternative to notarization or to the Proof of Life Affidavit. This will be considered on a case by case basis, and the member or joint annuitant is responsible for providing all evidence of good cause to TRS.

(2) TRS may request a Proof of Life Affidavit from any member or joint annuitant receiving monthly benefits who is age 89 or over, from any member or joint annuitant for which TRS receives a returned IRS Form 1099-R, and for all members or joint annuitants receiving monthly benefits who live outside the United States.

(3) TRS may request a Proof of Life Affidavit on an ad hoc basis from any member or joint annuitant receiving monthly benefits when TRS has a good faith basis. TRS will document internally the good faith basis. A good faith basis is automatically established in the case of suspected fraud or when a member or joint annuitant is reported as deceased to TRS by its death reporting service or another credible source.

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Subchapter 17 - Post-Retirement Employment

715:10-17-1.	Definitions
715:10-17-2.	Break between employment and retirement
715:10-17-3.	Fulltime employment after retirement [REVOKED]
715:10-17-4.	Fulltime employment with no effect on benefits [REVOKED]
715:10-17-5.	Permissible employment
715:10-17-6.	Earnings limits
715:10-17-7.	Employment by a disabled retiree
715:10-17-8.	Repayment of benefits
715:10-17-9.	Annual W-2P tax statements
715:10-17-10.	Effective date of OAC 715:10-17-1 through 715:10-17-9 [REVOKED]
715:10-17-11.	Special waiver for retirees past age 70 [REVOKED]
715:10-17-12.	Earnings report by remitting agencies
715:10-17-13.	Election to return to qualifying employment
715:10-17-14.	Termination and Resumption of Benefit Payments
715:10-17-15.	Salary limitations for certain returning classroom teachers
715:10-17-16.	Post retirement employment with the State Department of Education

715:10-17-1. Definitions

The following words or terms, when used in this subchapter, shall have the following meaning, unless the context clearly indicates otherwise:

"Public school" means all schools, colleges, universities, state agencies, boards, commissions or other state educational entities conducted within the state supported wholly or partly by public funds and operating for any function of public education. All employment by any state agency, which would cause or allow the member to be enrolled in TRS as an active employee will constitute employment by a public school for the purposes of this section. Members receiving service retirement benefits may be employed in private schools, public schools in other states, and in private business without affecting their benefits.

"Retired Member" shall be inclusive of any person, who is receiving monthly benefits from the Teachers' Retirement System of Oklahoma, whether that person is an individual, incorporated entity, corporation, proprietorship, partnership, limited liability company or partnership, or any other business structure that contracts with a public school to perform duties ordinarily performed by classified or non-classified personnel.

"Retirement" means withdrawal from active service, with a retirement benefit in lieu thereof.

715:10-17-2. Break between employment and retirement

A retired member is not eligible to be employed by the public schools of Oklahoma, in any capacity, for sixty (60) calendar days between the retiree's last day of preretirement public-education employment and any postretirement public-education employment. For purposes of this section, the term "last day of preretirement employment" shall mean the last day the employee is required to be physically present on the job to complete the terms of the employment contract or agreement or the member's effective retirement date, whichever is later. An employee on paid leave is still considered to be employed for purposes of this section. Employment under any conditions during this time including volunteer services shall cause the forfeiture of all retirement benefits received during the period. A retiree is ineligible to return to work post-retirement until after their retirement date.

715:10-17-3. Fulltime employment after retirement [REVOKED]

715:10-17-4. Fulltime employment with no effect on benefits [REVOKED]

715:10-17-5. Permissible employment

Post-retirement employment in the public schools, institutions, and agencies covered by TRS is allowed after the break in employment outlined in OAC 715:10-17-2 has been met. Employment subject to this section shall include any services performed by a retired member, as defined in this subchapter, except for payments received as an employee of the State Department of Education pursuant to 70 O.S. § 17-103(7) or as an independent contractor or consultant, pursuant to a lawful contract that complies with the requirements of 70 O.S. § 6-101.2(B) and which is approved by TRS within sixty (60) days of the contract's effective date. TRS will follow guidelines in 70 O.S. § 6-101.2(B) and federal guidelines from the Department of Labor and the Internal Revenue Service in determining when a retired person qualifies as an independent contractor or consultant.

715:10-17-6. Earnings limits

(a) The earnings limit for the calendar year in which a member retires shall be one-twelfth (1/12) of the annual limit multiplied by the number of months the member is eligible to work and receive payments from the public schools of Oklahoma.

(b) Earnings from the public schools may not exceed one-half (1/2) of the member's final average salary used in computing retirement benefits, or the Earnings Limitation for employees allowed by the Social Security Administration, whichever is less. For retired members under the age of sixty-two (62) years, the limit on allowed earnings shall be the lesser of Fifteen Thousand Dollars (\$15,000.00) or one-half (1/2) of the member's final average salary used in computing retirement benefits unless the earnings limitation allowed by the Social Security Administration would be greater than Fifteen Thousand Dollars (\$15,000.00). For retired members sixty-two (62) years of age or older the limit on allowed earnings shall be the lesser of Thirty Thousand Dollars (\$30,000.00) or one-half (1/2) of the member's final average salary used in computing retirement benefits.

(c) Earnings in excess of the maximum limit on allowed earnings from public schools of Oklahoma shall result in a loss of retirement benefits, not to exceed the amount of the monthly benefits, for the year the postretirement employment was performed of One Dollar (\$1.00) for each One Dollar (\$1.00) earned over the maximum allowed earnings amount. All other limitations on post-retirement earnings shall be administered as directed in 70 O.S. §17-116.10.

715:10-17-7. Employment by a disabled retiree

Members retired by disability prior to their applicable normal retirement age may only return to employment under the provisions of OAC 715:10-15-18. For clarity, members retired by disability prior to their applicable normal retirement age who return to work at a TRS participating employer under the provisions of subparagraphs (A) or (B) of paragraph (3) of subsection (b) of OAC 715:10-15-18 will have the postretirement contributions due to TRS from their TRS participating employer. Upon reaching the applicable normal retirement age, a member receiving disability retirement shall be eligible for post-retirement employment under the same conditions outlined above for other retired members.

715:10-17-8. Repayment of benefits

Any amount due TRS because of earnings exceeding the maximum must be repaid by the member within 30 days of the billing date. TRS has the right to suspend monthly benefits, once the member has reached their earnings limit and continues to be employed. TRS may also offset up to 25% of a member's monthly benefit payment to recoup overpayments. Repayment of benefits forfeited due to employment in excess of the maximum limit will require an interest penalty consistent with the actuarially assumed rate of return applicable to the billing, compounded monthly from the date due to the date of repayment.

715:10-17-9. Annual W-2P tax statements

TRS will not adjust W-2P, or other year-end tax statements, to reflect repayment of benefits received after December 31. Any adjustment in retirement income required because of repayments received after December 31 will be shown in the calendar year in which the transaction was completed.

715:10-17-10. Effective date of OAC 715:10-17-1 through 715:10-17-9 [REVOKED]

715:10-17-11. Special waiver for retirees past age 70 [REVOKED]

715:10-17-12. Earnings report by remitting agencies

Prior to March 15 of each year, each employer covered by the provisions of TRS shall submit a report showing the total earnings received by each individual, member and non-member of TRS, during the previous calendar year. The report provided by the employer shall be a copy of the report prepared and submitted to IRS to report W-2 Tax Statements and other taxable income reportable to IRS and the Social Security Administration. The report will be electronically transmitted to TRS via the Employer Portal and will contain the name, social security number, address and the total earnings paid from all sources from January 1 to December 31 of the year and shall be in the format specified by TRS.

715:10-17-13. Election to return to qualifying employment

Any retired member who returns to employment in the public schools of Oklahoma and is employed half-time or more as defined in OAC 715:10-3-2 and OAC 715:10-3-3 may return to post-retirement employment or active contributing status under the following conditions:

- (1) Active Contributing Status. The retired member must file an irrevocable election to discontinue retirement benefits for the period of such employment. The return to membership contributing status must coincide with the beginning of a school year or the member must refund all benefit payments received from the beginning of the school year in which employment begins and make employee contributions on any compensation earned from the beginning of the school year to the date of the election to return to contributing status.
- (2) The election must be completed by the employing school and signed by the retired member and an official who has authority to employ or pay regular employees of the school.
- (3) The election must include the nature of the position held and the beginning date of employment. Retirement payments shall not be resumed during the summer months between consecutive years of this type of employment.
- (4) The retired member and the employing public school shall remit employee and employer contributions in the same manner as active contributing employees.
- (5) The retired member shall accumulate service credit in the same manner as active contributing employees of the system.
- (6) Upon termination of employment, the retired member's monthly retirement benefits will resume with an adjustment to reflect credit for the additional employment as follows:
 - (A) The initial benefit calculated at the time of retirement will not be affected by the additional employment.
 - (B) Service credits will be accumulated and credited to the member's record in accordance with Subchapter 3 of this Chapter.
 - (C) A supplemental benefit for the year(s) of additional service will be calculated using the standard retirement benefit formula and the retirement plan and other options selected by the retiree when the member first retired (See OAC 715:10-15-7 and 715:10-15-7.1).
 - (D) The average salary used in calculating the supplement benefit will be the average of the salaries earned during this period of employment. In the event the member is employed for less than the number of years required to determine the appropriate average salary, the average will be determined by the number of years employed. Annual salaries will be based on contributions made and determined on a school year basis.
- (7) If the retired member is employed for a period of time which does not qualify for additional service credit, the employee contributions remitted by the retired member or by the employer on

the retired member's behalf will be refunded to the retired member without interest. Employer contributions as provided by OAC 715:10-13-3 will not be refunded.

(8) The employer shall provide written notice to TRS when the retired member's employment is terminated. The retired member cannot resume benefit payments under this rule and remain employed. The retired member must comply with the sixty (60)-day non-employment rule that applies to a member who elects normal retirement. Retirement payments will be resumed effective the first of the following month, provided the necessary retirement paperwork is received within the prescribed timelines, otherwise benefits will be resumed the first of the next succeeding month. Any supplemental benefit determined pursuant to this section shall commence at the same time.

(9) If the retired member dies while engaging in half-time or more employment as provided in this section, the retired member's beneficiaries will receive any survivor benefits specified in the terms of the retirement contract elected by the member, the \$18,000 death benefit provided by OAC 715:10-9-2, if applicable, and a return of employee contributions, plus interest accumulated during the current employment, as defined in OAC 715:10-9-1. The beneficiaries of the deceased retired member will not be entitled to both the \$18,000 death benefit and the \$5,000 death benefit described in 70 O.S. §17-105(11) and (12).

(10) If a retired member does not file an election to discontinue monthly benefits while employed by the public schools of Oklahoma, he or she waives the accrual of service credit and the right to any supplemental benefit from service in the position. The retired member will, however, be subject to the earnings limits outlined in 70 O.S. §17-116.10.

(11) Retired members returning to half-time or more employment under this subchapter and section shall not be considered "active members" for purposes of purchasing or transferring any form of prior service credit of whatever nature.

(12) A retiree having received a partial lump-sum payment, who is re-employed and returns to membership contributing status pursuant to OAC 715:10-17-13, shall have his or her subsequent retirement benefit calculated taking into consideration that a partial lump-sum payment has been received.

715:10-17-14. Termination and Resumption of Benefit Payments

When a retired member returns to active contributing status employment pursuant to OAC 715:10-17-13, the following will apply:

- (1) If the member commences employment after the 15th of the month the benefit payment for that month will be paid as regularly scheduled.
- (2) If the member commences employment on or before the 15th of the month the benefit payment for that month will not be due and must be refunded if paid to the member.
- (3) If the member terminates employment on or before the 15th of a month and TRS is notified prior to the 20th of the month, the benefit payment for that month will be paid as regularly scheduled.
- (4) If the member terminates employment after the 15th of a month, the benefit payment for that month will not be due and must be refunded if paid to the member.

715:10-17-15. Salary limitations for certain returning classroom teachers

Legislation enacted during the 2021 legislative session allows members who retired on or before July 1, 2020 to return to employment as an active classroom teacher for a public school or career technology district with no earnings limitations in certain circumstances. Members seeking to return to employment as an active classroom teacher under this provision must meet all the following requirements:

- (1) The member must have been retired as of July 1, 2020;
- (2) The member must have been retired and drawing a TRS retirement benefit and not be employed by any public school or career technology district in any capacity for a period of twelve (12) consecutive months immediately following the last day of employment prior to their retirement date;
- (3) The member can only be employed as an active classroom teacher as defined in 70 O.S. § 17-101(27) when they return to employment; and
- (4) Within sixty (60) days of the member's return to employment, the member's employer must provide to TRS in a manner prescribed by TRS, documentation establishing the member's eligibility under this provision.
 - (A) The Executive Director of TRS may waive the sixty (60) day requirement for good cause shown.
 - (B) To petition for waiver, either the TRS member, the employer, or both if appropriate under the circumstances, must provide written documentation of good cause to TRS along with documentation establishing eligibility under this provision.

715:10-17-16. Post retirement employment with the State Department of Education

A retired member of TRS who becomes employed by the State Department of Education (SDE) for the first time on or after November 1, 2019 ("eligible employee"), shall have the option to remain a member of TRS subject to any applicable post retirement limitations placed on retired members returning to work or may choose to participate in the Oklahoma Public Employees Retirement System (OPERS) as an active member with such eligible employee's participation in OPERS being subject to the laws governing OPERS.

- (1) An eligible employee shall have thirty (30) days from such eligible employee's initial date of hire with SDE to make a one-time irrevocable written election to remain a member of TRS subject to post retirement limitations or to participate in OPERS as an active member. If an eligible employee fails to make an election within the thirty-day period such eligible employee shall be subject to post retirement earnings limitations prescribed by laws governing TRS. If an eligible employee elects to participate in TRS, then SDE shall pay both the employee and employer contributions to TRS as required by law.
- (2) If an eligible employee makes the election to participate in OPERS such eligible employee shall not participate in TRS as an active member nor make employee contributions to TRS. In addition, SDE shall not make employer contributions to TRS. The eligible employee and SDE shall pay the applicable contribution rates as provided by the laws governing OPERS.
- (3) An eligible employee who elects to participate in OPERS shall be ineligible for participation in TRS so long as such eligible employee remains employed by SDE. If such eligible employee assumes a different position, which is governed by a state retirement system other than OPERS or TRS, the eligible employee shall be subject to the retirement system rules applicable to that new position. However, such eligible employee shall not be eligible for service credit in TRS for service performed while participating in OPERS.

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Subchapter 19 - Tax-Sheltered Annuity Program [REVOKED]

- 715:10-19-1. Authority for program [REVOKED]
- 715:10-19-2. General description [REVOKED]
- 715:10-19-3. Eligible employees [REVOKED]
- 715:10-19-4. Program requisites [REVOKED]
- 715:10-19-5. Contributions [REVOKED]
- 715:10-19-6. Calculation of exclusion allowance [REVOKED]
- 715:10-19-7. Methods of computing maximum Program contribution [REVOKED]
- 715:10-19-8. Distributions [REVOKED]
- 715:10-19-9. Withdrawals for financial hardship [REVOKED]
- 715:10-19-10. Example of tax-shelter earnings [REVOKED]
- 715:10-19-11. Rollovers from Program to other eligible retirement plans [REVOKED]
- 715:10-19-12. The Oklahoma Teachers' Deferred Savings Incentive Plan Fund [REVOKED]
- 715:10-19-13. Contributions from the Oklahoma Teachers' Deferred Savings Incentive Plan Fund into Program accounts of active contributing TRS members [REVOKED]

715:10-19-1. Authority for program [REVOKED]

715:10-19-2. General description [REVOKED]

715:10-19-3. Eligible employees [REVOKED]

715:10-19-4. Program requisites [REVOKED]

715:10-19-5. Contributions [REVOKED]

715:10-19-6. Calculation of exclusion allowance [REVOKED]

715:10-19-7. Methods of computing maximum Program contribution [REVOKED]

715:10-19-8. Distributions [REVOKED]

715:10-19-9. Withdrawals for financial hardship [REVOKED]

715:10-19-10. Example of tax-shelter earnings [REVOKED]

715:10-19-11. Rollovers from Program to other eligible retirement plans [REVOKED]

715:10-19-12. The Oklahoma Teachers' Deferred Savings Incentive Plan Fund [REVOKED]

715:10-19-13. Contributions from the Oklahoma Teachers' Deferred Savings Incentive Plan Fund into Program accounts of active contributing TRS members [REVOKED]

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Subchapter 21 - Investment Policy [REVOKED]

- 715:10-21-1. Investment of funds [REVOKED]
- 715:10-21-2. Statement of investment policy [REVOKED]
- 715:10-21-3. Investment guidelines [REVOKED]
- 715:10-21-4. Portfolio assets allocation [REVOKED]
- 715:10-21-5. Cash equivalents guidelines [REVOKED]

715:10-21-1. Investment of funds [REVOKED]

715:10-21-2. Statement of investment policy [REVOKED]

715:10-21-3. Investment guidelines [REVOKED]

715:10-21-4. Portfolio assets allocation [REVOKED]

715:10-21-5. Cash equivalents guidelines [REVOKED]

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Subchapter 23 - State and Education Employees Group Health and Dental Insurance Program

- 715:10-23-1. State and Education Employees Group Health and Dental Insurance Program
- 715:10-23-2. Monthly health insurance premium supplement paid by the Teachers' Retirement System
- 715:10-23-3. Participating education employers not enrolled in the State and Education Employees Group Insurance Plan
- 715:10-23-4. Retired members who return to employment
- 715:10-23-5. Retired members ineligible for health insurance supplement
- 715:10-23-6. Health Insurance Contribution

715:10-23-1. State and Education Employees Group Health and Dental Insurance Program

Members of Teachers' Retirement who retire or terminate employment with at least ten (10) years of creditable service are eligible to enroll in the State and Education Employees Group Health and Dental Insurance Program. The retiring member must conform to rules and regulations promulgated by the State and Education Employees Group Insurance Board, which is the final authority on questions of eligibility for membership and coverage provided by the insurance plan. Questions regarding eligibility for insurance coverage and monthly premiums should be referred to the local school district's health insurance coordinator or the State and Educations Employees Group Insurance Board.

715:10-23-2. Monthly health insurance premium supplement paid by the Teachers' Retirement System

Teachers' Retirement will pay a monthly health insurance premium supplement for each retired member who is enrolled in the health insurance plan provided by the State and Education Employees Group Health and Dental Insurance plan or in an insurance program provided by a participating education employer who provides health insurance coverage to former employees, provided the retired member had at least ten (10) years of Oklahoma service prior to retirement. The term "participating education employer" for purposes of this subchapter shall have the same meaning as the term "public school" as defined by 70 O.S., Section 17-101. The payment shall be in accordance with 74 O.S., Section 1316.3, as amended, which provides that the supplement paid by Teachers' Retirement shall be the premium rate of the Medicare supplement charged to the retired employees not to exceed an amount between \$100 and \$105, depending on length of service and the final average salary of the retired member as specified in subsection 4 of Section 1316.3 of Title 74 of the Oklahoma Statutes.

715:10-23-3. Participating education employers not enrolled in the State and Education Employees Group Insurance Plan

In accordance with 74 O.S., Section 1316.3, as amended, Teachers' Retirement will pay a monthly health insurance premium supplement to a participating education employer for all retired members enrolled in an insurance program provided to retired members of the employer, provided the retired member had at least ten (10) years of creditable service prior to retirement. For purposes of this section the following shall apply:

- (1) The participating employer must notify Teachers' Retirement that a retired member will remain enrolled in the insurance plan provided by the employer.
- (2) Each month Teachers' Retirement will provide the participating employer with a list of all retired members qualifying for the health insurance premium payment and a financial officer authorized by the school shall certify the listing is correct.
- (3) Teachers' Retirement will remit payment to the participating education employer upon receipt of the certified statement.
- (4) The participating education employer will be responsible for collecting additional premiums and remitting the total premium for each member to the health insurance provider.
- (5) The participating education employer shall file with Teachers' Retirement at least once each year the monthly premium charged for the Medicare supplement insurance plan provided to retired members of the employer's insurance plan. In the event the Medicare supplement premium is modified during the school year, the employer shall notify Teachers' Retirement at least thirty (30) days prior to the effective date of the change.

715:10-23-4. Retired members who return to employment

A retired member who returns to employment in the public schools of Oklahoma and becomes eligible for health insurance coverage as a regular employee of a participating education employer will cease to be eligible for the health insurance supplement paid by Teachers' Retirement for the period of time the member is enrolled or eligible to be enrolled in the participating education employer's group insurance plan. Upon termination of eligibility for coverage as a regular employee, the health insurance premium supplement will be resumed.

715:10-23-5. Retired members ineligible for health insurance supplement

Retired members who are not enrolled in either the State and Education Employees Group Health Insurance plan or an insurance plan provided by a participating education employer are not eligible for the insurance supplement provided for in 74 O.S., Section 1316.3 as amended. Retired members who for any reason are not receiving monthly retirement benefits from the Teachers' Retirement System are not eligible for the insurance supplement.

715:10-23-6. Health Insurance Contribution

(a) The Oklahoma Teachers' Retirement System shall contribute the amount required by law towards the cost of health insurance coverage under the State and Education Employees Group Insurance Plan or other eligible group insurance plans only for retired members who actually receive a monthly retirement benefit for that month. This contribution shall not be made for beneficiaries, survivors or directly to the retired member.

(b) For eligible group health insurance plans other than the State and Education Employees Group Insurance Plan, the System will contribute the amount required by law after the group insurance plan has made application to the System and completed any necessary and required forms and/or agreements. The group insurance plan must be in compliance with Oklahoma law and offer insurance to all of the covered participating employer's employees, former employees who are vested and former employees who retired from that covered employer. The insurance plan shall provide a certification monthly detailing each covered retired member in the form and manner required by the System. The subsidy shall be paid in arrears for each eligible retired member.

(c) As provided under 70 O.S. Section 17-108(13), and pursuant to the federal Internal Revenue Code Section 401(h) and Treasury Regulation §1.401-14, the Retirement Medical Benefit Fund shall be maintained as a sub-account of the Retirement Benefit Fund. From the Retirement Medical Benefit Fund, the System shall remit the amount specified in 74 O.S. Section 1316.3 for health insurance premiums.

(d) All contributions to the Retirement Medical Benefit Fund shall be reasonable and ascertainable.

(e) Contributions to the Retirement Medical Benefit Fund must be subordinate to the contributions to the Retirement Benefit Fund for retirement benefits. At no time shall the aggregate actual contributions to the Retirement Medical Benefit Fund (when added to actual contributions for life insurance protection under the plan, if any) be in excess of twenty-five percent (25%) of the total aggregate actual contributions made to the Retirement Benefit Fund (not including contributions to fund past service credits). The Board shall annually determine whether the twenty-five (25%) test has been met. If at any time the Retirement Medical Benefit Fund contributions (plus any life insurance contributions) would exceed the twenty-five percent (25%) test, the excess amount of contributions shall be transferred to the Retirement Benefit Fund for retirement benefits.

(f) Forfeitures in the Retirement Medical Benefit Fund shall not be allocated to individual accounts under the fund, but shall be used for account expenses.

(g) At no time prior to the satisfaction of all liabilities under the Retirement Medical Benefit Fund or termination of the fund shall any assets in the fund be used for, or diverted to, any purpose other than

the providing of payment of the System's portion of the monthly retiree health insurance premium benefit described by Title 74 O.S. Section 1316.3 and the payment of administrative expenses. Assets in the Retirement Medical Benefit Fund may not be used for retirement or disability benefits or any other purposes for which other assets held in the Retirement Benefit Fund are used.

(h) The provisions of section 401(h)(5) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended from time to time, shall apply upon the satisfaction of all liabilities under law and the Retirement Benefit Fund.

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Subchapter 25 - Qualified Domestic Order

715:10-25-1.	Definition
715:10-25-2.	Filing a qualified domestic order
715:10-25-3.	Contents of qualified domestic order
715:10-25-4.	Payment to alternate payee
715:10-25-5.	Termination of a qualified domestic order
715:10-25-6.	Teachers' Retirement not subject to ERISA [REVOKED]

715:10-25-1. Definition

The term "qualified domestic order" means an order issued by a district court of the State of Oklahoma pursuant to the domestic relations laws of this state which relates to the provision of marital property rights to a spouse or former spouse of a member and which creates or recognizes the existence of an alternate payee's right to, or assigns to an alternate payee the right to receive a portion of the benefits payable with respect to a member of the Teachers' Retirement System.

715:10-25-2. Filing a qualified domestic order

A TRS member, his or her legal representative, a member's former spouse, or his or her legal representative may file a qualified domestic order with TRS. In not less than thirty (30) days of such filing, TRS will acknowledge receipt and notify all parties listed in the order that the order has been accepted or that clarification of the order must be provided to TRS. All qualified domestic orders filed with TRS must be in accordance with Oklahoma Statutes and must conform to the provisions of 70 O.S., Section 17-109, as amended. An approved Qualified Domestic Order is available on the TRS website and its use is recommended.

715:10-25-3. Contents of qualified domestic order

For a qualified domestic order to be accepted and binding on the Teachers' Retirement System the order meet the following requirements:

- (1) The order must clearly specify the following:
 - (A) the name and last-known mailing address (if any) of the member and the name and mailing address of the alternate payee covered by the order,
 - (B) the amount or percentage of the member's benefits to be paid by Teachers' Retirement to the alternate payee,
 - (C) the number of payments or period to which such order applies,
 - (D) the characterization of the benefit as to marital property rights, and whether the benefit ceases upon the death or remarriage of the alternate payee, and
 - (E) each plan to which such order applies.
- (2) The order meets the requirements of this section only if such order:
 - (A) does not require Teachers' Retirement to provide any type or form of benefit, or any option not otherwise provided under the state law as related to the Retirement System,
 - (B) does not require Teachers' Retirement to provide increased benefits,
 - (C) does not require the payment of benefits to an alternate payee which are required to be paid to another alternate payee pursuant to another order previously determined to be a qualified domestic order or an order recognized by the Retirement System as a valid order prior to the effective date of this subchapter, and
 - (D) does not require payment of benefits to an alternate payee prior to the actual retirement date of the related member or prior to the date the member elects to receive a lump sum distribution of his or her retirement account.

715:10-25-4. Payment to alternate payee

Payments to an alternate payee will be made in a like manner and at the same time payment is made to the member. Payment will be either a lump sum distribution of the contributions and interest due the member upon termination of service or death, or monthly benefit payments under the retirement options available to the member at the time he or she applies for retirement benefits. The alternate payee shall not be allowed to choose a method of payment that is different from the method chosen by the member. The alternate payee may not receive payment of any kind prior to the member making application and becoming eligible for payment of benefits. Federal and Oklahoma state income taxes will be withheld from the payment to an alternate payee in accordance with applicable federal and state statutes.

715:10-25-5. Termination of a qualified domestic order

A qualified domestic order will terminate when Teachers' Retirement has fully met the provisions of the order. The obligation of the Teachers' Retirement System to pay an alternate payee pursuant to a qualified domestic order shall cease upon the death of the related member. In the event a qualified domestic order requires the benefits payable to an alternate payee to terminate upon the remarriage of the alternate payee, the Retirement System shall terminate said benefit only upon the receipt of a certified copy of a marriage license, or a copy of a certified order issued by the court that originally issued said qualified domestic order declaring the remarriage of said alternate payee. The order may be cancelled or modified by the court that originally issued the order.

715:10-25-6. Teachers' Retirement not subject to ERISA [REVOKED]

