

How to Retire with TMRS For Eligible Members

Phone: 512.476.7577 • Fax: 512.476.5576
Need help? www.tmr.com/contact.php • Website: www.tmr.com
Mailing address: P.O. Box 149153 • Austin, TX 78714-9153

Toll free:
800.924.8677
Hablamos Español.

If you are planning to retire soon from a TMRS city, congratulations! Over the course of your career, you have deferred a percentage of your compensation into your TMRS account, where it has earned interest annually. When you retire, your city will match the balance in your account at the city's chosen percentage. The total amount will be used to calculate a **monthly payment for your lifetime**. View your city's benefit choices under My City Plan on the TMRS website.

Your MyTMRS® Account

One of the best tools for planning your retirement is MyTMRS, a secure online program that allows you to view your account and run retirement estimates. If you have not already established a MyTMRS account, register from the link on the TMRS website. Once you log in, MyTMRS tells you whether you are retirement eligible or vested. In most cases, you can use MyTMRS to run estimates to help you choose the time to retire and your retirement plan option. In MyTMRS, be sure your address and phone number are entered correctly, and don't forget your email address! Use a long-standing, non-work email address (for post-retirement communications from TMRS).

Retirement Eligibility

Depending on your city's TMRS plan, you can retire:

- With at least 5 or 10 years of service, at age 60; or
- With at least 20 or 25 years of service at any age

If you have service credit with multiple TMRS cities, credit with other Texas retirement systems, or other public service, determining retirement eligibility can be more complicated. See the TMRS Member Benefits Guide for more information, check your account on MyTMRS, or call Member Services at 800-924-8677 for assistance with determining eligibility.

Applying for Retirement

Applying for your TMRS retirement is a separate process from ending employment with your city. To apply for TMRS retirement, download the **Service Retirement Packet (TMRS-SRP)** from the TMRS website. You may also request the SRP from your city personnel office, or call and request it from TMRS. The packet contains all the forms you need, as well as more detailed information about the retirement process.

Your TMRS effective retirement date must be the last day of a calendar month, and your last day of employment with your city must be on or before your retirement date with TMRS. Your Application for Service Retirement must be received in the TMRS office within 90 days before your retirement date.

Important Considerations

Detailed descriptions of all TMRS retirement benefits are contained in the *Member Benefits Guide* and in the Retirement Annuity Options video on the TMRS website. Here are some important things to keep in mind as you plan for your retirement.

- The retirement application will require your city's certification and, in some cases depending on your choice of retirement option and/or beneficiary designation, notarization.
- Along with the SRP, you will need to submit a copy of a document showing your birthdate and, for some selections, proof of birthdate for your beneficiary. A list of acceptable documents is included with the packet.

Pre-Retirement Resources

- "How to Retire" Quick Link on TMRS Website
- Member Annual Statement
- MyTMRS
- *TMRS Member Benefits Guide*
- *TMRS FACTS for Members*
- Website (Members page)
- Pre-Retirement Regional Conferences
- *INSIGHT* newsletter and E-newsletter
- **Videos** – Designating your Beneficiary, Retirement Annuity Options
- **Flyers** – HELPS Information Flyer, Divorce and Retirement
- TMRS Facebook Page

Post-Retirement Resources

- Retirement Account Statement
- MyTMRS
- Retiree Factsheet
- Website (Retirees page) and MyTMRS
- Retiree Luncheons
- *RetirementWise* magazine and E-newsletter
- **Videos** – Returning to Work after Retirement
- **Flyers** – COLAs for Retirees
- TMRS Facebook Page



- You will need to select the retirement option you want. For information about available options, view the TMRS video that explains them (see the Video Training Library on the TMRS website).
- MyTMRS allows you to see the available plan options and estimates of the annuity payments you can choose from. If you have a Qualified Domestic Relations Order (QDRO) on file, you must request your estimates from Member Services.
- You will also need to decide whether you want a Partial Lump Sum Distribution (PLSD) as part of your benefit and how you wish to have the PLSD paid out (directly to you or rolled over to another eligible retirement plan). If you are certified by your city as a public safety employee at the time you retire (see definition on the TMRS-15 form in the SRP), taxes on your PLSD may differ.
- The retirement forms will ask you to name a beneficiary. A TMRS video on choosing a beneficiary is available on the TMRS website (Video Training Library).
- You will need to provide financial institution information so that TMRS can direct deposit your payment each month. The form requests a voided check to verify accuracy.
- You will need to determine the federal income tax withholding election that you want applied to your benefit. Most TMRS annuity payments are taxable. Information on taxes is included in the SRP. TMRS cannot give individual tax advice.
- If you are a public safety officer, please see the box below for information on the federal HELPS provision.
- If you plan to return to work after retirement for a city that participates in TMRS, it may affect your ability to retire. Watch the Return To Work video on the website or call Member Services at 800-924-8677 for assistance.

Once you have filled out your retirement forms and the city has certified the application, the forms should be submitted to TMRS either by mail, fax, or uploaded to the City Portal (with assistance from an authorized city contact). After the SRP has been submitted, if TMRS needs additional information, we will notify you. When all required items have been received and your packet has been processed, TMRS will send you a confirmation letter by mail. It is your responsibility to review this letter carefully and notify TMRS of any errors immediately. **After your first monthly payment has been issued, you cannot change your retirement date, retirement plan option, and in most cases, your beneficiary designation.** (Exception: If you marry or divorce after retirement, contact TMRS for more information.)

FAQs about Retiring

Q. When will my annuity payments begin?

A. When you have fulfilled the application requirements and we have all the required documents, your first benefit payment will be made the last business day of the month after your effective retirement date. For example, if your retirement is effective May 31, your first monthly benefit will be deposited in your bank on the last business day of June.

Q. Will my payment amount ever change?

A. If your city has adopted a Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) provision, you may be eligible for an increase after you have been retired for at least 13 months. See the Cost of Living Adjustments flyer for more information on COLAs. Your benefit amount will also change if you adjust the amount of your tax withholding or HELPS payment (if applicable) at any time.

Q. How do I get proof of income for my TMRS retirement benefit?

A. After you receive your first annuity payment from TMRS, you may download an annuity verification letter through MyTMRS or call Member Services (800-924-8677) to request it.

Q. Will Social Security affect my TMRS benefit?

A. If you receive Social Security benefits, they will not affect your TMRS benefit.

Insurance Premium Deductions for Retired Public Safety Officers (TMRS-HLPS) — The federal HELPS provision allows eligible retired or permanently disabled public safety officers to elect an amount to be deducted from their TMRS benefit payment to pay for health care or long-term care insurance premiums. If you qualify, the amount you may exclude from taxable income on your tax return may not exceed \$3,000 in one year. If you wish to make this election, the amount is directly paid by TMRS to a qualified insurer. To qualify for this program, you must have separated from service as a “public safety officer.” If you believe this applies to you and you wish to enroll in the program, your last employing city will need to certify your status as an eligible public safety officer for you to get this benefit. The TMRS-HLPS form will need to be filled out, certified, and sent to TMRS.

Version 1.0, July 2018.

Texas Municipal Retirement System. This publication is an informal summary of statutes contained in the TMRS Act. If any specific questions of fact or law should arise, the statutes will govern. TMRS, MyTMRS, and the TMRS logo are registered trademarks of the Texas Municipal Retirement System.