

# Claiming Service Credit

## Outside Service

You may receive Teachers' Retirement System (TRS) credit for your employment in an out-of-state school or Alaska private school. Outside service includes employment as a:

1. Certificated full-time elementary or secondary teacher or certificated employee in a full-time position which requires a teaching certificate as a condition of employment in an:
  - a) Out-of-state public school either inside or outside of the United States supported by U.S. funds; or
  - b) Approved or accredited nonpublic school either inside or outside the United States supported by U.S. funds;
2. Full-time employee in an out-of-state institution of higher learning requiring academic standing and accreditation by a nationally recognized accrediting agency listed in the Education Directory, Colleges and Universities, by the National Center for Education Statistics; or
3. Full-time teacher in an approved or accredited nonpublic institution of higher learning in Alaska.

You may claim up to ten years of outside service (only full school years are creditable). However, the combined total of claimed outside and military service may not exceed ten years.

Although outside service is not membership service, in certain cases it may count toward vesting and retirement eligibility.

## How to Claim Service

You may claim your service by:

- Completing the appropriate forms; and
- Contacting the Division for specific information.

An indebtedness will be established when the process is completed and you may begin making payments at that time.

Applications and other forms are available online at [doa.alaska.gov/drb](http://doa.alaska.gov/drb), by calling the Member Services Contact Center at (800) 821-2251 or in Juneau at (907) 465-4460, or by email at [doa.drb.mscc@alaska.gov](mailto:doa.drb.mscc@alaska.gov).

## The Cost

The cost for claiming outside service (indebtedness) will depend on when you first entered the TRS.

If you first entered:

- Before July 1, 1978, you will be charged 7% of your base entry salary for each year claimed. However, if you first

entered before July 1, 1970, you will be charged 5% for each year of pre-July 1, 1970 service claimed.

Interest at the prescribed rate will begin accruing on your indebtedness on July 1, 1963, or the date of your TRS employment, whichever is later. If the outside service occurs after you terminate TRS employment, and it is claimed upon reemployment, interest will accrue from July 1, 1963, or the date of your reemployment, whichever is later.

- After June 30, 1978, you will be charged the full actuarial cost for providing benefits for the service. 7% interest will begin accruing on the date that your indebtedness is established.

Your annual base contract salary when you first entered under the TRS will be used to calculate your indebtedness, unless your outside service occurred following termination from TRS employment and is claimed upon reemployment. In that case, your reentrance salary will be used.

Interest will accrue on your indebtedness until it is paid in full or you retire, whichever occurs first.

## Simultaneous TRS and PERS Credit

If you are a member of the TRS and the Public Employees' Retirement System (PERS) at the same time, you may receive partial credit under both systems. To be eligible, you must be employed at least half-time in both the TRS and the PERS concurrently and you must make the required contributions.

The total TRS and PERS credit that you may earn during a school year (July 1 through June 30 of the following year) may not exceed one year.

## Claiming Earlier Service

You may also receive credit for TRS or PERS half-time service prior to May 31, 1989. Contact the TRS to find out how to claim earlier service. After your claim is received and accepted, an indebtedness will be established and you may begin making payments. Your indebtedness will be equal to the full actuarial cost of providing benefits for the service.

7% interest will begin accruing on the indebtedness beginning on July 1, 1989, or the date that you are first eligible to claim the service, whichever is later. It will continue to accrue until you have paid the indebtedness in full or you retire, whichever occurs first.



## Leave of Absence Without Pay (LWOP)

You may receive TRS credit for LWOP if your LWOP was authorized by your employer.

Contributions for LWOP are required and are based on the salary that you would have earned had you continued to work instead of taken LWOP. There are two types of LWOP.

Although LWOP credit does not count toward vesting and retirement eligibility, it will increase your TRS credit.

**Active LWOP:** You must pay both the employee and employer contributions to the TRS each month while on LWOP. Contributions should be paid through your payroll office.

**Inactive LWOP:** You are not required to pay TRS contributions while on LWOP. When you return to work and claim LWOP, an indebtedness equal to the employee and employer contributions will be established.

7% interest will be accruing on the indebtedness beginning the date you began inactive LWOP.

**Caution:** If you are participating in the 1% supplemental contributions provision, you should make sure that you do not jeopardize that coverage by going on inactive LWOP.

## Sabbatical Leave

Sabbatical leave is not considered leave without pay. You may receive membership credit while you are on approved sabbatical leave if:

1. You pay the employee and your employer pays the employer contributions to the TRS each month; and
2. You return to your teaching position for a full year after your sabbatical leave ends. If you are unable to return because of sickness, injury or death, this requirement does not apply.

Sabbatical leave is membership service and counts toward vesting and retirement eligibility. Contact the Division for more information.

## Alaska Bureau of Indian Affairs Credit

You may be eligible for additional TRS credit for your employment with a Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) school in Alaska. To qualify for this credit, you must have Alaska BIA service as:

1. A certificated full-time teacher in a position which requires a teaching certificate as a condition of employment; or

2. A professional educator.

Alaska BIA service will increase your TRS service and monthly benefits and may count toward vesting and retirement eligibility.

## The Cost

The cost for claiming Alaska BIA service (indebtedness) will depend on when you were first hired under the TRS.

Members first hired:

- After June 30, 1990, will be charged 8.65% of their base salary for each year claimed.
- After June 30, 1970, but before July 1, 1990, will be charged 7% of their base salary for each year claimed.
- Before July 1, 1970, will be charged 5% of their base salary for each year of pre-July 1, 1970, service claimed.

Your annual base contract salary when you were first hired under the TRS will be used to calculate your indebtedness, unless your Alaska BIA service occurred following termination from TRS employment and is claimed upon reemployment. In that case, your reentrance salary will be used.

Interest at the prescribed rate will begin accruing on July 1, 1963, or the date of your TRS employment, whichever is later. If the service occurs after you terminate TRS employment and it is claimed upon reemployment, interest will accrue from the date of your reemployment or July 1, 1963, whichever is later.

Interest will continue to accrue until you pay the indebtedness in full or you retire, whichever occurs first.

## Benefits Reduced for Federal Annuities

Monthly TRS benefits paid to members first hired under the TRS after June 30, 1978, will be reduced if benefits are received from the federal government for the same service. The reduction will equal the federal benefit that is being paid for that service.

## What Tier Am I?

Members who first entered a TRS position and were making contributions:

- **Tier I** — Before 7/1/90.
- **Tier II** — On or after 7/1/90, but before 7/1/06.

The information included here only applies to Tiers I and II.

## Alaska Division of Retirement and Benefits

6th Floor, State Office Building | 333 Willoughby Ave. | P.O. Box 110203 | Juneau, AK 99811-0203

### Member Services Contact Center

Hours: 10 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Toll-Free: (800) 821-2251 | In Juneau: (907) 465-4460 | Fax: (907) 465-3086 | TDD: (907) 465-2805

Alaska.gov/drb | doa.drb.mscc@alaska.gov

trs015