

# Frequently Asked Questions



## Countdown to Retirement

(adapted from the TRS website and the 2017 Retiree Guide Decision Guide)

Is your retirement date looming in the not-so-distant future? Make sure as the date approaches, you are prepared and your to-do list is marked off. Here are a few important things you can do to prepare for your retirement:

**Q: What do I do 24 months prior to retirement?**

**A:** Attend a TRS Half-Day Seminar about important topics including Social Security and estate planning. Check the TRS website for dates and locations throughout the State, and to register online.

Request a benefit estimate by logging into your online account and clicking “Generate Benefit Estimate” or by calling TRS.

**Q: What do I do 18 months prior to retirement?**

**A:** Research medical insurance for you and your family. Verify your post-retirement eligibility.

Review your estate plan and make sure your will, trust, and/or power of attorney are up-to-date.

**Q: What do I do 12 months prior to retirement?**

**A:** Request an estimate from the Social Security Administration.

Schedule a one-on-one counseling appointment at the TRS Atlanta office or at a location near you.

Submit a retirement letter to your principal or supervisor.

**Q: What do I do 6 months prior to retirement?**

A: You may start your online application process. Make sure you have decided on a retirement plan that works best for you.

Make sure you understand the criteria for working after retirement. Visit the TRS website to learn more.

Submit a retirement letter to your principal or supervisor.

**Q: What do I do 3 months prior to retirement?**

A: Make sure the service credit you are eligible to purchase is paid in full. You cannot purchase service credit once you retire.

Submit your retirement application if you haven't already done so. The application should be in no later than 2 months prior to your anticipated retirement date.

Contact Sherry McElroy if you need assistance.

**Q: What forms do I need to complete prior to retirement?**

A: You must apply for retirement online, your **Retirement Certification (TRS-8)** and **Sick Leave Certification** forms will be sent directly to your employer. Once you apply for retirement, your employer will be notified and will submit the completed forms to TRS.

You must also submit your **Application for Refund of Contributions** online. As with the forms mentioned above, once you complete your portion of the form, your employer is automatically notified. The **Sick Leave Certification** form is completed after you receive your last payroll check.

**Q: Can I be paid for unused vacation days?**

A: In the event of retirement, resignation, or termination of employment, the individual shall be paid in a lump sum for any earned but unused days of annual leave, up to a maximum of fifteen (15) days.

**Q: Can I be paid for unused sick leave?**

A: No, GCSS does not pay for unused sick leave.

Typically, for every 20 days of unused sick leave you accumulate while working in a TRS covered position, TRS awards one month of service credit. Nine months of unused sick leave is equal to one year of service credit, regardless of the number of months worked per year. You must accumulate at least 60 days of unused sick leave to qualify. TRS calculates sick leave credit only after receiving Sick Leave Certification forms from all of your TRS covered employers.

Your current/final employer must submit the form after your last day of work. However, your previous employers may submit the form at any time. We recommend that you provide all of your previous employers with the form well in advance of your retirement date. This will expedite the processing of your unused sick leave credit at retirement.

**SICK LEAVE LIMITATIONS**

Unused sick leave credit is allowed for Georgia teaching service, including repurchased Georgia teaching service and service transferred from local retirement plans. Georgia law, however, does not permit the awarding of unused sick leave credit for the following service:

- Out-of-State
- Study Leave
- Military
- Employees’ Retirement System of Georgia
- Maternity Leave
- Private School
- Air Time
- Public School Employees Retirement System

Creditable sick leave accumulates at a maximum rate of 1¼ days per month.

- If you worked in a system which awards more than 1¼ days per month, your earned total will be reduced by TRS to meet this standard.
- If you worked in a system which awards less than 1¼ days per month, no adjustment will be made.

While sick leave credit cannot be used to achieve a vested status, it can be added to your creditable service at the time of your retirement. Total creditable service cannot exceed a maximum of 40 years. Also, credit can not be established if you do not have at least 60 days of unused, unpaid sick leave.

**Sick Leave Credit Chart**

<b>Days of Unused Sick Leave</b>	<b>Creditable Service</b>
0-59	0 months
60-69	3 months
70-89	4 months
90-109	5 months
110-129	6 months
130-149	7 months
150-169	8 months
170-189	9 months = 1 year
190-209	10 months
210-229	11 months
230-249	12 months
250-269	13 months
270-289	14 months
290-309	15 months
310-329	16 months
330-349	17 months

350-369	18 months = 2 years
370-389	19 months
390-409	20 months
410-429	21 months
430-449	22 months
450-469	23 months

**The section below is adapted from the 2017 Retiree Guide Decision Guide. Please read the attached 2017 Retiree Guide Decision Guide in its entirety.**

**Q: What are my responsibilities?**

**A:** Make your elections online at [www.mySHBPga.adp.com](http://www.mySHBPga.adp.com) no later than November 4, 2016 by 11:59 p.m. ET.

- Read and make sure you understand the plan materials posted at [www.dch.georgia.gov/shbpplan-documents](http://www.dch.georgia.gov/shbpplan-documents) and take the required actions.
- Check your health insurance deduction to verify the correct deduction amount is made. If you are not being charged the correct amount, immediately contact SHBP's Member Services.
- Update any change in address by making the correction online at [www.mySHBPga.adp.com](http://www.mySHBPga.adp.com) during ROCP or call SHBP's Member Services at 800-610-1863 for assistance.
- Pay all required premiums by the due date if they are not automatically deducted from your retirement annuity.
- Notify SHBP whenever you have a change in covered dependents within 31 days of a qualifying event (QE).
- Notify SHBP when you, a covered spouse, or dependent gain Medicare coverage within 31 days, including gaining coverage as a result of End Stage Renal Disease (ESRD).
- Within 31 days of turning 65 you and your spouse, if applicable, must enroll in at least Medicare Part B and provide SHBP with your Medicare effective dates.
- Continue to pay Medicare Part B premium if you are in a Medicare Advantage (MA) PPO Plan Option.

**IMPORTANT NOTE**

If you discontinue your SHBP coverage for any reason, you will not be able to re-enroll unless you return to work in a position that offers SHBP benefits.

If you return to work after retiring, you will need to have health insurance premiums deducted from your paychecks as an active employee. Upon retiring again, you must notify SHBP's Member Services at 800-610-1863 within 31 days to request coverage as a retiree or you will no longer have coverage with SHBP.

When you retire, your deductions will be taken from your retirement annuity check. If your retirement annuity check does not cover the cost of your premium, you **MUST** set up a direct pay billing arrangement. For more information, call the SHBP Member Services at 800-610-1863.

The election made during the 2016 ROCP will be the coverage you have for the entire 2017 Plan Year unless you have a QE that allows a change in your coverage.

Enrolling or discontinuing coverage from individual coverage offered through the Health Insurance Marketplace (exchange) is **NOT** a QE.

**Q: When will I receive my last payroll check from Gainesville City Schools?**

**A:** Employees who complete a full year prior to retirement will receive their last payroll check using the schedule below:

10 month employee	Last payroll check in August
11 month employee	Last payroll check in July
12 month employee	Last payroll check in June