

Legislative Retirement System (LRS) Employer Manual





Two Northside 75, Suite 300, Atlanta, GA 30318-7701 404-350-6300 800-805-4609 www.ers.ga.gov

Dear Participating Employer:

The Employees' Retirement System of Georgia (ERSGA) is pleased to present our Legislative Retirement System (LRS) Employer Manual. We hope that you will find the Manual to be a valuable tool to assist you as you guide new employees through the enrollment process and report member data and contributions to ERSGA.

Within each section you will find information intended to summarize important Plan provisions and describe key processes and procedures. Please contact us if you have any questions about this Manual. We also encourage you to visit our website at www.ers.ga.gov for additional materials and information, including downloadable forms and our Plan Handbooks.

The support we receive from you is critically important to our ability to administer our pension systems and provide the best possible customer service to our members. Thank you for your assistance. We welcome your feedback on how to improve this Manual and our communication with you and our members.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "James A. Potvin".

James A. Potvin
Executive Director

Using the LRS Manual



The LRS Manual is available for download on our website www.ers.ga.gov. It contains employer information on the Legislative Retirement System (LRS) administered by ERSGA.

Users can click on a topic on the Table of Contents page and will be taken to the first page of that topic.

Over time ERSGA will provide updates to reflect changes in statutory provisions or ERSGA policy. Notification of these updates will be communicated via memo or the Employer Newsletter.

The Employees' Retirement System of Georgia (ERSGA) was created to administer retirement benefits for State of Georgia employees under the Employees' Retirement System (ERS) and other pension plans. ERSGA was established on February 3, 1949, as provided by laws enacted through the Georgia General Assembly.

In addition to the Employees' Retirement System (ERS), ERSGA administers the following pension plans: the Public School Employees Retirement System (PSERS), the Legislative Retirement System (LRS), the Georgia Judicial Retirement System (GJRS), the Georgia Defined Contribution Plan (GDGP), and the Georgia Military Pension Fund (GMPF). ERSGA also administers the State Employees Assurance Department (SEAD) insurance program, as well as the Peach State Reserves program (PSR) – the state's 457 and 401(k) Plans.

The mission of ERSGA is to be the guardian of the retirement systems it administers for the ultimate benefit of the members, retirees and beneficiaries of those systems. This mission is accomplished through ERSGA's core responsibilities which include pension administration; the collection, reconciliation and disbursement of contributions for the welfare of the members, retirees and beneficiaries of the plans; and the sound and secure investment of the retirement funds.

A Board of Trustees is responsible for the administration of ERS and other pension plans. Daily operations are under the direct administration of the Executive Director and staff of ERSGA. The laws governing ERSGA provide service retirements, death benefits and disability benefits, and permit refunds of contributions and interest to members who leave State employment. Employee and employer contributions are paid into the retirement fund for the welfare of members and their beneficiaries.



ERSGA has the responsibility of administering the following retirement plans as mandated under Title 47 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated (O.C.G.A.).

Employees' Retirement System (ERS) O.C.G.A. Title 47 Chapter 2

Largest and oldest defined benefit plan; established January 1, 1950, to provide retirement pension and benefits to full-time eligible state and local employees.

- Old Plan — Eligible employee memberships established prior to July 1, 1982
- New Plan — Eligible employee memberships established between July 1, 1982 and December 31, 2008
- GSEPS — A combination Defined Benefit/Defined Contribution program. New full-time employees to state government eligible for ERS membership hired on or after January 1, 2009 are enrolled in GSEPS. Rehired employees on or after January 1, 2009 with prior refunded or lost ERS memberships are also enrolled in GSEPS.

Public School Employees Retirement System (PSERS) O.C.G.A. Title 47 Chapter 4

Defined benefit plan created January 1, 1970 to provide supplemental retirement pension and benefits to eligible public school employees.

Legislative Retirement System (LRS) O.C.G.A. Title 47 Chapter 6

Defined benefit plan created July 1, 1967 to provide supplemental retirement pension and benefits to eligible members of the Georgia General Assembly.

Georgia Judicial Retirement System (JRS) O.C.G.A. Title 47 Chapter 23

Defined benefit plan created July 1, 1998 to provide retirement pension and benefits to eligible judicial branch employees within state and local government; specifically, superior, state and juvenile court judges, district attorneys, solicitors-general and other state prosecuting attorneys.

Georgia Defined Contribution Plan (GDGP) O.C.G.A. Title 47 Chapter 22

Defined contribution plan created July 1, 1992 to provide a retirement system for temporary, seasonal and part-time employees of eligible state agencies, departments, bureaus, institutions, boards, or commissions of the State of Georgia, including the State Board of Education and the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia.

State Employees' Assurance Department (SEAD) O.C.G.A. Title 47 Chapter 19

Created in 1963, provides governance for the administration of the Georgia Employees' Group Term Life Insurance Plan (GTLI) for eligible state and local employees.

Georgia Military Pension Fund (GMPF) O.C.G.A. Title 47 Chapter 24

Provides supplemental retirement allowances for eligible members of the Georgia National Guard; created July 1, 2002.

Peach State Reserves (PSR) - Deferred Compensation 457 Plan O.C.G.A. Title 45 Chapter 18 Section 30; 401(k) Plan O.C.G.A. Title 45 Chapter 18 Section 50

Peach State Reserves is offered by the State of Georgia to eligible employees to provide an opportunity to save for retirement while reducing current taxable income and accumulating tax-deferred savings. Peach State Reserves offers two Deferred Compensation/Defined Contribution Plans for employees to take advantage of: a 401(k) Plan and a 457 Plan. Employers may contact GaBreeze for additional information (1-877-342-7339 or www.gabreeze.ga.gov).

Contact Information

Mailing Address

Two Northside 75 NW
Suite 300
Atlanta, GA 30318

Location

Beta Building
Third Floor

Electronic Communication

ERSGA Website Address
General Email Address
Employer Website Address

www.ers.ga.gov
contact@ers.ga.gov
www.ers.ga.gov/employers/employers.aspx

Customer Care Group

Cynthia McClure, Manager

ERSGA General: General Member and Employer related calls

Toll free number (800) 805-4609
Local number (404) 650-6300
Fax number (404) 350-6310

Financial Management Division

Carlton Lenoir, FMD Director and ERSGA Chief Financial Officer

Contact information for your **Employer Reporting Representative** by Plan and Employer assignment is available on the **Employer Website**.

- Adjustments of Contributions to Prior Periods
- Change in Employer Contact Information
- Contribution Reporting
- Invoices
- Plan Contribution Rates
- Re-employment Before and After Retirement
- Plan Membership Eligibility and Enrollment
- Rehired Retiree Reporting
- Special Reporting Situations

Member Services Division

Susan Anderson, MS Director and ERSGA Chief Operating Officer

Call ERSGA General Telephone Numbers

- Application for Refund
- Application for Retirement
- Death of Member
- Estimate Requests
- Workshop for Retirement Answers and Preparation (WRAP)
- Retirement Counseling
- Service Accrual
- Service Purchase and Transfer
- Member Statements



1. Enrollment	
General Information	7
Membership Eligibility	7
Earnable Compensation	7
Maximum Compensation	7
Plan Contribution Rates	7
Current Rates	8
Tax Status of Contributions	8
The Enrollment Process	8
2. Active Member Reporting	
General Information	9
Contribution Reporting	9
Adjustments to Prior Periods	10
Invoices	11
Special Reporting Situations	12
3. Membership Service	
General Information	13
Service Accrual	13
Vesting	13
Optional Service Purchase	13
4. Leaving Employment	
General Information	15
Termination Process	15
Application for Refund	15
Application for Service Retirement	15
5. Other Benefits	
Active Member Death and Survivor Benefit	17
Group Term Life Insurance	17
6. Re-Employment	
General Information	18
Before Retirement	18
After Retirement	18
7. Rehired Retiree Reporting	
General Information	20
Employer Reporting Methods	20
8. Glossary	22

General Information

The Georgia Legislative Retirement System (LRS) began operation as of July 1, 1967. The system was created to provide retirement allowances and other benefits for members of the General Assembly (**O.C.G.A. 47-6-20; 47-6-40**). There are approximately 223 members of the LRS and all are members of the Georgia General Assembly. For a time after LRS was established in July 1967, it included non-elected officials such as the Secretary of the Senate, the Clerk of the House of Representatives, and the messenger and doorkeeper for each of the two houses. For the period May 1971 to June 1981, the system was merged with ERS. In July 1981, LRS again became a separate retirement system exclusively for members of the Georgia General Assembly.

Membership Eligibility

Members of the General Assembly are eligible for membership in the Legislative Retirement System on an optional basis.

Each person who first or again becomes a member of the General Assembly on or after July 1, 2012, may make an irrevocable election at the beginning of each term of office to become a member of the Georgia Legislative Retirement System. This election must be made within two months of taking office.



The LRS Election/Declination form is available on the Employer page of the ERSGA website www.ers.ga.gov.

Any member who is elected to a consecutive term of office and who has elected membership in LRS shall be deemed to have continuous membership from term to term and shall not be required to reapply each term. Members of the General Assembly who decline membership will be given the opportunity to elect membership upon their subsequent reelection to the General Assembly. Such membership election will be prospective.

Earnable Compensation

Members of the General Assembly receive an annual salary in accordance with Georgia Law (O.C.G.A. 45-7-4) paid in monthly installments. Earnable compensation is limited to the state paid allowance per statute.

Maximum Compensation

LRS is a single employer defined benefit plan covered by Internal Revenue Code (IRC) § 401(a). Georgia law limits the compensation used in computing employee and employer contributions to the maximum compensation set forth in IRC § 401(a)(17). The annual compensation limit under IRC § 401(a)(17) is subject to change annually. *

**A person who became a member of a public retirement or pension system prior to the calendar year beginning January 1, 1996 is not subject to the limits of IRC § 401(a)(17) of the Internal Revenue Code. The annual compensation limit for fiscal year 2013 is \$250,000. For fiscal year 2014, the limit is \$255,000.*

Plan Contribution Rates

Effective July 1, 2022, the employee contribution is \$165 each month for all Members (LXG) except the presiding officer of the House of Representatives (LXSS), also known as the Speaker, who has an Employee Contribution of \$825 each month. The State "pick-up" is 4.75% of the Member's monthly salary, less \$7, toward this contribution. The remaining balance of the \$165, or \$825 for the Speaker, is paid by the employee.

The Employee Contribution is put into each Member's Employee Contributions Account each month. Interest is posted on June 30 of each year to Employee Contributions Accounts belonging to Members who are employed at that time and

is calculated as 4% of the Account balance as of the previous July 1. Interest is not posted to any Employee Contributions Account belonging to a Member who has terminated employment.

Members of LRS taking office prior to July 1, 2009 (LXS) contribute 9% of earnable compensation. The State “pick-up” is 5% less \$7. The balance of 4% plus \$7 is paid by the member. The LXS contribution group has GTLI coverage. LRS Members joining on or after July 1, 2009 are not eligible for the GTLI benefit.



The State of Georgia began the “pick-up” effective January 1981.

Current Rates

Please refer to the list of current rates at <http://www.ers.ga.gov/employers/employerforms.aspx>

Tax Status of Contributions

Employers must deduct employee contributions after social security, federal and state taxes have been paid. Employee contributions are considered after-tax contributions unless paid by the employer. The state “pick-up” is considered a before-tax contribution. Employee contributions fund the annuity part of the retirement benefit.

The Enrollment Process

LRS has an electronic enrollment process for newly elected and re-elected officials. Membership accounts are created electronically based on data transmitted in the monthly detail file from the State Accounting Office (SAO). The Legislative Fiscal Officer is required to provide the LRS Election/Declination form along with the following demographic data for successful enrollment of each new official:

- Valid Social Security Number
- Full Legal Name
- Date of Birth
- Gender
- Valid Address
- Valid Contribution Group Code (as designated in your payroll system)
- Valid Plan Eligibility Date (also required for rehires and transfers)

Upon receipt of detail data for any new official to the system, membership and enrollment records are created assigning a unique pension identification number to the account. Upon receipt of detail data for any re-elected former plan member, the account is reactivated and enrollment records are updated.



Changes in employer’s demographic information?

Change in PeopleSoft.

Active Member Reporting

General Information

LRS members are deemed to consent to deductions made as a condition of employment. It is the responsibility of the Legislative Fiscal Officer to deduct the required contributions and remit such monthly to LRS.

Contribution Reporting

There are three components required in the reporting process: summary of monthly payroll data, detail of monthly payroll data and remittance of contributions via wire transfer.

- The monthly summary report — This report is used to submit earnable compensation and appropriate retirement contributions due for the payroll reporting period.
- Employee detail data — A member record must be submitted for all participating members of the General Assembly. Consult the employer record file layout (available from ERSGA) for the detail of the member record. The record should include SSN, demographic information, salary and contributions, percent time worked etc.
- Contribution payment — The total of the employee and employer contributions. All contribution payments must be submitted via wire transfer.



The deadline to complete the process is the 1st of each month.

The Georgia General Assembly, employer code 444, is the only employer eligible to report LRS members and is required to do so online using the employer reporting website at www.ers.ga.gov. The ERSGA online employer reporting module allows employers to submit all components safely, securely and efficiently.

Using the ERSGA Employer Reporting Website

Employer will log on and enter the summary of monthly payroll totals. The employee detail data file is uploaded by the State Accounting Office (SAO) monthly. Contribution payments are made via wire.

Registration

Users must be registered to report data. A unique user id and password are required for access to the module. Upon submitting a completed contact form, designated payroll or human resources personnel at the employer agency will be added to the ERSGA employer contact database. New users can use the [Employer Reporting Quick Reference](#) guide provided on the ERSGA website to assist them with the employer reporting registration process. Once the user is registered, he or she will log on to the website using the new user id and password.



Passwords should not be shared. LRS must be notified whenever there is a change in payroll or human resources personnel.

Maintain Monthly Summary Report

The Maintain Monthly Summary Report page is used to submit total monthly salaries and contributions based on payroll actions. There are four tabs: Reports, Invoice, Adjustments, and Comments. (Use [Quick Reference Guide](#) for instructions.)

- The *Reports* tab is used to enter the monthly payroll salary and contribution information. Once you have submitted your summary report to ERSGA, you will not be allowed to change it. If an error has occurred, contact your reporting representative at ERSGA and he or she will assist you with a resolution. This page features a “calculate” button which calculates the expected contributions based on the total salary entered and the rate of each contribution component. These amounts can be over-written to submit exact amounts based on payroll actions. The “report total” field is read-only and dynamic, reflecting a total of all contribution components entered.
- The *Invoice* tab is used to apply any outstanding invoices.
- The *Adjustments* tab is used to submit salary and contribution corrections to an employee’s account for prior reporting months. This feature is available to employers that do not have the functionality to submit these adjustments via the monthly contribution detail. Employers who submit adjustments with their detail file data will not be able to enter adjustments on the adjustments tab. **(The General Assembly submits adjustments through the detail file.)**
- The *Comments* tab is used to submit comments which will be useful to ERSGA in balancing the agency/ employee account.

The deadline to enter and submit the data is the 1st of each month.

Adjustments to Prior Periods

During the reporting process, it is sometimes necessary to make corrections to reported data. The Legislative Fiscal Officer can make corrections to the employee detail file prior to submission. In the event the error is not discovered prior to reporting, the Legislative Fiscal Officer may make the correction so that it is reported with the next report month’s data. This adjustment is referred to as a *prior period adjustment*.

An employer may submit an adjustment for the following reasons:

1. Changing the salary and contributions previously reported
2. Adding salary and contributions previously omitted
3. Changing contribution group previously reported
4. Changing percent time worked previously reported

Submitting Prior Period Adjustments Electronically

The PeopleSoft Benefits-Pension Summary/Adjustments module provides the functionality for Legislative Fiscal Officers at the Georgia General Assembly to make adjustments to salary and contributions. These adjustments are captured in the employee detail data file.

The Legislative Fiscal Officer should ensure that adjustments submitted via the employee detail data file are adjustments being made to all components: salary, contributions and percent time worked.

Submitting Prior Period Adjustments on Paper

The following exceptions require submission of a paper adjustment:

- Corrections made to periods prior to 07/2005.
- *Missing contributions for an extended period of time:* If the Georgia General Assembly is unable to recoup all contributions in a single month, they should send a paper adjustment and check for employee and employer contributions for the entire amount in arrears.
- *Change in contribution group:* If the Georgia General Assembly or ERSGA discovers that a member has been reported under the incorrect contribution group, the employer should submit a paper adjustment indicating the months that should be adjusted. ERSGA will make adjustments, creating an invoice for any differences.
- *Contribution rate error:* Submit a paper adjustment indicating the corrected contributions based on the contribution rate for that period.
- *Change in percent time worked:* ERSGA discovers that percent time worked is inconsistent with salary reported. Submit a paper adjustment to correct percent time worked.



Service credit for periods where no contributions were received will only be granted when contributions are paid in full.

Invoices

Invoices are created during the reporting process due to discrepancies between the summary report, contribution detail and/or payment remitted. These invoices can be positive or negative indicating a deficiency or overpayment respectively.

Summary Report Discrepancies

Once the Legislative Fiscal Officer has submitted all components to LRS, a balancing process is run during which the contribution totals are compared to payment remitted. Invoices are created as a result of differences between the amount of the payment remitted and the total contributions reported on the summary report.

Contribution Detail Discrepancies

The reported contribution for each individual is compared to the expected contributions. Expected contributions are calculated based on reported salary and the contribution rate for the report month. Contributions are flagged and corrected to expected values. The following scenarios are examples of contribution detail discrepancies:

- Contributions reported for ineligible employees
- Contributions reported in error
- Member reported under the incorrect contribution group

Allocating/Applying an Invoice

Outstanding invoices are allocated to the current summary report. On the Maintain Monthly Summary report page there is a tab for Invoices. The Invoice tab page lists all outstanding invoices to be allocated. The employer selects the invoice to be allocated and clicks the Allocate button. On the summary report, the employer enters the total of the invoices allocated in the Invoice Adjustment field. Depending on the type of invoice (debit or credit), the amount entered may increase or decrease the report total. The Legislative Fiscal Officer should review any outstanding invoices prior to allocating.



Contact LRS if your credit invoice total is larger than your report total.

Special Reporting Situations

Death in Service

Deceased members must be reported in employee detail data files. SAO reports an employee detail record with actual salary, percent time, and employee and employer contributions along with payment reason code 00 for Regular Pay. Include Termination Date (Date of Death) and Termination Reason code 02 for Death.

Regardless of the amount of time the member worked during the month of death, his/her final pay check should reflect prorated salary, contributions and percent time.

Reporting Percent of Time Based on Date Taking Office

Usually percent time is not an issue for legislators. However, members of the Georgia General Assembly who take office on a date other than the first day of the pay period or who leave office before completing the final month of service should be reported as percent time.

Reporting a Member Reported Under an Incorrect SSN

When the Legislative Fiscal Officer has discovered that an incorrect SSN has been reported, he/she should immediately contact LRS before the correct employee SSN is submitted in the next monthly employee detail file. LRS will require a copy of the affected employee's social security card for documentation/validation to correct/change the SSN submitted in error.

General Information

Membership service is established for actual time served as a contributing member of LRS.

Creditable service is used to determine a member's eligibility to receive retirement pension benefits. Creditable service consists of prior service and service credited as a member. Creditable service can be earned or purchased.

Service Accrual

Members who are compensated for a full month receive a month of creditable service. If a member is compensated for a partial month, the member will receive pro rata creditable service. When partial months are credited to a member during a fiscal year, the total months credited for the fiscal year are rounded to the nearest number of months. Half months of creditable service are rounded to the next full month.

Vesting

Members with eight years of creditable service have a vested right to service retirement at age 65. Members with eight years of membership service have a vested right to service retirement at age 62. Members may be eligible for one of the following benefits from the plan (depending upon their hire date and years of creditable service):

- Normal Retirement Benefit
- Early Retirement Benefit
- Refund of Employee Contributions and Interest
- Disability Benefit
- Death Benefit

Normal retirement age is 65 with 8 years of creditable service or age 62 with 8 years of membership service. Early retirement age is 60 with 8 years of membership service. The monthly benefit is reduced by 5% for each year under age 62.

Optional Service Purchase

Establishing Creditable Service through Refund Payback

Members returning to the Georgia General Assembly can re-establish creditable service by paying back the full amount of refunds, plus regular interest (4% compounded annually) from the date of the refund to the date of payment.

Establishing Creditable Service for Military Service

Members who have eight or more years of creditable service and served on active duty in the armed forces of the United States and were honorably discharged during a period of a military draft may receive military service credit under the following guidelines:

- One year of military service credit for every five years of creditable service or if less than one year military service then one month military service for every five months of creditable service;
- Total amount of prior service may not exceed 5 years for all military service;
- Member must pay 7½ % of compensation paid to members of the General Assembly at the time the military service was rendered plus 7% interest compounded annually from the time military service was rendered until the date of payment.

Note: Prior service credit for military service may not be obtained under O.C.G.A. 47-6 if such military service has or may be used in the determination of the allowances under any other publicly funded retirement system, except Social Security and those retirement programs covered under Public Law 810, 80th Congress, as amended.

In addition, the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act ("USERRA") provides certain employment rights, including rights with respect to retirement plan benefits, to employees who perform qualified military service. Members who return to employment after being absent while performing qualified military service, may establish creditable service for the period of absence.

In order to do so, the member must notify LRS of their intent to make the contributions, and the contributions must be paid within a period of no longer than 3 times their length of qualified military service or 5 years (whichever is less).

Members who are called to active duty in the National Guard or reserves, are permitted to make employee contributions to LRS during their period of active duty. The member should provide LRS with a copy of his/her active duty orders.

Restrictions: Members who left state employment to perform military service before October 13, 1994 should contact LRS for information about their rights to establish Creditable Service.

Cost: Member should contact LRS.

Leaving Employment

General Information

Your general responsibilities are to:

- Report members' termination dates to LRS
- Inform members of their options on termination of employment.

Refer LRS members to the ERSGA website at www.ers.ga.gov to access the online LRS Handbook. They can also access their account online to verify their creditable service, account balances, or run estimates of their benefit. If members need more information, please ask them to contact LRS.

Termination Process

In order for termination dates to be transmitted to LRS on the monthly contribution detail file, they must be entered in PeopleSoft in a timely manner. This process could take several weeks from the member's actual termination to the time LRS receives this file and updates our records. To expedite this process, ERSGA has provided the Ad Hoc Termination Reporting module on the ERSGA Employer website. (Use [Quick Reference Guide](#) for further instructions.)

Please use this option whenever a member will be applying for a refund of contributions or retirement before the next monthly file update. For example, a member resigns on February 2, 2013 and wants to apply for a refund. The February 2, 2013 termination date will not reach LRS in the monthly file until March 2013. General Assembly can use Ad Hoc Termination to supply the termination date in real time; allowing the member to successfully submit their application for benefits sooner. Salary and contributions must be reported for the member through date of termination.

Application for Refund

Members of LRS who terminate membership before retirement are entitled to a refund of the accumulated employee contributions and interest. By receiving a refund, the member forfeits any future benefits from the retirement system, including a monthly retirement allowance.

To receive a refund, members must complete a LRS Refund Application. The current refund application form can be found on the ERSGA website at www.ers.ga.gov under Forms and Publications. A valid termination date from the General Assembly is required.



Requests are generally processed within 8 weeks of receipt.

Application for Service Retirement

Encourage members to request an estimate from LRS within six months of their anticipated retirement date. Applications cannot be accepted more than 90 days before their retirement date and should be received no later than 30 days before their retirement date to ensure timely payment of their first check. Completed applications should be submitted directly to LRS and are not valid until received. When a member inquires about the retirement application process:

- Direct members to the ERSGA website at www.ers.ga.gov to access their account, estimate their benefits and download the latest version of the retirement application.

- Inform members that assistance is available for completing the retirement application process if needed. Members can attend one of our WRAP programs or view the online presentation at www.ers.ga.gov.



Employers will receive an acknowledgement of the retirement application 7-10 business days after receipt.

Active Member Death and Survivor Benefit

Your general responsibilities are to:

- Encourage members to keep their beneficiary designations updated with current mailing addresses. Failure to do so may cause delay in payment.
- Contact LRS as soon as possible upon the death of an active member. Provide whatever information is available concerning the death.
- Certify current Fiscal Year Contributions.



LRS will require a certified death certificate and completion of benefit applications from beneficiary or family.

The LRS member's creditable service years determines eligibility for death benefits, refunds of contributions and interest, and payment of Group Term Life Insurance. Please contact LRS for further information.

Group Term Life Insurance

The Group Term Life Insurance (GTLI) benefit is administered by the State Employees' Assurance Department (SEAD) Board. The GTLI benefit provides coverage to both active and retired members of LRS. Coverage is equal to 18 times their monthly salary should they pass away while in active status. (Note: At age 60, benefits begin to reduce. Refer to the LRS Plan Handbook for more details.)

If an active member terminates employment with at least 18 years of Creditable Service, GTLI coverage is automatically retained. Premiums in the amount of 1% of the final monthly salary accumulate each month while vested, and are due at retirement, refund, or death.

The coverage can be discontinued only by a written request to ERSGA. The premiums will continue to accrue until request is received by ERSGA.

GTLI coverage is revoked upon receipt of a refund of employee contributions and interest.

General Information

The General Assembly should contact LRS when a former employee returns to service before or after retirement.

Before Retirement

The most important employer responsibility relative to former employees returning to LRS covered employment is determining their membership status and correct pension contribution rate. Plan rules governing LRS members have changed in recent years and it is a good idea to determine how the member returning to service should be enrolled. The Legislative Fiscal Officer should verify plan eligibility by contacting their employer reporting representative.

After Retirement

To ensure that LRS remains compliant with IRS regulations and maintains its qualified status, an employee must terminate employment before receiving retirement benefits. IRS regulations require that the employee have a bona fide termination; i.e. an actual break in service (minimum 1 month).

Rehired Retirees Returning to the General Assembly as Staff Members

Any retiree that is re-employed by any employer, with the exception of the General Assembly, is limited to no more than 1,040 hours of work per calendar year. Failure to adhere to the 1,040 hour work limitation will result in the suspension of the retiree's benefit for the remainder of the calendar year.



Normal Retirement Age is defined as:

- Age 62 with 8 years of membership service
- Age 65 with 8 years of creditable service

Rehired Retirees Returning as Elected Members of General Assembly

A retiree of normal retirement age returning to service for the Georgia General Assembly may either continue to receive their retirement benefits while in service as a member of the Georgia General Assembly or reestablish active membership in the retirement system. The retired member must make the election within 30 days of taking office as a retired member. Such election must be in writing and is irrevocable.

A retiree less than normal retirement age returning to service for the Georgia General Assembly must reestablish active membership in the retirement system.

Your responsibilities are to:

- Notify ERSGA of any current or newly hired retirees by submitting a rehired retiree reporting form within 30 days of hire. The form is available on the ERSGA website. We recommend that employers inquire about a new hire's retirement status during the hiring process.
- Assume liability for any pension overpayments in the event the employer fails to notify the retirement system.
- Report monthly hours worked for rehired retirees. To facilitate this, a Rehired Retiree reporting module is available on the Employer Desktop.
- Ensure that rehired retirees are not contributing to the GDC plan. Employers should ensure that they have not been enrolled or are not contributing to this plan.

- Complete and submit the Independent Contractor Verification form, which is available on the ERSGA website.
 - Non-exempt contractors are reported using the Rehired Retiree Reporting Module
 - Exempt contractors are not subject to the 1040 hour limits (see exceptions below)

Independent Contractor Exceptions

A retiree is not subject to the 1,040 hour restrictions when all the following conditions have been met:

- The retiree is working for or as a contracting entity where the entity has multiple employees;
- The contracting entity has multiple contracts and the contracts are not limited to State of Georgia Employers;
and
- The contractual relationship was not created to extend employment to a retiree in a position similar to that held prior to retirement.

General Information

The Legislative Fiscal Officer is required to submit rehired retiree data to the retirement system. Rehired retirees elected to the General Assembly are reported via FTP (file upload).

Log on to the Employer Reporting website to access the Rehired Retiree module, review the data uploaded from the file and approve the data reported.

Files and reports are due the 5th of each month.

Employer Reporting Methods

Rehired Retiree data is submitted to the retirement system in two ways:

- Rehired Retiree Form – This form is completed by the hiring agency and submitted to the retirement system within 30 days of hire.
- Rehired Retiree data reports – The State Accounting Office (SAO) uploads a file each month for employers on Statewide Payroll. The file includes agency 444 – General Assembly and must be reviewed and approved each month.

Reporting Hours Worked

Users must be registered to report data. A unique user id and password are required for access to the module. Upon submitting a completed contact form, designated payroll or human resources personnel at the employer agency are added to the ERSGA employer contact database. The user can access the Rehired Retiree module by clicking Maintain Rehired Retiree on the Employer desktop.

The Rehired Retiree desktop includes the following links:

- Report Rehired Retiree Data
- Upload File for the Current Month
- Approve Submitted Data
- Rehired Retiree Adjustments
- No Rehired Retiree Data
- View Yearly Summary

Report Rehired Retiree Data

SAO uploads a rehired retiree detail data file each month that includes all agencies on statewide payroll. The file must be reviewed and approved by the Legislative Fiscal Officer.

Upload a File for the Current Month

SAO uploads a file for the General Assembly. The user will approve the uploaded detail by navigating to “Approve Submitted Data”.

Approve Submitted Data

Use this module to review and approve reported rehired retiree data and add hours for contracted retirees if applicable. (Use [Quick Reference Guide](#) for further instructions.)

Once data has been approved, corrections or updates can only be made using Rehired Retiree Adjustments.

Rehired Retiree Adjustments

Use this module to adjust or add previously approved data. (Use [Quick Reference Guide](#) for further instructions.)

Once data has been updated, navigate to the previous page to confirm the change.

No Rehired Retiree Data

Use this module to indicate that there is no data to report. (Use [Quick Reference Guide](#) for further instructions.)

Enter report month and click the No Data To Report button. The report month will be updated with status "Non-Report".

- You cannot report for a month that has a status "Non-Report".
- To re-open a month that may have been set to Non-report in error, check the "Delete" check box and click on the "Delete" button. This activates that report month and user can enter and approve data for that month.

View Yearly Summary

Employer will use this module to review reported data.

Accumulated Employee Contributions

The sum of all amounts deducted from the compensation of a member or paid by the member to establish or reestablish credit for service. It includes employer pickup, regular interest and excludes contributions for group term life insurance coverage.

Beneficiary

Any person designated by the member to receive a pension, annuity, retirement allowance, or benefit under the retirement plan.

Board of Trustees

The board of trustees provided for in Code Section 47-6-22 to administer the retirement system.

Contribution Group

A group of employees or members who have the same retirement contribution rates and benefits.

Creditable Service

Consists of prior service and service credited as a member.

Defined Benefit Plan

An employer-sponsored retirement plan where employee benefits are calculated based on a formula using factors such as average salary history and service (duration of employment).

Employee

An elected member to the Georgia General Assembly.

Employer

The Georgia General Assembly.

File Transfer Protocol (FTP)

A standard communication protocol used to transfer files from one computer/network to another.

Fiscal Year

The 12-month period beginning on July 1 of each year.

Group Term Life Insurance

The survivor benefits administered by SEAD. It provides benefit coverage to active and inactive members. Benefit coverage varies based on age and status. Refer to the LRS Plan Handbook for more details.

Member

A member of the Georgia General Assembly who has elected membership in this retirement system.

Membership Service

Service rendered by an employee while a member of the retirement system and for which credit is allowable under O.C.G.A. 47-6-60.

Pension

Periodic payments for life derived from contributions of the state.

Plan Eligibility Date

The date the General Assembly member elects membership in LRS.

Regular Interest

Interest at such a rate as shall be determined by the board of trustees in accordance with Code Section 47-6-22 (g), which interest shall be compounded annually at 4%.

Retirement

Withdrawal from service with a retirement allowance granted under O.C.G.A. 47-6.

Retirement System

The Georgia Legislative Retirement System.

Termination Date

A date employee terminated employment or date employee is no longer eligible for pension plan participation.