

HANDBOOK FOR ADMINISTRATORS

TCDRS.ORG



At the Texas County & District Retirement System (TCDRS), we help hard-working Texans plan for their future. To do that, we partner with counties and districts to provide retirement, disability and survivor benefits. TCDRS was created by the Texas Legislature in 1967. Since that time, we've grown into a financially strong, multi-billion dollar trust.

TCDRS is not a one-size-fits-all system. Your unique employer plan provides a benefit level customized to the needs of your employees and budget. We provide you with easy online administration to help you manage your retirement plan. This handbook is a quick reference guide to help you understand your retirement plan, manage your day-to-day needs, and help employees get the most out of your benefits.

Note: This handbook is intended as a general summary. In all cases, the actual provisions of applicable state and federal laws take precedence.

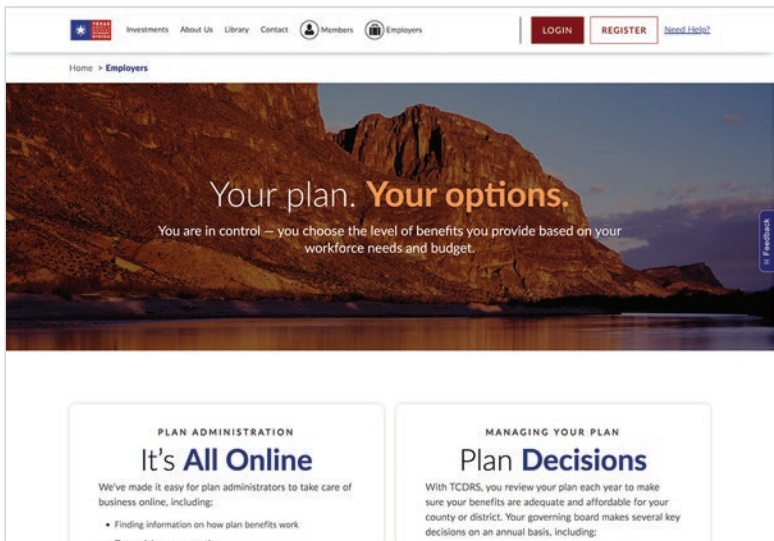
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ACCESSING THE EMPLOYER WEBSITE

The TCDRS employer website, TCDRS.org/Employer, is designed to make managing your retirement plan easier and faster, and puts a host of tools and resources at your fingertips. We recommend that you bookmark the page or add it to your web browser's favorites list.



Accessing the site

TCDRS recommends that you designate one Security Administrator, and one backup, for the employer website. This person sets up your organization's contacts in the system and establishes their web access. You can learn more about it with our "Managing Your TCDRS Contacts" on-demand tutorial at TCDRS.org/EmployerVideos.

The web access designation determines the pages, tools and features users can see when they sign in. If you need web access, your Security Administrator is the person to contact. If you are unsure who your Security Administrator is, call Employer Services at 800-651-3848.

Once you are set up in the employer website by your Security Administrator, you will receive an email with your user ID. You will need to activate your account by clicking on the link in the email.

Web roles

When you sign into the employer website, the information and functions you have access to will depend on your assigned role, such as Benefits Administrator, Payroll Administrator or Decision-Maker. You may be assigned multiple roles. To change your role, contact your Security Administrator.

Benefits Administrator

This role gives you the ability to enter in the Social Security number of an employee and see their TCDRS account information, run benefit estimates, enroll new employees, update contact and beneficiary information, and add last date of employment for your employees.

Payroll Administrator

The online tools for this role allow you to submit payroll files and enroll new employees in TCDRS.

Decision-Maker

This role shows you all of your plan information in one convenient location, including GASB reports, Retirement Plan Assessment and more. You can also access the Plan Customizer to run benefit/cost scenarios and submit plan changes.

EMPLOYER EDUCATION RESOURCES

If you, or someone in your organization, is new to administering TCDRS benefits, we have a host of on-demand tutorials and videos to help them learn more.

On-demand tutorials

Our on-demand tutorials cover all the aspects of managing your TCDRS plan online – from reviewing your plan to enrolling employees. All of our on-demand tutorials are available at TCDRS.org/EmployerVideos.

Videos

Our videos give you an overview of how your TCDRS retirement plan does retirement right, as well as more details about our investments. You can find all our employer videos at TCDRS.org/EmployerVideos.

Guides and How-to's

In our Library, you'll find guides for individual processes (such as enrollment and uploading payroll) at TCDRS.org/EmployerPublications.

Your TCDRS Employer Services Representative is always a phone call away at 800-651-3848.



**UNDERSTANDING
RETIREMENT BENEFITS**

UNDERSTANDING RETIREMENT BENEFITS

TCDRS retirement is the point in time when an employee chooses to get a monthly payment from their TCDRS account. It can be later than the time an employee leaves their job with your organization.

In this section, we'll explain the basics of how an employee earns the right to a monthly benefit at retirement, as well as describe benefit payment options. You can also learn more by watching our "Understanding Retirement Eligibility" on-demand tutorial at TCDRS.org/EmployerVideos.

SERVICE TIME

Retirement eligibility means an employee has earned the right to begin receiving monthly benefit payments. There are some important milestones employees will pass on the road to eligibility and several ways an employee can earn service time.

Service time

Service time determines eligibility for:

- The Survivor Benefit
- Vesting
- Retirement

Your employees earn one month of service time for each month they make a TCDRS deposit. They earn only one month of service time for each month worked, no matter how many paychecks they get each month.

We will contact employees when they reach these important milestones.

Other sources of service time

Prior service time

This is service time your employees receive for their employment with you before you joined TCDRS. If your employees were in a position that would be eligible for TCDRS benefits on or before the date you joined TCDRS, they may be able to get prior service time.

Proportionate System

TCDRS also recognizes service time for your employees for time they worked for other TCDRS-covered employers and the following Texas public retirement systems:

- Employees Retirement System of Texas (ERS)
- Teacher Retirement System of Texas (TRS)
- Texas Municipal Retirement System (TMRS)
- Judicial Retirement System of Texas (JRS)
- City of Austin Employees' Retirement System (COAERS)

Your employees can request other service time when they sign into their online account at [TCDRS.org](https://www.tcdrs.org) or by calling TCDRS Member Services at 800-823-7782.

Military Service Time

Once an employee is vested with your plan, they can count up to five years of military service toward your retirement eligibility requirements. (This applies to TCDRS time only. Proportionate Service time doesn't count toward vesting for military service.) Using this time does not increase the employee's retirement benefit or allow the employee to make additional deposits into their TCDRS account. It simply allows the employee to qualify for retirement earlier.

For more information about Military Service time and how to apply for this benefit, please direct employees to the *Military Service Time* webpage at [TCDRS.org/Library/Military-Service-Time](https://www.tcdrs.org/Library/Military-Service-Time).

USERRA

The Uniformed Services Employment and Re-employment Rights Act (USERRA) gives employees who are called away from work to active military duty the right to regain their lost service time upon their return to work. USERRA also allows returning soldiers to make up the deposits they would have made into their TCDRS accounts had they not been called away to active duty. This is a federal law and all employers are required to follow it.

Upon rehiring an employee who is returning to employment under USERRA, you should fill out the *Application for Service Credit Under USERRA* (TCDRS-90), then ask that the employee sign the form. Once the application is complete, upload the form as well as the employee's DD-214 to TCDRS through the employer website. For more information, please direct employees to the *USERRA and Your Military Service* brochure on our website.

Survivor Benefit

Your employees are eligible for the Survivor Benefit when they earn four years of TCDRS service time. The Survivor Benefit allows the beneficiaries of an employee who passes away to receive a monthly benefit payment including employer matching.

Vesting

An employee is vested when they have earned the right to receive a lifetime monthly benefit in the future. Each employer chooses a vesting level of 5, 8 or 10 years of service time.

The benefits of vesting with TCDRS differ from vesting in a 401(k) account. When you are vested in a 401(k), it usually means you get employer matching when you withdraw that account. That's not the case with your TCDRS plan. If a vested former employee withdraws an account, that person only gets their deposits and interest – not employer-matching money. The only way an employee can get employer matching is to get a monthly benefit from TCDRS when they retire.

How to tell when an employee is vested

You can use the “Employee Lookup” tool when you sign into **TCDRS.org/Employer** to check an employee’s vesting status. Once you find the employee’s account, select “View Dashboard” to see if the employee is vested.

Employees who register for online account access will also be able to see their vesting status when they sign into their account at **TCDRS.org**.

Vesting information is listed on each employee’s annual statement, as well. Please call TCDRS Member Services at 800-823-7782 if an employee needs more information about their vesting status.

Eligible to retire

In general, an employee must have a certain combination of service time and age to be eligible to retire as set by the employer.

- At age 60 with 5, 8 or 10 years of service time
- At any age with 20 or 30 years of service time
- When combined age and service time equals 75 or 80 (Rule of 75 or Rule of 80)

However, just because an employee is eligible to retire doesn’t mean they should. Employees should look at whether they are financially and emotionally ready to retire. The availability of retiree health insurance can also affect the decision of when to retire.

You can use the “Employee Lookup” tool when you sign into **TCDRS.org/Employer** to see if an employee is eligible to retire. Once you find the employee’s account, select “View Dashboard” to see if the employee is eligible to retire.

You can also run estimates for your employees at **TCDRS.org/Employer**. Running estimates for different dates can show an employee how working longer can significantly raise their monthly benefit.

Employees who register for online account access will also be able to see their eligibility status and run benefit estimates when they sign into their account at **TCDRS.org**.

Eligibility information is listed on each employee's annual statement as well. If an employee needs more information about their eligibility, have them call TCDRS Member Services at 800-823-7782.

MEMBER BENEFITS

Service retirement

All employees who choose to retire will get a monthly benefit for the rest of their lives.

Service time does not affect how much money an employee will get every month in retirement. Instead, the employee's deposits and interest, employer matching money, employee's age at retirement, and selected payment option determine the amount of the monthly benefit.

Depending on the selected benefit option, the age of the retiring employee's beneficiary can also affect the amount of the monthly benefit.

Monthly benefit options

TCDRS offers retiring employees seven different monthly benefit payment options. All of the options pay the retiree a benefit for life and all options are equivalent in value; however, the monthly benefit amounts are different for each option. Some of these options allow the retiree to provide a monthly benefit for their beneficiary after the retiree's death; others do not.

Options that provide for a beneficiary will pay less monthly than a benefit that just covers a retiree's lifetime.

If a retiree chooses an option that does not provide a monthly

benefit to a beneficiary, then the retiree's beneficiary will only receive the remaining balance of the retiree's TCDRS account, if available.

A remaining balance is available when the amount of a retiree's individual TCDRS account, which consists of member deposits and interests (does not include employer match) exceeds the amount of the annuity payments made to the retiree.

A retiree can change their payment option up to the last day of the month in which their first benefit payment will go out. After that, the payment option is permanent. In most cases, the retiree cannot change their beneficiary after retirement.

The benefit payment options are:

Single Life

This option provides the highest monthly benefit payment, but all monthly benefits stop when the retiree passes away. This option may be suited to retirees whose loved ones will not be dependent on their retirement income.

Guaranteed Terms

With one of these options, the beneficiary gets 100% of the retiree's monthly benefit only if the retiree dies within the guaranteed period. The guaranteed period starts at retirement, not when the retiree dies. All monthly benefits to beneficiaries stop when the guaranteed period ends.

10-Year Guaranteed Term

15-Year Guaranteed Term

If the primary beneficiary is a minor child, this option can guarantee they will receive a benefit for a set period if the retiree should pass away before the child reaches adulthood.

Dual Life

Under one of these options, the beneficiary gets a percentage

of the retiree's monthly benefit for life after the retiree's death. If the beneficiary dies before the retiree, monthly benefits stop when the retiree dies.

100% to Beneficiary

75% to Beneficiary

50% to Beneficiary

These options ensure that a beneficiary will continue to receive a monthly benefit for their lifetime. A retiree can only have one beneficiary and cannot change beneficiaries after retirement.

100% to Beneficiary With Pop-Up

The beneficiary gets 100% of the benefit when the retiree dies. If the beneficiary dies before the retiree, the monthly benefit will "pop up" to the higher paying, Single Life option.

Partial lump-sum payment at retirement

This option is only available to employees whose employers have authorized it as a plan option. It allows an employee to withdraw up to 100% of their account balance in a lump sum at retirement. Employees should carefully consider the long-term costs of this option. Taking a lump sum will permanently reduce the amount of the monthly benefit and they will have to pay taxes on the amount withdrawn. Additional income taxes may also be owed to the IRS.

Taxes in retirement

Retirees' monthly benefits are taxable. Retirees can instruct TCDRS on how much of their benefit they would like to withhold for federal income tax and they can change their withholding at any time. They can view or update their withholding by signing into **TCDRS.org**. For help or more information on withholding, retiring employees should call Member Services at 800-823-7782, or sign into their online account.

Call TCDRS: We're here to help

When it comes to helping a retiring employee choose a benefit payment option, you want to make sure they have all the information they need to make sound decisions. TCDRS Member Services Representatives are ready to answer your employees' questions and provide guidance.

Your employees can also meet one-on-one with a TCDRS Member Services Field Representative by signing up for an online counseling session. This free service gives your employees a chance to talk one-on-one with one of our representatives using a computer or a mobile device. To learn more about this service, visit [TCDRS.org/OnlineCounseling](https://www.tcdrs.org/OnlineCounseling).

Survivor Benefit

If an employee with at least four years of TCDRS service passes away, the Survivor Benefit entitles their beneficiary to receive the employee's benefit, including employer matching dollars. The beneficiary does not have to wait until the employee would have been eligible to retire; they can begin receiving a monthly benefit immediately. An employee who is eligible for the Survivor Benefit can also choose to remove the option for their beneficiary to withdraw the account as a one-time payment. Employees can indicate this when they designate a beneficiary online.

Disability retirement

Sometimes employees get injured – either on or off the job – or become ill and can no longer work. TCDRS offers early retirement due to disability.

Disability retirement is for employees who cannot work and will not be able to work in any gainful occupation in the future due to a permanent disability. However, eligibility depends on whether the employee is vested and whether the injury is job-related or not. If they are not vested, then in order to be eligible the disability must be the result of a job-related injury. If they

are vested, the disability is not required to be the result of a job-related injury. Employees do not get any additional benefit with disability retirement. It simply lets them begin their monthly benefit early.

Disability retirement also requires medical examinations to verify the disability, as well as doctors' certifications. Because of this, if the employee is already eligible, they will receive service retirement, rather than go through the lengthy process of a disability retirement.

What the employee gets with disability retirement

As with service retirement, how much the retiring employee will get each month depends on their deposits and interest, employer-matching money, the employee's age, and the selected payment option. Depending on the selected option, the age of the beneficiary can also affect the amount of the monthly benefit payment. An employee taking disability retirement has the same benefit payment options as an employee taking service retirement. (See page 10.)

Because employees often apply for disability retirement before they are eligible for service retirement (they are usually younger than age 60), their account balances are smaller. A smaller account balance means smaller monthly benefit payments.

OPTIONAL BENEFITS

These are benefits that are not standard components of TCDRS retirement plans. Each employer chooses whether to provide these optional benefits for their employees.

Buybacks

This allows current employees to re-establish a closed TCDRS account from previous service with your organization, including employer matching.

Cost-of-living adjustments (COLAs)

A COLA allows employers to increase retiree benefit payments to restore purchasing power lost due to the effects of inflation.

Group Term Life

Group Term Life is a life insurance benefit. The coverage provides the beneficiary of an employee who dies before retirement the equivalent of the employee's regular annual salary. Employers may also choose to cover retirees. Upon the covered retiree's death, their beneficiary receives \$5,000.

Partial lump-sum payment at retirement

This option allows an employee to withdraw up to 100% of their TCDRS account balance as a lump sum at retirement. However, taking a lump-sum payment will permanently reduce a retiree's lifetime monthly benefit payment and TCDRS must withhold taxes on the amount withdrawn. Additional income taxes may also be owed to the IRS.

EMPLOYEE LIFE EVENTS

Divorce

TCDRS does not decide if or how an employee's benefit may be divided upon divorce. We rely on the specific language in the divorce decree and Qualified Domestic Relations Order (QDRO). Employees can call Member Services for assistance, but our representatives cannot give legal advice. Employees should seek their own legal counsel.

- Just by entering "QDRO" in the search at the top of **TCDRS.org**, employees can find a divorce instruction booklet and sample QDRO format to review with their attorney. TCDRS requires specific wording on the divorce decree or order, and it must be approved by the TCDRS Legal department.

- The benefit does not have to be split. In cases where no split is ordered, no action needs to be taken, unless the divorce is post-retirement. In a post-retirement divorce, the court can award the entire benefit to the member, and the member must submit a copy of the divorce decree and no QDRO is required.
- If this benefit is split, accounts will be split and the ex-spouse will get their own TCDRS account.

Members can update their name and designated beneficiaries by signing into their TCDRS account. Members are required to upload proof of legal name change.

Deaths

If you find out about the death of a TCDRS-covered employee, retiree or retiree's beneficiary, please notify TCDRS as soon as you can. This allows us to begin any benefit payments to that person's beneficiaries as soon as possible.

Please contact TCDRS Member Services with the name and Social Security number of the deceased, as well as any additional information you may have – such as date of death, contact information or funeral home information – that could help us contact the deceased's beneficiaries.

Garnishment for bankruptcy, child support or IRS levies

As long as your employees are depositing, their TCDRS accounts are 100% protected from bankruptcy actions, child support orders and IRS levies. They cannot be seized to pay creditors, the IRS, or a custodial parent, or otherwise be affected by a court order.

If you are required to withhold from an employee's wages to comply with a bankruptcy repayment plan or garnish wages under a child support court order, you must continue to deposit the employee's full TCDRS deposit into their account, not what is left after applying the wage deduction.

These protections end if an employee terminates employment, withdraws their account or begins receiving a monthly retirement benefit. Employees should consult their own legal counsel for more advice.

Power of attorney

A power of attorney is a document that allows an employee or retiree to appoint someone (known as the Attorney-in-Fact or agent) to manage all or some of their affairs. A power of attorney can be effective immediately or only if the employee or retiree is incapacitated.

If an employee wishes to designate a power of attorney for their retirement account, they should complete the *Durable Power of Attorney* (TCDRS-67) form, available at TCDRS.org, and upload the form to our website. We can also rely on a non-TCDRS power of attorney document that meets certain legal criteria.

- The employee must be mentally competent to appoint the Attorney-in-Fact.
- The Attorney-in-Fact does not have to be a lawyer.

The employee can upload all their legal documents directly to TCDRS by using the Document Upload feature when they sign into **TCDRS.org**.

Social Security

Some employers participate in Social Security and some do not. Even if your county or district does not participate in Social Security, your employees might still be eligible for Social Security benefits based on their spouses' work or previous employment.

We recommend that employers who do not participate in Social Security contact the Social Security Administration for information concerning the minimum benefit rule, which requires employers to provide benefits to employees that are comparable to those benefits provided by Social Security.

- The TCDRS retirement benefit is not affected by whether an employee draws Social Security.
- If you have an employee who is currently drawing Social Security, that person can still participate in TCDRS.

For information on an employee's Social Security eligibility and benefits, advise your employee to contact the Social Security Administration directly.

Leaving employment

Employees who end employment are not required to withdraw their money from TCDRS. Even if they are not vested, their accounts will continue to earn interest and grow. If they have at least four years of TCDRS service, their beneficiaries are still entitled to receive a Survivor Benefit if the employee should pass away before retirement. Please direct all exiting employees to the *Changing Jobs* resources at **TCDRS.org/Library/Job-Changes-Video** and **TCDRS.org/Library/Changing-Jobs-FAQs**. This brochure lists the exiting employee's options for their TCDRS account. Exiting employees should call Member Services at 800-823-7782 for more information. Be sure to provide TCDRS with a last date of employment (termination date) for each exiting employee by signing into **TCDRS.org/Employer**.

Withdrawals and rollovers

An employee must leave employment in order to withdraw their TCDRS account balance. The IRS requires TCDRS to withhold taxes on withdrawals. Former employees who withdraw their account balance may also be required to pay an early withdrawal penalty.

Alternately, a former employee can choose to roll all or part of their account balance into a qualified retirement account (such as an IRA or employer-sponsored 457). If they choose a rollover, they do not need to pay taxes or a penalty for those funds.

If an exiting employee chooses to withdraw or rollover and close their TCDRS account:

- Have the employee log into **TCDRS.org** and complete the online withdrawal application.
- Provide the employee's last date of employment online.

Note: Please provide the last date of employment for an employee as soon as they leave employment. To avoid delays, it is best not to wait until the employee applies for a benefit.

Employees who have ended employment with a different county or district can withdraw their money from those accounts while they are employed by you.



**EMPLOYEE ENROLLMENT AND
LAST DATE OF EMPLOYMENT**

EMPLOYEE ENROLLMENT AND LAST DATE OF EMPLOYMENT

All of your employees (except temporary staff) must participate in TCDRS. This ensures that all employees are saving for retirement. You can also find this information in our on-demand tutorial “Managing Employee Data” at TCDRS.org/EmployerVideos.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

All employees are eligible and must be enrolled with the exception of temporary employees. There are no probationary periods for employees participating in the retirement system. If you have a waiting period for health benefits, you must still deduct retirement deposits starting with the employee’s first paycheck.

As an employer, you are responsible for determining the status of your employees. Please refer questions about a new employee’s status to your employer’s legal counsel.

When determining if an employee is temporary, ask yourself:

- Will you employ that person only for the duration of a specific project?
- Have you hired this person to fill a position until you can hire a non-temporary employee to fill it?
- Is the position seasonal?
- Do employees in the position customarily and consistently leave employment after a short period?

It is a good idea to review job descriptions periodically, as an employee’s status may change. If an employee’s status changes from temporary to permanent, benefits are not retroactive. If you have any questions regarding enrollment of employees, please call your Employer Services Representative at 800-651-3848.

SPECIAL MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES

There are several special membership categories:

District judges and attorneys

Counties may choose whether or not to enroll district judges and prosecuting attorneys.

Probation department employees

These employees should be enrolled in TCDRS within the county designated by the supervising district judge.

AgriLife county extension agents

Extension agents are not eligible to participate and should not be enrolled in TCDRS.

Employees with multiple TCDRS accounts

Employees who work at the same time for two or more TCDRS participating employers (such as court reporters) should be enrolled in each employer's retirement plan.

Employees covered by another retirement system

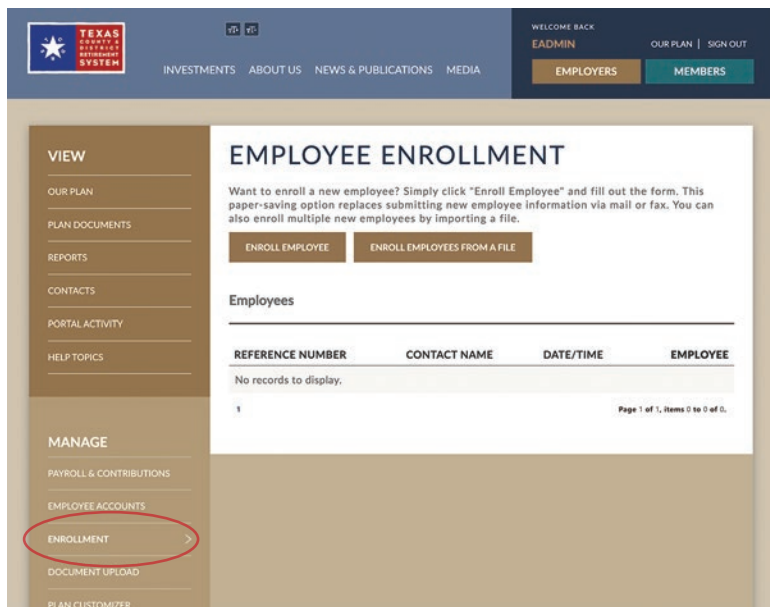
Some employees who receive payment from you may be covered for much of their total salary by one of the following public retirement systems:

- Employees Retirement System of Texas
- Teacher Retirement System of Texas
- Judicial Retirement System of Texas
- Texas Municipal Retirement System
- City of Austin Employees' Retirement System

Please contact your Employer Services Representative to determine if these employees are eligible to participate with TCDRS based on the compensation you provide them.

ENROLLING EMPLOYEES

To enroll a new employee, sign into the TCDRS employer website, **TCDRS.org/Employer**, and select “Enrollment” from the menu on the left.



The screenshot shows the TCDRS Employer website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the Texas logo and links for INVESTMENTS, ABOUT US, NEWS & PUBLICATIONS, and MEDIA. A user is logged in as EADMIN, with options for OUR PLAN and SIGN OUT. Below the navigation bar, there are two buttons: EMPLOYERS and MEMBERS. The main content area is titled "EMPLOYEE ENROLLMENT" and includes instructions on how to enroll a new employee. Two buttons are visible: "ENROLL EMPLOYEE" and "ENROLL EMPLOYEES FROM A FILE". Below these buttons, there is a section for "Employees" with a table. The table has columns for REFERENCE NUMBER, CONTACT NAME, DATE/TIME, and EMPLOYEE. The table is currently empty, displaying "No records to display." and "Page 1 of 1, Items 0 to 0 of 0." In the left sidebar, under the "MANAGE" section, the "ENROLLMENT" menu item is circled in red.

You have the option of enrolling your employees one by one or uploading a file of new employees. Easy-to-follow, on-screen instructions will guide you through the process. Employee names should have an initial capital letter. Please do not submit names in all upper or all lower case. **Please provide the employee’s email address when prompted. If enrolling multiple employees from a file, locate the “Email Address” column on the right.** If you need assistance, please call your Employer Services Representative at 800-651-3848.

TCDRS will mail your new employees a welcome letter after they are enrolled with TCDRS.

Employees will be able to register online at **TCDRS.org** after they are enrolled in TCDRS. Please encourage them to register so that they can enjoy online account access and benefit estimates. They can also update their personal information and beneficiaries on the website.

ENTERING LAST DATE OF EMPLOYMENT

As soon as an employee leaves your organization, you'll need to provide TCDRS with that employee's last day of employment (termination date). Not entering a termination date for an exiting employee creates issues with their benefit estimate. TCDRS needs the last date of employment to process any retirement or withdrawal requests.

To enter employee last date of employment, sign into the employer website at **TCDRS.org/Employer**, and select the "Employee Terminations" link from the left menu.

You can enter dates one by one, or by uploading a file of dates for multiple employees. Easy to follow, on-screen instructions will guide you through the process.

The screenshot shows the TCDRS Employer website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the Texas logo and links for INVESTMENTS, ABOUT US, NEWS & PUBLICATIONS, and MEDIA. On the right, it says "WELCOME BACK EADMIN" and "OUR PLAN | SIGN OUT", with buttons for "EMPLOYERS" and "MEMBERS".

The main content area is titled "EMPLOYEE TERMINATIONS". Below the title, there is a text box explaining that users can click "Employee Termination" for individual entries or "Upload Termination Data" for multiple employees. There are two buttons: "EMPLOYEE TERMINATION" and "UPLOAD TERMINATION DATA".

Below this, there is a search section for "Terminated Employees" with an input field for "Employee Name" and "FIND" and "CLEAR" buttons.

A table header is visible with columns: REFERENCE NUMBER, CONTACT NAME, DATE/TIME, EMPLOYEE, and TERMINATION DATE. Below the header, it says "No records to display." and "Page 1 of 1, Items 0 to 0 of 0."

At the bottom of the main content area, there is a "DOWNLOAD TERMINATION HISTORY" button.

On the left side, there is a sidebar menu with sections "VIEW" and "MANAGE". Under "VIEW", there are links for OUR PLAN, PLAN DOCUMENTS, REPORTS, CONTACTS, PORTAL ACTIVITY, and HELP TOPICS. Under "MANAGE", there are links for PAYROLL & CONTRIBUTIONS, EMPLOYEE ACCOUNTS, ENROLLMENT, DOCUMENT UPLOAD, PLAN CUSTOMIZER, and "EMPLOYEE TERMINATIONS", which is circled in red in the image.

The Missing Last Date of Employment Report can help you identify former employees who need last date of employment. An email will be sent out weekly to Security and Benefit Administrators if there are any pending benefit applications that

have missing last dates of employment. You can find it on the “Reports” page after you sign into [TCDRS.org/Employers](https://www.tcdrs.org/Employers).

Failure to enter an employee’s last date of employment by the end of the year will impact your employer contribution rate, as your rate is determined in part by the number of currently enrolled employees.

Until a member’s last date of employment has passed, TCDRS will not be able to process a benefit request and their account will remain open.

If you need help using this feature, visit [TCDRS.org/Library/Exiting-Employees-FAQs](https://www.tcdrs.org/Library/Exiting-Employees-FAQs), or call your TCDRS Employer Services Representative at 800-651-3848.

REHIRING RETIREES AND FORMER EMPLOYEES

An in-service distribution is either a retirement benefit or an account withdrawal to an employee who is still actively employed with you. These kinds of distributions are impermissible under federal and state law. An in-service distribution invalidates the employee’s retirement or withdrawal. If it is not corrected by the return of benefit payments or the withdrawn amount (by either the employee or the employer), then it could jeopardize your TCDRS retirement plan’s qualified status. Losing your plan’s qualified status could subject you and your employees to significant fees, penalties and additional taxes levied by the IRS.

Rehiring a retiree or former employee who has withdrawn their account is not an in-service distribution as long as the following two conditions are met:

- 1. Bona fide separation in service:** There must be a true separation in service between the employer and the employee in which the employer/employee relationship is completely severed. There can be no agreement between the employer and the employee to rehire them in the future.

2. One full calendar month separation in service: Assuming a bona fide termination, the employee must be separated from employment for one full calendar month. For example, if an employee separates from employment on April 15, the earliest that person could be rehired with the same employer is June 1.

Keep in mind that a termination is not considered bona fide if there is an expectation, understanding or agreement that the termination is temporary or that the person will be rehired in the future. This applies even if the position that the employee will occupy:

- Is different from their current position
- Pays more or less than the current position
- Is in a different department
- Requires different hours (for example, going full-time to part-time, or vice versa)
- Is an independent contractor position that has the individual providing the same services they provided while an employee
- Is an elected position. Elected officials are considered employees of the county or district for purposes of participating in TCDRS.

These rules apply to employees rehired on a *pro re nata* (PRN) or “as needed” basis.

In order to avoid jeopardizing your plan’s qualified, tax-deferred status, we strongly encourage you to carefully evaluate your human resource policies concerning rehiring retirees and former employees.

For more detailed guidance on developing hiring policies that prevent an in-service distribution, please contact your county attorney or district legal counsel. If you have additional questions, please contact TCDRS’ Legal department at 800-823-7782.

CORRECTING ENROLLMENT ERRORS

It is important that you take steps to correct any error in enrollment as soon as possible. An uncorrected error could cost your organization additional money.

An error in enrollment is when you didn't enroll an employee who was eligible to join TCDRS and no deposits have been made for the employee. It is also important to enroll employees before reporting any deposits for them.

You should start reporting that employee's deposits with your next payroll report. Your next step is to bring that employee's account up to date for the time they should have been enrolled. Contact Employer Services at 800-651-3848 and we can help you through the process.

If any underpayment has occurred, your organization could choose whether to ask the employee for reimbursement for their monthly deposits. We cannot accept money directly from employees for underpayment.

If you need to make a correction to an employee's account due to an employment dispute that is settled by a judgement, order or settlement agreement, you may submit the adjustment online, but you must send TCDRS a copy of the judgment. We encourage you to contact TCDRS before the judgment is finalized so we can ensure the judgment complies with the terms of the TCDRS plan. Please contact Employer Services if you need to implement a correction due to a judgment.



REPORTING PAYROLL

Payroll reporting is one of the most important functions you perform as a TCDRS plan administrator. You can learn more about reporting payroll by watching our on-demand “Managing Payroll Reporting” tutorial at TCDRS.org/EmployerVideos.

PAYMENT OPTIONS

Choose one of the following ways to submit your payments. If you need to change your payment method, please contact your TCDRS Employer Services Representative at 800-651-3848.

ACH credit

ACH credit lets you initiate a payment to TCDRS from your bank account through the ACH network. In addition to reporting payments, you can use ACH credit for one-time payments, such as additional employer contributions.

ACH debit

ACH debit allows TCDRS to transfer money from your bank account to TCDRS. We never withdraw money from your account before the due date for the month.

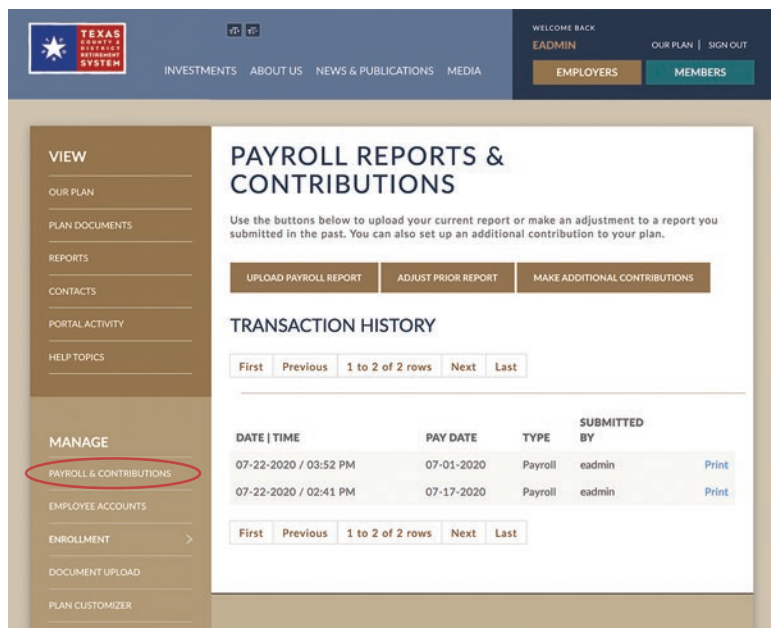
Wire transfer

You can use a wire transfer to move funds directly between banks on the same day. You initiate the transfer. Before choosing this method, please discuss the process with your bank representative, so you understand wire transfer deadlines and associated fees. In addition to reporting payments, you can use wire transfer for one-time payments, such as additional employer contributions.

SUBMITTING PAYROLL REPORTS

You can upload your reports directly at **TCDRS.org/Employer**. You may transfer a text file containing your payroll data using this method. See page 31 for file format requirements.

Once your data is uploaded, simply click “Submit Payroll File,” and your payroll reporting is complete. You will receive an email confirmation that we received your data.



The screenshot shows the TCDRS.org/Employer website interface. The header includes the Texas County Retirement System logo, navigation links (INVESTMENTS, ABOUT US, NEWS & PUBLICATIONS, MEDIA), and user information (WELCOME BACK EADMIN, OUR PLAN | SIGN OUT, EMPLOYERS, MEMBERS). The main content area is titled "PAYROLL REPORTS & CONTRIBUTIONS" and includes instructions for uploading reports. Below the instructions are three buttons: "UPLOAD PAYROLL REPORT", "ADJUST PRIOR REPORT", and "MAKE ADDITIONAL CONTRIBUTIONS". A "TRANSACTION HISTORY" section features a table with columns for DATE | TIME, PAY DATE, TYPE, and SUBMITTED BY. The table contains two rows of data, each with a "Print" link. A navigation bar below the table includes "First", "Previous", "1 to 2 of 2 rows", "Next", and "Last". The left sidebar menu includes "VIEW" (OUR PLAN, PLAN DOCUMENTS, REPORTS, CONTACTS, PORTAL ACTIVITY, HELP TOPICS) and "MANAGE" (PAYROLL & CONTRIBUTIONS, EMPLOYEE ACCOUNTS, ENROLLMENT, DOCUMENT UPLOAD, PLAN CUSTOMIZER). The "PAYROLL & CONTRIBUTIONS" item in the "MANAGE" section is circled in red.

DATE TIME	PAY DATE	TYPE	SUBMITTED BY	
07-22-2020 / 03:52 PM	07-01-2020	Payroll	eadmin	Print
07-22-2020 / 02:41 PM	07-17-2020	Payroll	eadmin	Print

If you need assistance uploading reports, please contact your Employer Services Representative at 800-651-3848.

You may submit your payroll data either monthly or submit them on dates that coincide with your regular payroll cycles (weekly, bi-weekly or semi-monthly). If you choose to submit your report according to your pay cycle, please contact your Employer Services Representative at 800-651-3848.

HOW TO DETERMINE COMPENSATION

You calculate an employee's retirement account deposit based on their gross monthly pay, before federal income taxes and other deductions. Do not deduct an employee's voluntary pay reductions to 457, 401(k) or other deferred compensation plans from their gross monthly salary before determining covered compensation for TCDRS. This amount should include:

- Wages
- Sick pay
- Vacation pay
- Travel, car or uniform allowances (Only include these allowances as part of an employee's compensation if the allowance amount is included as income on the employee's W-2)
- Value of non-monetary compensation (such as housing)
- Retroactive pay based on an adjustment or judgment
- Regular supplemental payment (scheduled annual bonus or monthly longevity pay)
- Annual or periodic salary supplement from federal, state or local sources (such as state supplement to county judges)
- Any additional taxable income, including overtime

An employee's compensation should not include:

- Workers' compensation payments
- Damages awarded along with retroactive pay

IRS limits on employee deposits to qualified plans

Because TCDRS is a qualified defined benefit plan, the IRS places a limit on the amount of annual compensation you use to calculate an employee's deposits into TCDRS. This limit – also called the 401(a)(17) limitation – changes every year. This limit only affects highly compensated employees. It is listed on the employer site: Click on "Plan Administration," and locate the "Calculating the Deposit" section.

How to fill out W-2s

TCDRS is a qualified retirement plan, which means any deposits to plan accounts are tax deferred until the employee withdraws their account, or starts getting a monthly benefit payment. It also means that you have to take your employees' TCDRS deposits into consideration when you fill out their W-2s.

Do not include the required employee contribution in wages subject to federal income tax. Include the required TCDRS employee contribution when calculating Social Security and Medicare tax. If your employer participates in our Group Term Life program, that could also affect how you fill out W-2s.

If you have any questions, please call your Employer Services Representative at 800-651-3848, or search for "Preparing W-2 Forms" in the search bar at TCDRS.org

Calculating the deposit

To calculate each employee's TCDRS deposit, multiply the employee's compensation by your organization's employee deposit rate.

Example:

Gross compensation = **\$1,750**

Deposit rate = **7%** (0.07)

$\$1,750 \times .07 = \mathbf{\$122.50}$

This employee's TCDRS deposit for that report would be **\$122.50**.

You can find your organization's employee deposit rate under "Our Plan" when you sign into your account at

TCDRS.org/Employer.

Add all the employee deposit amounts together to get a grand total for all employee deposits. You'll use this total to start your online reporting process.

Collecting and formatting payroll data

Your payroll data must include the following for each employee:

- Social Security number
- Full name (last name, first name and any middle initial)
- Monthly compensation
- TCDRS deposit amount

You can send your payroll data via text file.

Text file format example

Please submit your data in a text file using the following format:

Position	Field Title	Number of Characters	Description
1-9	Social Security Number	9	Enter the employee's nine-digit Social Security number with no spaces or dashes.
10-49	Employee Name	40	Enter the employee's name, last name first, with a space between the last and first name, and a space between the first name and middle initial (if any). Left justify the text.
50-56	Salary Amount	7	Salary earned must contain seven unsigned numeric characters in dollars and cents. Do not use dollar signs, commas or decimal points. Right justify the salary amount. Zero-fill the unused part of the field. We assume two decimal spaces.
57-62	Deposit Amount	6	Deposits must contain six unsigned numeric characters in dollars and cents. Do not use dollar signs, commas or decimal points. Right justify the deposit amount. Zero-fill the unused part of the field. We assume two decimal spaces.
63-71		9	You may use this optional field for sorting or other internal requirements.

- Use a fixed-length format with each field filled with data or spaces (for text fields) or zeros (for number fields).
- Do not use tab, NULL characters, negative numbers or zero deposits in either the "Salary Amount" or "Deposit Amount" fields. These will cause an error on your report.

- End each line with a return.
- The first four fields (shown in the following example) are required.

For example, if you are submitting the following information:

Employee	Social Security	Salary Amount	Deposit Amount	Internal Dept.
Jane Doe	123-45-6789	\$3,364.00	\$235.48	101
John Smith	987-65-4321	\$1,535.00	\$107.46	None

Your file should look like this:

```
123456789Doe Jane           0336400023548 101
987654321Smith John       0153500010746
```

For help with your text file, please call TCDRS Employer Services at 800-651-3848.

Reporting deadlines

Submitting your payroll report and payment to TCDRS on time is very important. By law, we have to charge late penalties and interest for reports we receive after the deadline if you do not have an approved extension.

Your payroll report and payment are due on the 15th of the following month, whether you report monthly or according to your payroll cycle. For example, contributions for your January reports are due on Feb. 15. If the 15th happens to fall on a legal holiday or on a weekend, your contributions are due the first business day after the 15th. In our example, if Feb. 15 fell on a Sunday, your contributions would be due on Mon., Feb. 16.

Late reporting penalties

By law, TCDRS is required to charge a \$500 penalty plus interest on past-due reports and amounts. Interest is charged at an annual rate of 12%, calculated daily from the original due date until TCDRS receives the report and the funds.

Extensions

We understand that sometimes circumstances beyond your control may cause a delay in your reporting and payment. To ask for an extension, you must complete and sign a *Request for Extension of Filing Deadline* (TCDRS-94) found on **TCDRS.org/EmployerForms**. It must arrive in the TCDRS offices by the report's regular due date. You may upload the form through the employer website.

SUBMITTING ADJUSTMENTS

You may submit your data in either a CSV or text file. Your file can include adjustments for multiple employees and from multiple pay periods, no matter how long ago the error took place. Detailed instructions for adjustments are available online.

CSV file format

You can easily save an Excel worksheet in a CSV format. Put the information below into a spreadsheet and select "File", "Save As" and choose "CSV" as the file type. A sample CSV file is available online. Please call Employer Services at 800-651-3848 if you need help.

Column Title	Description
SSN	Enter the employee's nine-digit Social Security number with no spaces or dashes.
First Name	Enter the employee's first name. Please do not go over 40 characters.
Last Name	Enter the employee's last name. Please do not go over 40 characters.
Pay Date	Enter the end date of the original reporting period for the deposit that needs the adjustment as mmddyyyy with no dashes or slashes.
Adjustment	This shows the difference between the original deposit reported and the corrected deposit. It can be positive or negative. Use a minus sign to indicate a negative amount. Include a decimal point and cents, even for whole dollars.

Please keep in mind that this format will remove leading zeros, and any ending zeros on whole dollar amounts.

If you are submitting this information:

A	B	C	D
Employee	Social Security	Pay Date	Adjustment
Bob Smith	098-76-5432	10/31/2016	-\$25.00
Jane Doe	222-33-4444	05/31/2016	\$50.78

Your adjustment CSV will look like this:

A	B	C	D	E
SSN	Last Name	First Name	Pay Date	Adjustment
98765432	Smith	Bob	10312016	-25
222334444	Doe	Jane	5312016	50.78

If you have any questions, please call your TCDRS Employer Services Representative at 800-651-3848.

Text file format

Please make sure the data in your text file is in the following format:

Position	Field Title	Number of Characters	Description
1-9	Social Security Number	9	Enter the employee's nine-digit Social Security number with no spaces or dashes.
10-49	Employee Name	40	Enter the employee's name, last name first, with a space between the last and first name, and a space between the first name and middle initial (if any). Left justify the text. Please do not go over 40 characters.
50-57	Pay Date	8	Enter the end date of the original reporting period for the deposit that needs the adjustment as mmddyyyy with no dashes or slashes. Left justify the numbers.

58-64	Adjustment	7	This shows the difference between the original deposit reported and the corrected deposit. This must contain at least six numeric characters in dollars and cents. You use a minus sign to indicate a negative amount. Right justify the adjustment amount. Zero-fill the unused part of the field. We assume two decimal places.
-------	------------	---	---

- Use a fixed-length format with each field filled with data or spaces (for text fields) or zeros (for number fields).
- Do not use tab, NULL characters or zero deposits in the “Adjustment” field. These will cause an error on your report.
- End each line with a return.
- All fields are required.

If you are submitting this information:

Employee	SSN	Pay Date	Adjustment
Bob Smith	098-76-5432	10/31/2016	-\$25.00
Jane Doe	222-33-4444	05/31/2016	\$50.78

Then your text file will look like this:

```
098765432Smith Bob 10312016-002500
222334444Doe Jane 053120160005078
```

If you have any questions, please call your Employer Services Representative at 800-651-3848.



ASSISTING EMPLOYEES ONLINE

ASSISTING EMPLOYEES ONLINE

By moving online, we are providing the following to our members and employers:

- **More Security**
We're taking steps to keep sensitive information safe.
- **More Efficiency**
We've streamlined TCDRS account management.
- **More Flexibility**
We're making sure it's easy to go paperless, no matter the situation.
- **More Empowerment**
We're giving you the tools you need to help your employees.

WHAT MEMBERS CAN DO ONLINE

Claiming their online account at **TCDRS.org** is the best way for members to take control of their retirement. By registering online, a member can:

- See all their information in one place
- Track savings and eligibility
- Update personal information and preferences
- Designate and update beneficiaries
- Access and upload secure documents
- Manage account security
- Estimate possible future retirement benefit
- Apply for benefits

For more information on what members can do online, visit **[TCDRS.org/Library/What-Members-Can-Do-Online](https://www.tcdrs.org/Library/What-Members-Can-Do-Online)**.

To see a list of your employees who have not registered their online account at TCDRS.org, view or download the Non-Registered Online Account report.

Registering online will also give employees access to the TCDRS Security Center, a feature within their member portal.

The security center allows members to manage their 2-factor authentication settings, get security recommendations and report any suspicious activity regarding their TCDRS account.

You can also make updates to your employees personal information and manage beneficiaries through the employer portal. Visit **[TCDRS.org/Library/Employer-Website-Features-Empower-You](https://www.tcdrs.org/Library/Employer-Website-Features-Empower-You)** for more information.

EMPLOYEE EDUCATION RESOURCES

TCDRS retirement benefits are an important part of the total benefits package you provide your employees. To help employees learn more about your retirement plan, you can use these resources:

TCDRS.org

Employees who are enrolled in TCDRS can register for online account access. Once signed into their account, members can see their account balance, update personal information, run benefit estimates and designate their beneficiaries. Please encourage your employees to register online. One-on-one Online Counseling is available for members needing further instruction on their TCDRS account. Members can also find webinars for each stage of retirement at TCDRS.org.

- ***TCDRS Library***

By visiting TCDRS.org and clicking on “Library” at the top

of the page, your employees can access a library of content created by TCDRS. You can explore TCDRS content by most recent, or use the filter system to filter the content by relevant audience, topic or type.

How we support new hires

- ***“An Introduction to Your Member Benefits” video***

This video gives your employees an overview of how TCDRS works in less than three minutes. You can find it, and a lot of other helpful videos, at TCDRS.org/MemberVideos.

- ***New Hires Page***

Your new hires can visit us online for information on how TCDRS works and what to expect as they continue their journey with us at TCDRS.org/NewHire.

- ***New Member Email Series***

New hires will receive an email introducing them to TCDRS and instructions to register their account. After registering, they will receive additional information about TCDRS and their account. Please be sure to include an email address when enrolling new members.

- ***New Member Welcome Mailer***

Once your employees are enrolled in TCDRS, we will send them a *New Member Welcome Mailer*. This mailer includes all the details about the benefits your TCDRS plan provides, as well as their TCDRS account number. Employees will need this account number to register for online account access at TCDRS.org.

- ***Welcome to TCDRS brochure***

This brochure gives new employees details about the benefits your retirement plan provides, such as your matching rate, deposit rate and eligibility requirements. If you would like a supply of these free, custom brochures, please contact your Employer Services Representative at 800-651-3848.

Milestones

- **Outreach**

When a member has earned enough service time to qualify for the Survivor Benefit, Vesting and Eligibility to Retire milestones, TCDRS will notify them.

Eligibility to Retire

- **Destination Retirement**

Have an employee who's considering retirement? Our *Destination Retirement* booklet gives employees all the details about their journey to retirement, including information about benefit payment options and how to apply. This booklet is available at [TCDRS.org/Library](https://www.tcdrs.org/Library).

- **Email series**

When a Member has earned enough service time to be eligible to retire, TCDRS will send them an email series informing them what they need to know before applying for retirement.

- **"Am I Ready to Retire" video**

TCDRS' "Am I Ready to Retire" video helps members to ask themselves three questions to determine if they're ready to retire. The video will be linked in the retirement eligibility email series and can be found at [TCDRS.org/Video-Library](https://www.tcdrs.org/Video-Library).

EMPLOYEE ACCOUNT ACCESS

You also have online access to employee account information. Sign into [TCDRS.org/Employer](https://www.tcdrs.org/Employer) to see employee account information. You must have Benefits Administrator access rights assigned to you by your Security Administrator.

To view an employee's account information from the Employee Lookup page, enter the employee's Social Security number and click "Lookup". The next screen will show you the employee's service time and other account information. From here, you can

choose to view the employee's dashboard, which will allow you to see that employee's account summary.

Please encourage your employees to update their information on their online account.

ACCOUNT INFORMATION

It is important for employees to keep their account information updated, including contact information, name changes and beneficiaries. Employers can also update contact information and beneficiaries online for their employees. If you notice an error with a Social Security number, please contact TCDRS as soon as possible.

Name changes

Employees can update their name from their online account. They can click "My Information" in the dropdown box at the top right corner of their dashboard. They can then click "Personal Information" and "Update" under their name. Employers can also update this information through their TCDRS employer portal.

Social Security number changes

Please upload a photocopy of the employee's updated Social Security card, as well as the *Report of Member Changes* (TCDRS-04).

Contact information

We need to have current contact information to make sure employees receive their annual statements and any other important information about their benefits. To update an address or phone number, employees can visit **TCDRS.org** and sign in to update them online. Employers can also update this information through their TCDRS employer portal.

Naming beneficiaries

Please remind employees to update their beneficiary information after life-changing events, such as divorce, birth of a child or death of a spouse. The *Naming a Beneficiary* brochure can help employees with questions about naming a minor child or non-spouse as a beneficiary. We also reach out to members directly if they do not have a beneficiary on file.

Employees can change their beneficiaries at any time when they sign into their account at **TCDRS.org**. Employers can also update this information through their TCDRS employer portal.

Special beneficiary categories:

Group Term Life

If your plan offers Group Term Life (GTL) for employees and/or retirees, they may choose a different beneficiary than the one selected for their TCDRS benefit. They may designate a GTL beneficiary by signing into **TCDRS.org**. If they have not selected a different beneficiary, TCDRS will pay the beneficiary designated for their retirement account.

SERVICE RETIREMENT RESOURCES

When it comes to helping an employee retire, you want to make sure they have all the information they need to make sound decisions. You can give employees a better understanding of the benefits you provide through TCDRS by scheduling an online or in-person visit from the TCDRS Member Services Field Representatives. This team will conduct webinars or come to your offices and talk to groups of your employees about your specific TCDRS benefits. They can also talk to your employees one-on-one about their individual accounts and options during Personal Benefits Counseling sessions. Call your Employer Services Representative at 800-651-3848 to schedule.

Your employees can also meet one-on-one with a TCDRS Member Services Field Representative by signing up for online counseling. This free service gives your employees a chance to talk one-on-one with one of our representatives using a computer or a mobile device. To learn more about this service visit **TCDRS.org/OnlineCounseling**.

Please recommend that retiring employees contact a TCDRS Member Services Representative at 800-823-7782 for assistance with their retirement application and benefit payment options. TCDRS Member Services Representatives are available to answer questions and provide guidance. Additional resources are also available at **TCDRS.org** under “Planning Ahead”.

Encourage an employee who is considering retirement to review *Destination Retirement*, our retirement roadmap, and our *Passport to Retirement* checklist, which are both available at **TCDRS.org/Library**. These guides provide helpful information to employees considering retirement.

You can run benefit estimates for your employees on the TCDRS employer website. Running estimates for different dates can show an employee how working longer can significantly raise their monthly benefit.

Applying for a benefit

Your employees can apply for retirement online by signing into their account. The employee must choose a retirement date and a benefit payment option. Remind your employees that their first benefit payment date will be one month after their retirement date.

Your employees can choose from seven different monthly benefit payment options. All of the options pay the retiree a benefit for life and all options are equivalent in value; however, the monthly amounts are different for each option. See “Member Benefits” on page 9 of this handbook for more information on payment options.

If an employee needs assistance, call Member Services at 800-823-7782.

TCDRS will send new retirees confirmations in our new retiree email series when their retirement application is received and processed.



RESOURCES

ON THE WEB

The TCDRS website, **TCDRS.org**, gives employees access to information about their benefits, secure access to their personal accounts and the ability to estimate their benefits online. Registering online allows them to see a summary of their account whenever they sign into **TCDRS.org**. Employees will set up and manage their own user IDs and passwords on the website. They can manage their contact information and beneficiary information online. Employees can also apply for benefits and upload legal and other forms and documents directly to TCDRS by using the Document Upload feature when they sign into **TCDRS.org**.

As an administrator for your county or district retirement plan, you can go directly to **TCDRS.org/Employer** to access online tools for managing your retirement plan faster and easier. You can view your plan details in one convenient location, enroll new employees and help employees by running retirement estimates (or looking up their account information).

Need online access?

One person (and one backup) from each employer will be designated the Security Administrator for the employer website. This person will set up your organization's contacts in the system, assign web access and establish roles. If you need online access, please contact your Security Administrator.

Once you are set up in the employer website by your Security Administrator, you will receive an email with your user ID. You will need to activate your account by clicking on the link in the email and then creating a password.

EMPLOYER REPORTS

All roles will be able to access reports on [TCDRS.org/Employer](https://www.tcdrs.org/employer). You may download the reports and save them to your local computer. Here's what each report shows:

Monthly reports:

- **Employer Account Statement:** Get a list of all transactions posted to your TCDRS account in the previous month, including contributions, transfers, allocations, adjustments or any voided transactions. See how to read your statement by looking up "Employer Account Statement Glossary" using the search tool at [TCDRS.org](https://www.tcdrs.org).
- **Group Term Life Payments:** If you offer your employees optional Group Term Life insurance, this report lets you know which of your group-term-life participating employees have passed away in the previous month.
- **In Memoriam:** This provides an overview of which of your retirees and beneficiaries have passed away in the previous month.
- **Member Listing:** This report contains the names of your current and former employees who have an open account with TCDRS (whether they are depositing or not) as of the previous month.
- **New Member Listing:** Learn which of your employees made their first TCDRS deposit in the previous month.
- **Retirees and Beneficiary Payees:** This lists your current retirees and beneficiaries that were receiving benefit payments as of the previous month.
- **Withdrawal Payments:** This lists your former employees who received a withdrawal payment as of the previous month.

There are also dynamic reports that are available to run in real time. They are:

Real-time reports:

- **New Retirements:** This shows, in real-time, your employees and former employees who have applied for retirement with

a retirement date that is up to six months in the past or six months in the future.

- **New Withdrawals:** Find out which of your employees and former employees who have withdrawn their account with a withdrawal date that is up to six months in the past or six months in the future.
- **Request for Last Date of Employment:** See all of your non-depositing employees who do not have a termination date on file with TCDRS. Missing termination dates can delay retirement and withdrawal applications, cause inaccurate benefit estimates for those who no longer work for you and impact your plan's annual valuation results by causing terminated employees to be valued as though they are working. It's important to check this report often, and provide TCDRS with any missing termination dates as soon as possible.
- **Non-Registered Online Accounts Report:** Find out which of your employees have not yet claimed their TCDRS online account. Please reach out to those employees to claim their account.

You can access these reports from the left menu after you sign into **TCDRS.org/Employer**. Click on "Reports" and the reports page will display.

WHO TO CONTACT AT TCDRS

Contact TCDRS Member Services at 800-823-7782 for:

- Questions from retirees, your employees, former employees and employers about benefits
- Reporting of deaths

You may reach any TCDRS department by calling Member Services. The Member Services call center is available 7:30 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday through Friday.

If a member needs service in Spanish, Member Services has Spanish-speaking representatives available.

Contact TCDRS Employer Services Representatives via email at employerservices@tcdrs.org or call 800-651-3848 for:

- Employee presentations and Personal Benefits Counseling
- Presentations to governing boards or commissioners courts
- Rate information and analysis
- Special plan studies
- Questions about administering your plan

EDUCATION

Newsletters

TCDRS sends quarterly educational emails to members regarding their benefits and overall retirement planning. Content is based on their career/life stage.

We also provide updates when a new service or website feature is available and invite members to attend educational sessions such as webinars and online counseling.

Connections, our retiree newsletter, is distributed three times a year and covers information relevant to financial planning in retirement and health and wellness.

Employers receive email communications around plan decision and administration topics and when important documents are available on the employer website. We'll also notify you of any new services or website features for you and your employees.

Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR)

This is the annual financial report for TCDRS, which includes investment and actuarial reports. A digital copy is available on the TCDRS website in July of the following year. Printed copies are available upon request.

Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR)

This is the annual financial report for TCDRS, which includes

investment and actuarial reports. A digital copy is available on the TCDRS website in July of the following year. Printed copies are available upon request.

TCDRS Act

This document outlines the sections of the Texas Government Code that govern TCDRS operations and policies. The Act is available on our website on the “Governance” page located under “About Us”. You may also request a copy by calling Employer Services.

Handbook for Administrators

If you need more copies of this book, please call Employer Services at 800-651-3848.

Videos

- ***Employer Videos***

TCDRS.org/EmployerVideos

Our on-demand tutorials provide lots of information about TCDRS processes, from reporting payroll to enrolling employees.

- ***Employer Webinars***

TCDRS.org/Webinars

Our webinars, both live and on-demand, provide you with an overview of TCDRS, how to help educate your employees about the financial and emotional side of retirement, retirement-related legal issues and more.

- ***Member Videos***

TCDRS.org/MemberVideos

Our member videos cover everything from familiarizing employees with TCDRS to preparing for retirement.

- ***Member Webinars***

TCDRS.org/Webinars-Tailored-To-Members

Members can register for a webinar to learn more about their

TCDRS retirement plan and get questions answered in real-time. Member webinars are hosted by TCDRS along with retirement planning experts.



GLOSSARY

10-Year Guaranteed Term

A monthly benefit option that provides a lifetime monthly payment to the retiree, and a monthly payment to a beneficiary only if the retiree dies within the 10-year guarantee period. The guarantee period starts at retirement, not at the retiree's death.

15-Year Guaranteed Term

A monthly benefit option that provides a lifetime monthly payment to the retiree, and a monthly payment to a beneficiary only if the retiree dies within the 15-year guarantee period. The guarantee period starts at retirement, not at the retiree's death.

50% to Beneficiary

A monthly benefit option that provides a lifetime monthly payment to the retiree, and a lifetime monthly payment to the beneficiary after the retiree's death. The beneficiary will receive 50% of the retiree's monthly payment for life.

75% to Beneficiary

A monthly benefit option that provides a lifetime monthly payment to the retiree, and a lifetime monthly payment to the beneficiary after the retiree's death. The beneficiary will receive 75% of the retiree's monthly payment for life.

100% to Beneficiary

A monthly benefit option that provides a lifetime monthly payment to the retiree, and a lifetime monthly payment to the beneficiary after the retiree's death. The beneficiary will receive 100% of the retiree's monthly payment for life.

100% to Beneficiary With Pop-Up

A monthly benefit option that provides a lifetime monthly

payment to the retiree, and a lifetime monthly payment to the beneficiary after the retiree's death. The beneficiary will receive 100% of the retiree's monthly payment for life. If the beneficiary dies before the retiree, the retiree's monthly payments will pop up to the higher, Single Life amount.

Account balance

The sum of an employee's deposits and interest earnings. It does not include employer matching.

ACH credit

A process that allows you to initiate payment to TCDRS from your bank through the ACH network. It can be used to submit funds for your monthly deposit report, as well as additional employer contributions and other one-time payments to TCDRS.

ACH debit

A process that allows TCDRS to automatically debit a TCDRS-covered employer's bank account to collect employer contributions.

Beneficiary

A person the employee chooses to receive their TCDRS account balance, retirement payments and/or any additional benefits after their death.

Benefits Administrator

TCDRS web role that enables the user to run employee benefit estimates, update employee personal information and beneficiaries, look up employee information, enroll new employees online and provide termination dates online.

Benefit estimate

An estimate of an employee's monthly retirement benefit payments for a future retirement date. The estimate can

assume future deposits and interest. Employees who register at **TCDRS.org** can run their own benefit estimates for any retirement date. Employers can run estimates for their employees as well or employers can call TCDRS Member Services at 800-823-7782 for benefit-estimate help.

Benefit payment option

A monthly payment arrangement by which a retiring employee indicates whether their payments will continue to a beneficiary after they pass away. TCDRS offers seven payment options allowing for a variety of beneficiary arrangements.

Buyback

When an employee restores a withdrawn TCDRS account by replacing the withdrawn deposits and interest, plus a penalty. Buying back an account makes the employee eligible for employer matching for that account at retirement. Your organization must authorize a buyback.

Covered compensation

The portion of an employee's gross pay used to calculate their monthly deposit amount. Covered compensation includes wages, sick pay, vacation pay, allowances and some other forms of compensation.

Decision-Maker

TCDRS web role that shows all plan information, including GASB, Personal Plan Summary, Retirement Plan Assessment and more, in one convenient location.

Disability retirement

A type of retirement that allows employees who are mentally or physically unable to do any gainful employment on a permanent basis to retire and receive a monthly payment before they are eligible for service retirement.

Early withdrawal penalty

An IRS penalty (usually 10%) for withdrawing money from a tax-deferred retirement account before age 59½. The penalty is in addition to any income taxes owed on the withdrawn amount.

Error in enrollment

Not enrolling an employee who was eligible to join TCDRS. This employee has no deposits on record with TCDRS.

Error in reporting

Overstating or understating an enrolled employee's salary, causing a miscalculation of employee deposits and employer contributions.

Group Term Life

Life insurance that is separate from the TCDRS retirement plan. TCDRS administers the program, and employers pay an additional rate every month to fund it. Your organization's participation in this program is voluntary. Your governing board may approve this optional benefit and may cancel it at any time, but it becomes effective the end of that year. Coverage can include your employees, or both your employees and retirees.

Military service time

Service time for an employee's active military service before working for your organization.

Monthly benefit payment

A retirement benefit paid in monthly installments for the lifetime of the recipient. It is also referred to as an annuity, retirement benefit or pension. An employee's account balance, the employer's matching rate, the selected retirement option and the employee's age at retirement determine the amount of the monthly payment. Depending on the selected option, the beneficiary's age can also affect the payment amount.

Partial lump-sum payment

Allows an employee, at retirement, to withdraw all or part of their TCDRS account balance and receive a smaller monthly payment for life. This option is only available if your governing board has authorized it as a plan option.

Payroll Administrator

TCDRS web role that allows for uploading and submission of payroll reports and enrolling of new employees online.

Plan options

Elements of your TCDRS plan that your governing board defines. Your board authorizes vesting requirements, employee deposit rates, employer matching rates, buybacks, Group Term Life coverage, optional employer matching rate for prior service, partial lump-sum payments and retiree cost-of-living adjustments.

Proportionate Retirement Program

A program that allows a statewide public employee retirement system to recognize service time an employee earns in other statewide public employee retirement systems. TCDRS recognizes service time an employee earns with Employees Retirement System of Texas (ERS), Judicial Retirement System of Texas (JRS), Teacher Retirement System of Texas (TRS), Texas Municipal Retirement System (TMRS) and City of Austin Employees' Retirement System (COAERS), and vice versa. All of these systems can apply service time earned in any of the other systems to its retirement eligibility requirements.

Qualified Domestic Relations Order (QDRO)

A judicial order that grants a divorced spouse a portion of an employee's current or future monthly retirement payment. TCDRS is legally obligated to honor the provisions of any valid QDRO.

Retirement date

TCDRS retirement dates are always the last day of the month. The employee must leave employment by that date. To establish a retirement date, the employee should apply for retirement online. If an employee submits an application after the retirement date, the retiree will receive retroactive payments from the intended retirement date.

Rollover

A rollover occurs when a former employee withdraws all or part of their deposits and interest into another qualified retirement account. When a member chooses to roll over their money, they will not need to pay income taxes on it, or a penalty. Members who withdraw their accounts will receive a 1099-R in January of the following year.

Security Administrator

TCDRS web role that enables the employer to manage contacts for the employer website and establish web access for individual users. A user's web access designation determines the tools and features available to that user when they sign into the employer website.

Service retirement

A type of TCDRS retirement that provides a monthly lifetime benefit to the retiree. An employee must meet the employer's retirement eligibility requirements before applying for service retirement.

Service time

An employee gets one month of service time for each calendar month that they make a deposit to their TCDRS account, regardless of how many pay periods occur within the month. The amount of service time earned with TCDRS employers

determines an employee's eligibility for the Survivor Benefit, vesting and retirement. TCDRS also recognizes other sources of service time such as military service and proportionate service to determine retirement eligibility.

Single Life

A monthly benefit option that provides a lifetime monthly benefit to the retiree, but no monthly payment to a beneficiary after the retiree's death. Under this option, a retiree's beneficiary would receive a one-time payment of the retiree's remaining account balance, if any. This option provides the highest monthly payment.

Survivor Benefit

A benefit that allows the beneficiaries of an employee who dies with at least four years of service time, but before retirement, to choose to receive a monthly benefit payment. Monthly payments include employer matching.

Last Date of Employment

The date an employee leaves employment with your organization. You can enter a termination date for your employees at **TCDRS.org/Employer** up to six months in advance or up to six months after.

Uniformed Services Employment and Re-employment Rights Act (USERRA)

A federal law that gives an employee called to active military duty that interrupts their employment the right to re-employment, and the right to regain lost retirement service credit and lost deposits upon returning to work.

Vesting

An employee is vested when they have earned the right to receive a lifetime monthly benefit in the future. Each employer

chooses a vesting level for its employees of 5, 8 or 10 years of service time. A vested employee may apply for service retirement at age 60, even if they leave their county or district job and don't earn any more service time. A vested employee only gets employer matching by choosing a monthly payment at retirement. A vested employee withdrawing a TCDRS account will only receive employee deposits and interest.

Web role

When you sign into the employer website, the information and functions you have access to will depend on your assigned role, such as Decision-Maker, Payroll Administrator, Benefits Administrator or Security Administrator. Multiple people can be assigned Decision-Maker, Payroll Administrator and Benefits Administrator roles; however, there can be only one Security Administrator (and one backup).

Wire transfer

A process that allows you to move money directly from your bank to TCDRS' bank on the same day. You initiate the payment. It can be used to submit funds for your monthly deposit report, as well as additional employer contributions and other one-time payments to TCDRS.

Withdrawal

The payment of an employee's account balance after they leave TCDRS-covered employment. A withdrawal does not include employer matching, and the member forfeits the right to a lifetime monthly benefit.



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