

RETIREE ADVISOR

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Produced for retired members of the Tennessee Consolidated Retirement System

CALLING TCRS

For your convenience, TCRS has an automated system on our toll-free number (1-800-770-8277). When you call, you have these options:



Selection

Number Service Area Desired

- 1 Retired Payroll, Refunds, Account Balance
- 2 Retirement Insurance
- 3 Field Services, Counseling, Appointments, or Beneficiary Changes
- 4 Benefit Computations and Prior Service Questions
- 7 Report the Death of a TCRS Retiree or Active Member

If you call from a touch-tone phone, you do not have to listen to the menu. Press your selection after the automated attendant answers your call. If you call from Davidson or surrounding counties, you may reach the system locally by dialing 242-6554.

The TCRS website is full of useful information and forms. Access the site at www.state.tn.us/tcrs.

EXTENDED SERVICE HOURS

The TCRS Retired Payroll Area will be open from 7:00 AM CT until 6:00 PM CT beginning **February 1, 2004 until April 30, 2004**. Call Center Representatives will be available to take your calls regarding tax questions, requests for duplicate 1099R's and other Retired Payroll needs.

Please be aware that the Retired Payroll Offices will be open for these extended hours only on Monday through Thursday during this three-month period. We will open for the regular business hours 8:00 AM CT until 4:30 PM CT every Friday during this period. The number of calls and requests for assistance typically increase during this time of year. We hope the extended hours will make it easier for you to get in touch with us during this busy time.

NEED HELP WITH HEALTH INSURANCE ISSUES?

The TCRS Insurance Office determines your eligibility for coverage through retirement, processes your enrollment and provides the service of deducting your health insurance premium from your monthly retirement check. Questions regarding eligibility for coverage at retirement and enrollment issues should be directed to the TCRS Insurance Office. Requests for changes in your coverage or termination of coverage should be submitted to the TCRS Insurance Office in writing. Address changes must also be submitted in writing.

Your Insurance Vendor (*BlueCross, Aetna, John Deere*) is responsible for paying medical and prescription claims, mailing your insurance cards, and keeping you informed of changes with regard to what your plan covers. The Insurance Vendor also provides customer service regarding claims issues.

The Tennessee Division of Insurance Administration coordinates the services you receive from your Insurance Vendor. Furthermore, if your TCRS check is not large enough to deduct your premium, you will pay your premium directly to the Division of Insurance Administration. You should contact this office with questions regarding your direct payment of premiums, except for Medicare Supplement Plans 1 and 2.

Listed below are the phone numbers for these offices:

TCRS Insurance Office	1-877-681-0155
Insurance Administration or in the Nashville area	1-800-253-9981 (615) 741-3590
BlueCross BlueShield of TN or in the Chattanooga area	1-800-558-6213 (423) 755-5879
Advance PCS (BCBS Prescription) (PPO and Plan 3)	1-877-683-6837
BlueCross BlueShield (Medicare Supplement Information)	1-800-221-7828
Aetna	1-877-719-3993
John Deere	1-877-366-0011

2004 Direct Deposit Payment Schedule

January	30	April	30	July	30	October	29
February	27	May	28	August	31	November	30
March	31	June	30	September	30	December	31

**2004 Medicare Supplement Premiums
(Effective 2/1/04)**

Plan One

	30 or More Years	20 - 29 Years	15 - 19 Years	Less than 15 Years	Dependents and Local Government Retirees*
Monthly Premium	\$88.00	\$88.00	\$88.00	\$88.00	\$88.00
State Support	40.00	30.00	20.00	0.00	0.00
Retiree Pays	\$48.00	\$58.00	\$68.00	\$88.00	\$88.00

Plan Two

	30 or More Years	20 - 29 Years	15 - 19 Years	Less than 15 Years	Dependents and Local Government Retirees*
Monthly Premium	\$172.00	\$172.00	\$172.00	\$172.00	\$172.00
State Support	40.00	30.00	20.00	0.00	0.00
Retiree Pays	\$132.00	\$142.00	\$152.00	\$172.00	\$172.00

Plan Three

	30 or More Years	20 - 29 Years	15 - 19 Years	Less than 15 Years	Dependents and Local Government Retirees*
Monthly Premium	\$285.00	\$285.00	\$285.00	\$285.00	\$285.00
State Support	40.00	30.00	20.00	0.00	0.00
Retiree Pays	\$245.00	\$255.00	\$265.00	\$285.00	\$285.00

*Local Government retirees are entitled to employer-supported rates only if the chief governing body has authorized such support.

TAX TIME IS UPON US



Retirees and beneficiaries who received TCRS retirement benefits in 2003 will receive a 1099-R form with this newsletter. Below is an explanation of some of the sections on the 1099-R.

Box 1 is the total TCRS pension benefits you received.

Box 2a is the taxable portion of your benefit as calculated by TCRS. TCRS uses the Simplified General Rule to calculate the taxable amount. If you retired on or before July 1, 1986, the amount of your after-tax contributions has already been excluded from your taxable income and your TCRS benefits are now fully taxable.

Disability benefits from TCRS are fully taxable until the benefit is converted to a regular retirement benefit at age 60 or death. After that point, the Simplified General Rule is used to determine the taxable portion of each monthly payment.

Box 4 indicates the amount of federal income tax withheld by TCRS in the year 2003. Forms to change or revoke your withholding election may be obtained by calling or writing TCRS, or on the TCRS website at www.state.tn.us/tcrs.

Box 7 shows the type of benefit you are receiving. If you are a disability retiree, you may be eligible for a disability tax credit. (Refer to IRS Publication 524.)

Additional tax information may be obtained by calling the IRS toll-free at 1-800-829-1040.

CAREGIVING AND OTHER SPECIAL SERVICES FOR THE ELDERLY

Shopping. Meals. Transportation. When the elderly need help, family and friends can step in. But providing care is a **huge commitment**. The good news is, **there's help**.

The Tennessee Commission on Aging and Disability provides assistance to Tennesseans in areas ranging from Medicare and Meals on Wheels to Alzheimers Assistance and Nursing Home Investigation. Other areas of expertise include Medicare Assistance, Legal Guardianship, and a wide range of Community Services in your area. No matter where you or your loved ones live in Tennessee, there are nine regional offices that can be reached by dialing 1-866-836-6678. This toll-free number will connect you with the agency on aging and disability nearest you.

If you live outside Tennessee, please call 1-800-677-1116 for the Eldercare Locator or go to www.eldercare.gov for information on the agency in your area.



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