

# Service Credit Equivalency Guidelines



**Service credit is one of the factors used to determine your eligibility for retirement benefits with the Teachers' Retirement System of the City of New York (TRS), as well as the amount of these benefits.**

**All TRS members are entitled to receive a maximum of one year's service credit in a given school year. However, your eligibility for service credit may depend on your position (and may even be affected by your tier status). For instance, members in full-time positions are credited with one year of service credit for each full school year of service rendered. Members in part-time positions, on the other hand, may need to render a minimum number of hours or days of service in that position in order for it to be creditable. For these positions, the service credit allowed would be granted on a prorated basis to account for the reduced hours or days of service rendered. Tables of service equivalency are used to make this calculation.**

**This brochure provides answers to some questions members may have regarding service equivalencies for crediting and eligibility.**

## **What are the requirements for crediting Substitute Teaching Service?**

Employees of the New York City Department of Education (DOE) and participating Charter Schools serving in substitute teaching positions **are not eligible** to join TRS, whereas employees of the City University of New York (CUNY) providing substitute teaching service **are eligible** for TRS membership. If you served in a substitute teaching position prior to joining TRS, you may receive prior service credit for the service. If you render substitute teaching service during an unpaid leave of absence or after separating from service and you return to active service in a TRS-eligible position, you may receive Amman credit for the service. In either case, the service would be credited only after verification (and payment, as applicable).

If you render substitute teaching service after you resign or are terminated from your TRS-eligible position, you may still be able to receive credit for this service, even if you do not return to active service in a TRS-eligible position. In this case, however, you must first apply for transferred contributor status. As a transferred contributor, you can retain your TRS membership rights and receive credit for substitute teaching service rendered both before and after the effective date of your transferred contributor status. For more information about transferred contributor eligibility requirements, please refer to the *Separating from Service* brochure.

Tiers I/II members do not have a minimum requirement for crediting of substitute teaching service. However, in order for Tiers III/IV members to receive credit for substitute teaching, they must serve a minimum of 20 days as a substitute teacher during

a given school year. For substitute teaching service (all tiers), 170 days is equivalent to a full school year.

Credit for service totaling less than 170 days (but at least 20 days for Tiers III/IV members) would be prorated accordingly.

### **What are the requirements for crediting Paraprofessional Service?**

As of August 12, 1983, paraprofessionals became eligible to join TRS. Membership for paraprofessionals is optional, and their membership begins on the date TRS receives their enrollment application.

Paraprofessional service that you render on or after your membership date is considered membership service. However, paraprofessional service you rendered prior to TRS' receipt of your enrollment application would be credited as prior service after verification (and payment, as applicable).

To receive service credit for paraprofessional service, you must complete at least 233 hours of service as a paraprofessional during a given school year. For paraprofessional service, 935 hours is equivalent to a full school year. Credit for service in excess of 233 hours, but less than 935 hours, would be prorated accordingly.

### **What are the requirements for crediting Adjunct Service?**

As of January 1, 1971, pedagogical adjuncts became eligible to join TRS. (Non-teaching adjuncts became eligible to join TRS as of February 1, 2002.) Membership for adjuncts is optional, and their membership begins on the date TRS receives their enrollment application. Adjunct service that you render on or after your membership date is considered membership service. However, adjunct service that you rendered prior to TRS' receipt of your enrollment application would be credited as prior service after verification (and payment, as applicable).

To receive service credit for adjunct service, you must complete at least 45 hours of service as an adjunct during a given school year. For adjunct service, 360 hours is equivalent to a full school year. Credit for service in excess of the applicable minimum, but less than 360 hours, would be prorated accordingly.

### **What are the requirements for crediting Adult Education Teaching Service?**

As of September 1, 1986, full-time adult education teachers were required to become TRS members. Adult education teaching service that you render on or after your membership date is considered membership service. However, adult education teaching service that you rendered prior to your TRS membership would be credited as prior service after verification (and payment, as applicable).

To receive service credit for adult education teaching service, you must complete at least 255 hours of service as an adult education teacher during a given school year. For adult education teaching service, 1,020 hours is equivalent to a full school year. Credit for service in excess of 255 hours, but less than 1,020 hours, would be prorated accordingly.

**Please note that part-time adult education teachers are not eligible for TRS membership.** However, they may instead elect to join the New York City Board of Education Retirement System (BERS).

### **Are other positions affected by service equivalencies and minimums?**

Most other positions are not affected by service equivalencies, and credit for eligible service would be granted based on the actual days worked, with summer vacation credit allowed where applicable. However, certain positions (such as continuing education teachers and graduate assistants) not mentioned above may be affected by service equivalencies. Credit for service in these positions would be prorated based on the applicable service equivalency for each position. Each position would also require a minimum amount of service in order to be eligible for crediting.

### **Does service credit have to be purchased, or is it automatically granted?**

Any credited service you render as a TRS member is considered membership service. The member contributions that are automatically deducted from your paycheck pay for this membership service credit. If you rendered other eligible service that is not yet credited (such as prior and/or Amman service), you

may have to purchase the credit, depending on several factors, including your tier status and the type of service rendered. In all cases, such service would be credited only after TRS has reviewed appropriate documentation to verify your service.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

If you would like additional assistance regarding service equivalencies for crediting and eligibility, please contact TRS' Member Services Center. You may also write to TRS' Member Status Unit at 55 Water Street, New York, NY 10041. Please keep a copy of any correspondence for your records.

For your convenience, TRS forms and publications are available on our website.

If you require additional assistance, we encourage you to contact our Member Services Center at 1 (888) 8-NYC-TRS.

*This publication should not be solely relied upon, as it is based on currently available information that is subject to change. TRS suggests that you consult with an attorney and/or a tax advisor if you have any specific legal or tax questions concerning this information. In all cases, the specific provisions of the governing laws, rules, and regulations prevail.*



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