

Benefits report

A publication of the
Teachers' Retirement System
of the City of New York



Tour TRS' Website Features

Do you know what you can do in the secure section of TRS' website? Sign up for the **Retiree Website Tour**, and find out!

In this virtual class, TRS will help you explore these secure online features:

- Checking and updating bank information
- Viewing payment history
- Checking and updating beneficiary designations
- Managing your TDA account, including withdrawals and RMDs

The **Retiree Website Tour** will be offered on two dates this summer:

Wednesday, June 29, 11:00 a.m., Eastern Time

Thursday, July 14, 1:00 p.m., Eastern Time

The class is free, but advance registration is required. Visit our website's Educational Programs page and sign up for a class today! (www.trsnyc.org ► **Resources** ► **Educational Programs**)

Spring 2022

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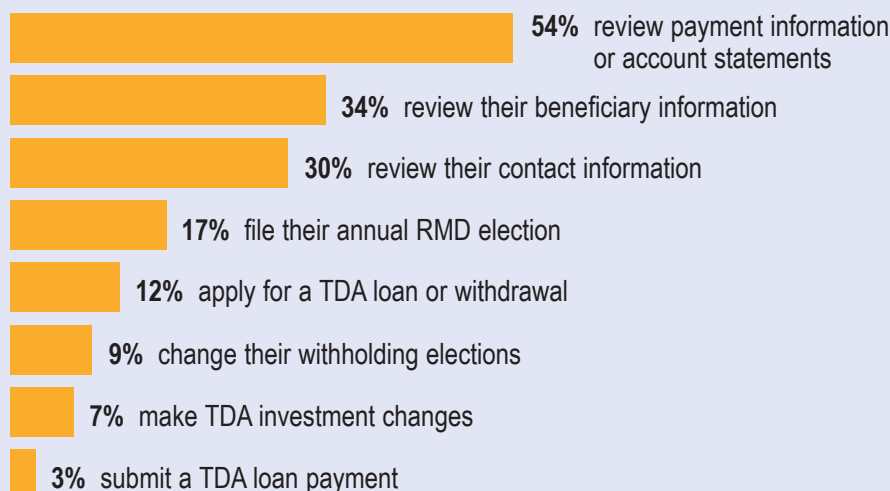
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What do retirees do in the secure section of TRS' website?

According to our recent website usage survey:



See page 2 for more survey results!

Website Survey Results Say...

Since our newsletters regularly promote self-service features available on our website, we asked for your feedback. The [Fall 2021 issue of Benefits Report](#) included a Retiree Website Usage Survey. Thank you to the hundreds of members who took the time to complete the survey online or send it in by mail. Your honest feedback helps us identify what we are doing right and prioritize what we can do better!

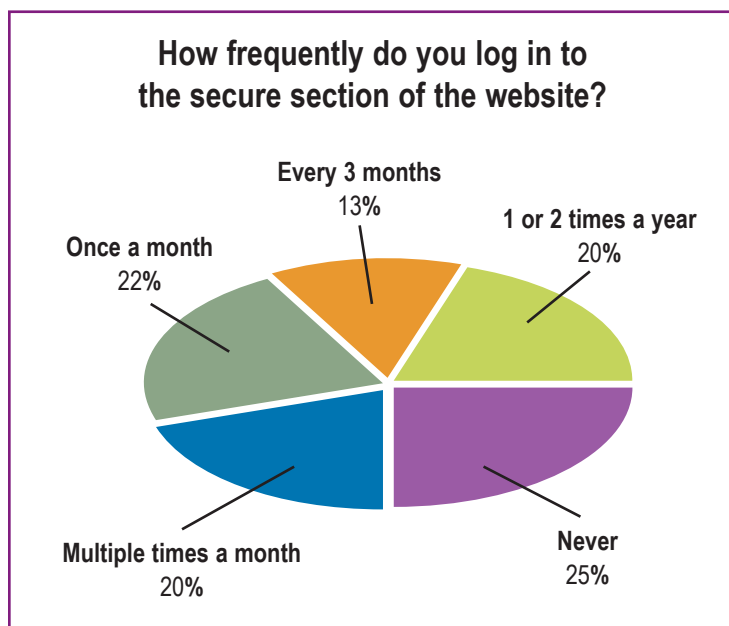
Here are some takeaways from the survey results. See the graphs below and on page 1 for details:

- ★ 75% of respondents said that they log in to the website at least once or twice a year, and 42% log in at least once a month. Those who do not use the website at all cited login issues and a lack of computer/computer knowledge as the reasons.
- ★ For those who do log in, checking payment and account information is the most common activity, followed by reviewing/updating contact information and beneficiary designations.
- ★ 48% of respondents said it is easy or very easy to accomplish what they want to do on our website. Almost 20% said it is difficult or very difficult, and some provided specific examples.

The survey also asked about retirees' interest in learning opportunities from TRS. One-third of respondents said they would be interested in attending onsite programs at TRS (after the pandemic ends, of course). And a little more than half of the respondents said they would be interested in online programs. Those members are in luck, as we are premiering a new online program specifically for retirees this summer; see article on page 1.

Respondents were also asked to share their age and how long they had been retired. The largest group of respondents was in their 70s and had been retired for 10-19 years. But the respondents included a wide range—from recent retirees in their 50s to a handful of impressive members in their 90s who have been retired for more than 30 years!

Thanks again to all who participated in the survey, and especially those who provided additional written comments. You're helping TRS to serve you better online!



Retiree Earnings Limit Excludes Public School Work

In general, service retirees under age 65 can earn up to \$35,000 per calendar year in New York State public employment without impacting their retirement allowance. Chapter 56 of the Laws of 2022, enacted in April, provides that earnings in public school employment between April 9, 2022 and June 30, 2023 will not count toward the annual limit.

For those retirees who return to work, our [Earnings After Retirement](#) brochure explains the restrictions on retiree earnings and the filings necessary to preserve their retirement allowance.

Chapter 56 also brings changes for non-retired TRS members:

- The vesting requirement is now five years of service credit, down from ten years, for all members who joined TRS after December 10, 2009.
- For Tier VI members, the calculation of pension contribution rates, which is based on member wages, will exclude “overtime” pay for a period of about 24 months.

2022 Cost-of-Living Adjustment

Starting in September, eligible retirees will receive New York State’s 2022 Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) in their retirement allowance payments.

This year’s COLA is 3%. To be eligible, you must be at least:

- 62 years old and have been retired for at least five years, or
- 55 years old and have been retired for at least 10 years.

Certain other disability retirees, surviving spouses, and other beneficiaries may also qualify for the COLA.

The COLA percentage is based on 50% of the Consumer Price Index increase for the year as of March 31. The amount can range from 1% to 3% and is calculated based on the lesser of an eligible retiree’s fixed maximum retirement allowance or \$18,000. For this year, the maximum annual adjustment is \$540.

COLA Calculation Examples

1. Based on a \$32,000 annual retirement allowance, the COLA amount would be \$540.

The retirement allowance amount is greater than \$18,000, so the COLA is based on \$18,000.

$$\$18,000 \times .03 = \$540 \quad \text{making the total retirement allowance } \$32,540$$

2. Based on a \$16,000 annual retirement allowance, the COLA amount would be \$480.

The retirement allowance amount is less than \$18,000, so the COLA is based on the retirement allowance amount of \$16,000.

$$\$16,000 \times .03 = \$480 \quad \text{making the total retirement allowance } \$16,480$$

Semiannual Investment Results: 12/31/2021

TRS Passport Funds

TRS' Passport Funds are available to all Tax-Deferred Annuity (TDA) Program participants and members in Tiers I and II for a portion of their funds in the Qualified Pension Plan (QPP).

For more recent investment results, please visit our website. (www.trsnyc.org ► **Investments** ► **Investment Returns**)
For more details about the Passport Funds, please review our annual *Fund Profiles* booklet.

Annualized Investment Returns

	1 Year	3 Year	5 Year	10 Year
Fixed Return Fund (TDA/UFT)*	7.00%	7.00%	7.00%	7.00%
Fixed Return Fund (All Others)*	8.25%	8.25%	8.25%	8.25%
Diversified Equity Fund	20.24%	22.09%	15.37%	13.92%
Balanced Fund**	5.22%	8.19%	N/A	N/A
International Equity Fund	8.44%	15.08%	10.89%	8.95%
Sustainable Equity Fund	30.36%	30.98%	20.31%	16.67%
U.S. Equity Index Fund***	25.82%	N/A	N/A	N/A
International Equity Index Fund***	7.87%	N/A	N/A	N/A

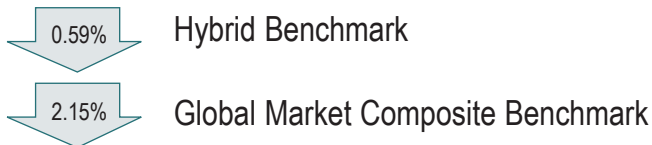
*Returns for the Fixed Return Fund are set by New York State Law. Currently, members affiliated with the United Federation of Teachers are credited with 7% annually on TDA investments in the Fund. Other members' TDA investments in the Fund, and any member's QPP investments in the Fund, are currently credited with 8.25% annually. Historical rates are published on our website. For retirees and annuitants who have Fixed Return Fund investments, the guaranteed return is factored into their monthly payments. Funds that members allocate to the Fixed Return Fund are invested with the Pension Fund.

**5- and 10-year investment returns are not available for the Balanced Fund, which began on 1/1/2018.

***3-, 5-, and 10-year investment returns are not available for the U.S. Equity Index and International Equity Index funds, which began on 1/1/2020. The 1-year returns shown above represent the actual returns of the U.S. Equity Index Fund and the International Equity Index Fund. Any difference between the returns of the U.S. Equity Index Fund and the International Equity Index Fund and that of their underlying mutual funds is due to the timing of cash flows.

Five-Year Performance vs. Benchmarks

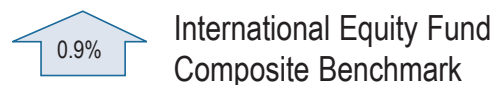
Diversified Equity Fund:



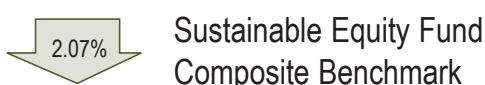
Balanced Fund¹:



International Equity Fund:



Sustainable Equity Fund:



¹ As of 1/1/2018, the Bond Fund became the Balanced Fund, so no 5-year comparison is available. A 3-year comparison is shown above.

TRS Plans

TRS offers two plans to members.

All members participate in the Qualified Pension Plan (QPP), a defined-benefit plan that is funded by employer contributions and member contributions. TRS also administers a Tax-Deferred Annuity (TDA) Program, a supplemental defined-contribution plan. The TDA Program is funded by member contributions.

QPP Total Investments

\$80.89 Billion*

TDA Total Investments

\$40.00 Billion*

* As of 12/31/2021 (unaudited)

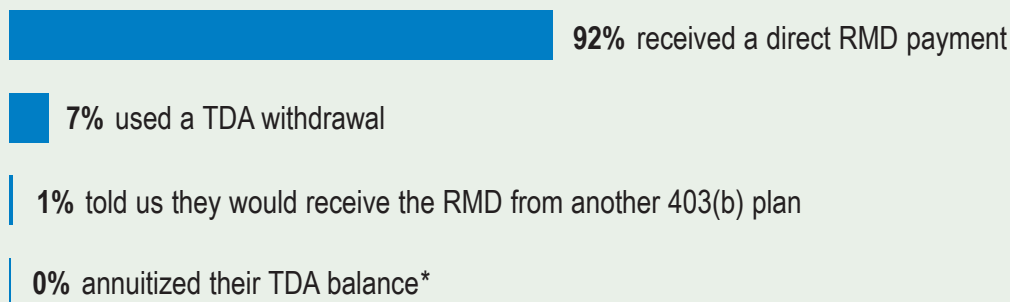
Required Minimum Distributions

If you are maintaining a Tax-Deferred Annuity (TDA) Program account during retirement, you will eventually be subject to an annual Required Minimum Distribution (RMD). In general, the IRS requires distributions of TDA funds to begin for retirees as of the year they reach age 72.

Earlier this spring, TRS mailed RMD packets to members reaching age 72 and older this year. If you are due to receive an RMD and do not respond to TRS' mailing, we will send you a payment this December that meets IRS requirements. If you would like to receive your RMD sooner, or if you want to choose another way to meet the requirement, you have until October 31 to file an RMD election on our website or use the form enclosed in our mailing.

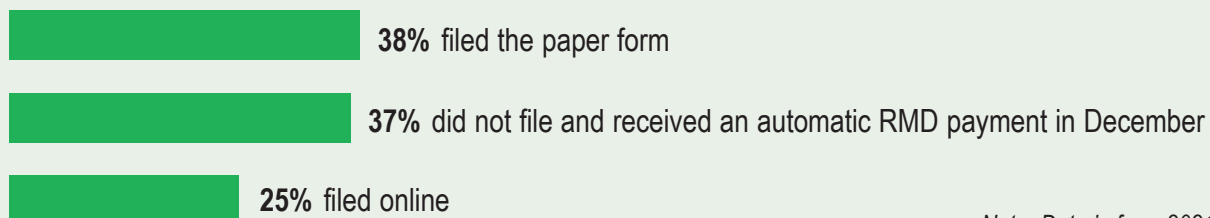
Reminder: You can access your RMD letter in the secure section of our website. (Log in at www.trsnyc.org ► Documents ► Correspondence.)

How do members meet their RMD requirements?



*A negligible number of members (3) chose to meet their RMD by annuitizing their TDA accounts.

How do members file their RMD elections?



Note: Data is from 2021 RMD filings

TRS Plans Rank High

According to *Pensions & Investments* magazine's annual survey of retirement funds, TRS' Tax-Deferred Annuity (TDA) Program remains America's:

- ✓ 2nd largest 403(b) plan
- ✓ 4th largest public defined-contribution plan

TRS' Qualified Pension Plan (QPP) is part of the combined New York City retirement plan—which is ranked the 5th largest overall fund, and the 4th largest defined-benefit plan in the country.

The *Pensions & Investments* survey was published in the February 14, 2022 issue, based on reported assets as of September 30, 2021.

Retired TRS Members Live Everywhere

Pick a borough, county, state, country, or even a continent, and you're likely to find a retired TRS member. Here's a look at where our pensioners—currently 92,000 and growing—are spending their golden years.

Using data from the end of 2021, we found that 43% of our retirees still live in New York City. Within the five boroughs, Brooklyn has the most retired members, followed by Manhattan, Queens, the Bronx, and Staten Island.

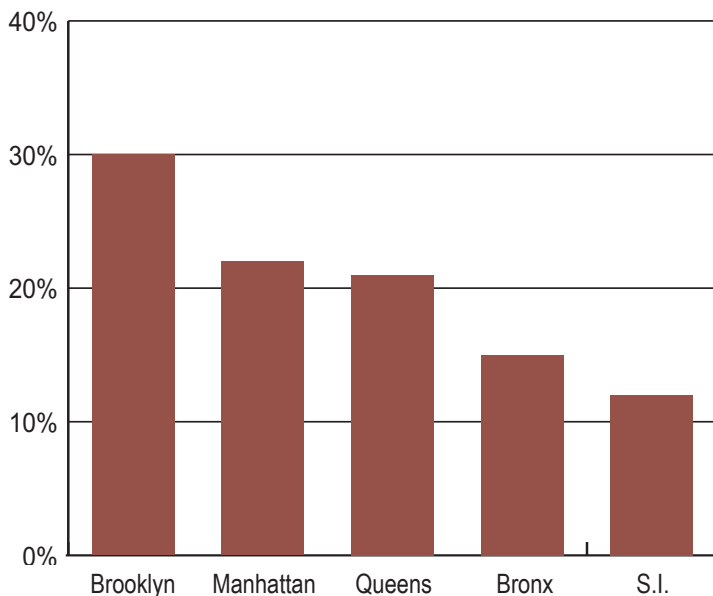
Seventy percent live in New York State. Outside of the City, the biggest contingent is found on Long Island, followed by Rockland and Westchester counties.

Outside of New York State, retirees reside in each of the other 49 states plus the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and even American military bases in Europe and Asia.

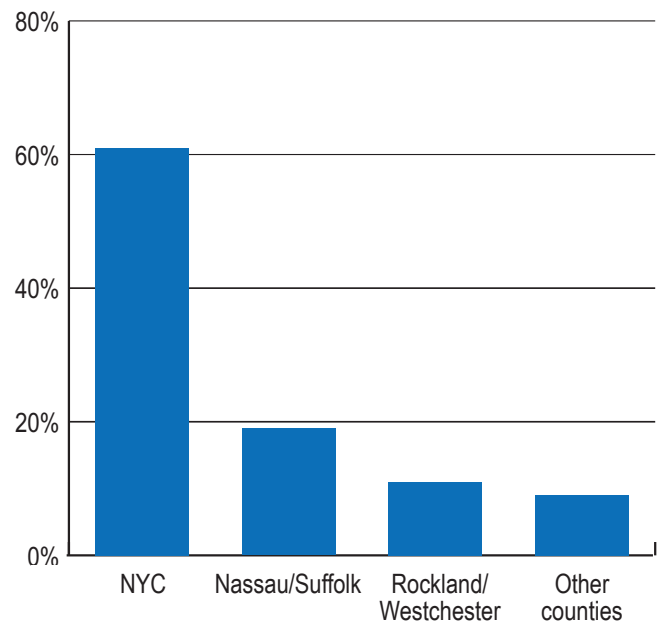
Finally, there are more than 250 retirees living in 42 foreign countries in Europe, Asia, Central and South America, Africa, and Australia. Israel is where you'll find the most TRS retirees (100) outside the U.S.

Our retired membership is truly global, but the majority has remained right where it all started, in the greatest city in the world.

43% of TRS retirees live in New York City



70% of TRS retirees live in New York State



Top 5 Other States

1. Florida
2. New Jersey
3. Pennsylvania
4. North Carolina
5. Connecticut



Outsmart Web Imposters and Other Cybercriminals

Today, we live in a virtual environment. And with all the benefits of the Internet, there are some downsides—including cybercriminals. Fraudsters jump at the chance to hack your personal information. Two common gateways are web imposters and fake apps.



Web Imposters

When a fraudulent web address is created to mimic a popular website, that's a web imposter. Instead of Walmart.com, for example, an imposter may create Wallmart.com. A simple change to the company web address can fool unsuspecting people and can lead to theft of data.

Avoid becoming the next victim:

When you visit a website, check the address bar for the site's security status.

- ◆ A padlock icon should display before the web address. Avoid sites without the icon!
- ◆ The padlock indicates that any information you send to the site is sent securely and can't be intercepted.

Dashes and symbols in the domain name (like **www.Apple #\$\$%.com**) are a red flag indicating a likely web imposter.

The domain extension is often a clue.

- ◆ Common extensions for legitimate businesses: .org, .com, .edu, .gov
- ◆ Domain extensions like .biz or .info tend to be illegitimate.
- ◆ Note that .com and .net are the easiest extensions to obtain.

When you have trusted websites that you visit frequently, use the bookmark tool on your computer to "remember" those sites. Doing so allows you to visit sites you've previously confirmed with confidence.

Fake Apps

While it may seem that every company has an application (app) for Apple or Android phones, that's not true. **TRS does not have an app.** Yet, there are TRS app imposters!

Don't let imposter apps fool you. Confirm that the app is legitimate:

Obtain apps from Apple's App Store or the Google Play Store.

- ◆ Unfortunately, some fake apps may be there, too.
- ◆ Read the app score and customer reviews before downloading.

To be sure you're visiting the real TRS online, here are our web locations:

- Website: <https://www.trsnyc.org>
- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/mytrsnyc>
- Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/trsnyc>
- Twitter: <https://twitter.com/mytrsnyc>
- YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/user/trsnyc>



TRS does not have an app, and we are not currently on any other social media platforms.

Check the company's website to see if the app is referenced.

- ◆ If it's not mentioned on the company website, it probably doesn't exist.

Most apps are available at no cost.

- ◆ If there is a cost, confirm the app is legit by contacting the company first.

Change your system settings to not allow third-party apps to be downloaded from untrusted sites.

Think twice before clicking a link or downloading anything on the Internet. Assume all unsolicited requests for information are phishing attempts. Whether it's a web imposter or fake app, spelling errors, bad formatting, and poorly written content are obvious clues. If you keep these tips foremost in your mind, you're less likely to fall into traps set by cybercriminals.



Teachers' Retirement System of the City of New York
Public Information Office
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BENEFITS REPORT

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Publications

The following TRS publications were recently updated and are available on our website (www.trsnyc.org ► **Publications**):

- *Investment Portfolios*
- *Earnings After Retirement*
- *TDA Program Summary*
- *TRS Guide to Domestic Relations Orders*

Calendar

July 1, 2022: Effective date of retiree investment election changes received by May 1, 2022 (QPP changes, TDA annuitant changes) or May 31, 2022 (changes for deferred TDA accounts).

July 2022: Mailing of EFT Quarterly Statements and posting of TDA Quarterly Statements for the second quarter of 2022.

September 2022: New York State's 2022 Cost-of-Living Adjustment takes effect. See story on page 3.

October 1, 2022: Effective date of retiree investment election changes received by August 1, 2022 (QPP changes, TDA annuitant changes) or August 31, 2022 (changes for deferred TDA accounts).

October 2022: Mailing of EFT Quarterly Statements and posting of TDA Quarterly Statements for the third quarter of 2022.

October 31, 2022: Deadline for filing RMD elections with TRS. See story on page 5.

Retirement payments are transmitted on the last business day of each month; check with your bank about when funds will be available in your account. Checks are mailed three business days before the end of each month.

TRS offices will be closed to observe official New York City holidays on these dates: **June 20, July 4, September 5, and October 10, 2022.** On Fridays from **July 8** through **September 9**, we will close at 1:00 p.m.

Stay informed between issues of *Benefits Report*. Please follow TRS on social media.

