



479 Versailles Road
Frankfort, KY 40601
800-618-1687

Teachers' Retirement System

RETIRED
MEMBER EDITION

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From the Executive Secretary By Gary L. Harbin, CPA

INSIDE:

How TRS Is Reaching You During COVID-19 Pandemic	2
TRS Receives Full Funding in One-Year Budget	2
Tollesboro Teacher Re-Elected to Board	3
Returning-to-Work Reminders	3
KEHP & MEHP Open Enrollment	4
KEHP Benefits Offered	5
How to Complete the LivingWell Promise	6
Be Careful Before Giving Out Personal Information to People Trying to Sell You Something	6
Turning 65 Webinars Offered	7
Turning 65? How to Get Important Insurance Information When Hitting That Milestone	7
MEHP Benefits Offered	8
Employed and Participating in TRS Insurance?	9
New Contact Information?	10

If 20 years ago, when I started at TRS as executive secretary, you'd have told me that, instead of cutting a cake together, we'd celebrate our 80th anniversary wearing masks; well, that would have piqued my interest, to put it mildly.

But as a result of the global COVID-19 pandemic, we marked the 80th anniversary of the Teachers' Retirement System of the State of Kentucky opening July 1, 1940, with most TRS employees, instead, meeting with members while working from home.

In an odd way, that hard-to-envision scenario helps prove the success of the vision behind the opening of TRS eight decades ago with a \$1 million appropriation. That vision was – and remains – that Kentucky's teachers can rely on a secure retirement regardless of the crisis of the day, year or decade. Through wars, natural disasters, economic upheavals and pandemics of the last 80 years, TRS, now with about \$20 billion in assets, has been there to provide a secure retirement for Kentucky's teachers, including almost a dozen living today who were active teachers on the day the doors opened July 1, 1940. It's proof that pension plans are built to last.

During the current global pandemic, TRS has performed without a hitch, providing all our services to members.

The checks still go out on time. Counseling sessions are by video or phone, and seminars now are webinars. We're still processing retirements and insurance applications. We're still investing in real time. Board meetings are live streamed and conducted by video conferencing.



See From the Executive Secretary, page 2

From the Executive Secretary, from page 1

Beyond that, we've contacted our oldest members directly using mass emails and phone calls to remind them of ways to stay safe and healthy against a disease that preys on senior citizens. That message is echoed in a video on the TRS website that I recorded. The video is on a new website page that summarizes all the changes made because of the virus and ways that members can stay well.

Speaking of investing, while some investors panicked during the pandemic-driven market drop through March, TRS's investment team used that

financial disruption as an opportunity. This calm discipline is proving again to be the correct approach. By the end of April, TRS's investments nearly had rebounded to even for the fiscal year to date. TRS has this ability because funds for retired teachers are invested for a group of people rather than one person. Discipline works.

Stay safe as we all wish your retirement system a happy 80th birthday and look forward to another 80 years of retirement security for Kentucky's teachers.

How TRS Is Reaching You During COVID-19 Pandemic

TRS is using videoconferencing and other electronic forms of communication, including bulk emails, during this time that the office in Frankfort remains closed to visitors. Because health professionals say many TRS members are, by virtue of age and other health conditions, among the most at risk for COVID-19, TRS plans to continue operating this way for the time being to protect members and TRS staff.

Any change would be communicated through TRS's feeds on Twitter and Facebook and the website, including its coronavirus update page: <https://trs.ky.gov/news/coronavirus-response-updates/>.



TRS Receives Full Funding in One-Year Budget



The one-year state budget for the fiscal year that began July 1 provides the full funding for retired teachers' pensions and the state's Shared Responsibility contribution toward single premiums for health insurance.

Should revenue projections be short by 5% or less for the current fiscal year that began July 1, the budget calls for reducing contributions to TRS. This could result in a loss of funding in pension contributions of \$550 million in the current fiscal year and \$572 million in the following fiscal year. Health insurance contributions could be reduced by \$15.7 million in the current year and \$28.5 million the following fiscal year.

Shortfalls of more than 5% would require a special session of the General Assembly.

Tollesboro Teacher Re-Elected to Board



Current teacher trustee Josh Underwood won a second term on the TRS Board of Trustees as a result of this year's members' election.

The four-year term began July 1.

He has served the previous four years on the board's investment, insurance and scholarship committees.

Mr. Underwood has taught science for 19 years in middle and high schools and is currently the physics and aviation teacher at Mason County High School. He earned bachelor's and master's degrees from Morehead State University and a master's from Montana State University – all in science education.

Mr. Underwood also is National Board Certified in physics. He is a past president of the Kentucky Science Teachers Association, a member of the Kentucky Education Association's TALK conference planning committee and a past member of KEA's National Board Certification Jump Start team. Mr. Underwood also received the Kentucky Department of Education's 2015 High School Teacher of the Year award and KEA's Award for Teaching Excellence in 2013.

The Board of Trustees consists of 11 members: seven people elected by the membership (four active teachers, one retiree, two lay trustees); two appointed by the governor with investment experience; the state treasurer; and the state education commissioner.

Returning-to-Work Reminders

As a reminder, changes to return-to-work rules took effect several months ago for anyone who retired or is retiring on or after Jan. 1, 2020.

The changes ensure TRS members are able to make tax-deferred contributions toward retirement and that TRS's policies comply with federal law for retirees returning to work with any employer covered by TRS.

Two of the biggest changes, before a retiree can return to work with a TRS employer, are the required break in service is measured from the date of retirement, not the last day worked, and the break is required even if the new job with a TRS employer will not be a TRS position.

Also new is that retirees returning to work

with any TRS employer must sign – along with the new employer – a form certifying no agreement was made prior to retiring about returning to work. This includes retirees returning to work with a different TRS employer.

Under the new rules, the break in service also now is required for university members seeking to return to work with a TRS employer.

Detailed information is on the TRS website at <https://trs.ky.gov/retired-members/returning-to-work/>. See article on page 9 for health insurance implications.



OPEN ENROLLMENT

KEHP

Under-65 Retirees Who Aren't Medicare-Eligible

Open enrollment for the Kentucky Employees' Health Plan (KEHP) will be Oct. 12-28 for coverage that will be effective Jan. 1, 2021. Those under 65 and not eligible for Medicare will receive detailed information from the KEHP. Watch for that mailing and read all the information before making any decisions about 2021 coverage.

Because of COVID-19, the state Department of Employee Insurance, which oversees the KEHP, decided to hold virtual benefit fairs this year instead of in-person locations across the state. Detailed information about virtual benefit fairs will be included in the open enrollment packet.



MEHP

Over-65 & Medicare-Eligible Retirees

Open enrollment to participate in the Teachers' Retirement System's (TRS) Medicare Eligible Health Plan (MEHP) during 2021 is Oct. 15-Dec. 7.

For those already in the TRS MEHP, no action is needed to continue coverage for 2021. As a reminder, spouses cannot enroll during open enrollment.

Retirees who need to enroll during open enrollment can get an MEHP enrollment form at <https://trs.ky.gov/retired-members/age-65-over/> beginning Oct. 15.

The 2021 MEHP monthly premium is not known yet, but the 2020 MEHP monthly premium is \$224 per person. TRS pays all or a portion of the premium for retirees based on a retiree's entry date into TRS and years of service at retirement. Spouses of TRS retirees pay the full premium.

The 2021 standard Medicare Part B monthly premium, which is paid by retirees and spouses to Social Security, is unknown at this time. But, for reference, the 2020 Part B standard monthly premium is \$144.60.

Remember: if you are enrolled in the TRS MEHP you cannot enroll in another Medicare Advantage plan or another Medicare Part D prescription drug plan without it terminating your TRS MEHP coverage. If you have other coverage through a spouse or other retirement – even if you have not used that coverage – and that plan changes to a Medicare Advantage plan and/or a Medicare Part D prescription drug plan, that will terminate your TRS MEHP coverage. Check to make sure whether any other plan you have is changing for 2021.

The Kentucky Employees' Health Plan (KEHP) has many benefits/services available to TRS retirees covered under the plan, which is for those under 65 and not eligible for Medicare. Most of these benefits are free.

LiveHealth Online Medical, Psychology and Psychiatry – livehealthonline.com or 888-548-3432

LiveHealth Online provides a video visit with a board-certified medical doctor, psychiatrist or therapist for free using a computer (with a web camera), tablet or smartphone. Example of visit topics include cold and flu symptoms, allergies, sinus infections, migraines, upper respiratory infections, bronchitis, anxiety, depression, grief and panic attacks.



StayWell – kehplivingwell.com or 866-746-1316

Wellness platform offers a variety of services and free health coaching for managing weight; preventing injuries and fatigue; improving food choices; reducing stress; and enhancing workouts. Earn rewards by participating in health and wellness activities.

Diabetes Prevention Program (DPP) – 844-206-3728

Free prevention program available to members who have prediabetes.

Value Benefits for Diabetes, COPD and Asthma – [Caremark.com](https://caremark.com) or 866-601-6934

Pharmacy costs have been reduced for most maintenance prescriptions and supplies for treatment of these conditions.

SmartShopper – [Smartshopper.com](https://smartshopper.com) or 855-869-2133

Search for routine medical care and earn rewards on certain procedures.

Why Weight Kentucky – [Anthem.com/kehps](https://anthem.com/kehps) or 844-402-5347

Weight management program that pairs members with an Anthem clinician who will help you reach weight-loss goals.

Tobacco Cessation – [Anthem.com/kehps](https://anthem.com/kehps) or 844-402-5347

KEHP has many resources available, including nicotine replacement therapies for free.

Substance Use Disorder Telephone Support – 855-873-4931

Talk with a clinical expert anytime confidentially about treatment options and help finding doctors or treatment centers.

Rethink – [Rethinkbenefits.com](https://rethinkbenefits.com) or 800-714-9285

Free benefit to support those caring for children and teenagers with learning or behavioral challenges, including autism.

24/7 NurseLine – 877-636-3720

Speak to a nurse and receive accurate health information anytime. Experienced nurses are trained to address common healthcare concerns such as medical triage and education.



It's time to keep your LivingWell Promise for the Kentucky Employees' Health Plan (KEHP). All KEHP plan holders are required to complete an online StayWell health assessment or biometric screening by Aug. 14. (The normal July 1 deadline has been extended because of the coronavirus).

The incentive, available only to retirees in the KEHP, is a premium discount of up to \$480 a year (\$40 a month) in 2021.

Here's how to complete the LivingWell Promise:

How to take the health assessment

Complete the questionnaire at KEHPlivingwell.com. Registration is required. Use your Social Security number as your unique ID to register.

How to get a biometric screening — See Note

NOTE: These options may not be available or advisable while distancing restrictions are in place because of the coronavirus outbreak; the online health assessment is recommended. Three options are provided for completing the screening with a health care provider:

An onsite screening provided by health departments or StayWell (in areas where health department coverage is unavailable).

LabCorp locations offer a biometric screening using a form you download from the StayWell portal. LabCorp sends the screening to StayWell and it will appear on the StayWell platform within 10 business days.

Biometric screening forms can be downloaded from the StayWell portal and used at a variety of locations. Members must send the form to StayWell, and the screening will appear on the StayWell platform within 10 business days.

Keep proof of completion

Keep proof of completion until the completion of the biometric screening or health assessment appears on the StayWell platform. (This can take two weeks.)

Questions

For more information, visit KEHPlivingwell.com to print the biometric screening form or LabCorp voucher. Contact StayWell at 866-746-1316 with any questions.

If you have completed your LivingWell Promise, please disregard this.

Be Careful Before Giving Out Personal Information to People Trying to Sell You Something

Be careful before giving your personal information to callers, including your Medicare and Social Security numbers. Many times people are trying to sell you health care coverage, and signing up for that coverage will terminate your coverage through TRS.

Other sales pitches may be scams. If you have questions about any one of these offers and its potential impact on your TRS coverage, call TRS at 800-618-1687.

Turning 65 Webinars Offered

TRS is hosting webinars in the coming months geared toward the many retirees who find turning 65 to be daunting as they approach Medicare eligibility. Let TRS help with a full presentation and walkthrough on the features and benefits of the TRS Medicare Eligible Health Plan (MEHP).

The webinars, which can be viewed on your computer, are Aug. 20, Sept. 9, Nov. 4 and Dec. 8. Registration, which is required, can be done by calling 800-618-1687, extension 8853, or visiting <https://trs.ky.gov/active-members/seminars-workshops#65> and clicking the appropriate link for the desired webinar date. A video of a recorded version of the presentation also is available at <https://trs.ky.gov/retired-members/turning-65/>.



Turning 65? How to Get Important Insurance Information When Hitting That Milestone

If you are insured through TRS, you will receive a packet about three months before you turn 65 with information on how to ensure you get enrolled in the Medicare Eligible Health Plan (MEHP) provided for TRS retirees who are 65 and older.

If you are not enrolled in insurance coverage through TRS you will not receive this packet. If you would like a copy of the 2020 Turning 65 booklet, it can be obtained on the TRS website at https://trs.ky.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/Turn_65Booklet_YR-2020_FULL-BOOKLET.pdf. Also, reference the article in this edition of the newsletter regarding Turning 65 Webinars available to you.

If you currently are employed and have health insurance coverage through your employer, you are ineligible to enroll in the TRS MEHP until you have ceased working and your employer coverage is set to terminate. Also, if you are a reciprocity retiree and have waived insurance at TRS and enrolled at Kentucky

Retirement Systems (or Judicial Form Retirement System), you can take insurance only in one system. Always make sure you are enrolling in the system where you want coverage.

The MEHP consists of a Medicare Advantage PPO with UnitedHealthcare and a Medicare Part D prescription drug plan with Express Scripts. If you are a TRS retiree, you must have Part B of Medicare to enroll in the TRS MEHP. The monthly premium to be paid by the retiree for the MEHP is based on your entry date and your total years of service credit. Spouses are eligible for the MEHP if they have Medicare Part A and Part B and the TRS retiree is enrolled in TRS health insurance. Spouses pay full premium cost, currently \$224 per month in 2020. This premium is automatically deducted from the TRS retiree's monthly annuity payment. The monthly Medicare Part B premium is paid to Social Security.

Below is a listing of details about services provided to Medicare-eligible retirees. Some of these benefits might be of more interest as retired teachers try to keep safe during the COVID-19 pandemic. Some also have special terms, as described below, to make using them easier during the pandemic.

Renew Rewards Annual Wellness Visit Extended

Your Renew Rewards Annual Wellness Visit deadline, offered by UnitedHealthcare, has been extended to Dec. 31. The visit must be completed and reported by Dec. 31. To learn more about Renew Rewards or to report your completed annual physical or wellness visit, log on to myUHCmedicare.com/rewards or call Renew Rewards Customer Service at 888-219-4602.

Schedule your virtual HouseCalls Visit

UnitedHealthcare now provides HouseCalls visits virtually. HouseCalls uses video technology to connect you with a health care practitioner for up to 60 minutes. This is an easy way to stay on top of your preventive health routine, right at home. This visit is provided to you at no additional cost. Call 866-447-7868 to schedule. Completing a HouseCalls visit earns you a \$50 Visa Reward Card, funded by UnitedHealthcare.

Primary care and specialist office visits out-of-pocket costs waived through September

UnitedHealthcare (UHC) is waiving certain out-of-pocket costs (deductible, copays and coinsurance) for MEHP members through Sept. 30. This means you'll have a \$0 copay for primary care provider (PCP) and specialist physician services, as well as other covered services, until Sept. 30. By lowering the primary care and specialist copays to \$0, along with a \$0 copay for telehealth visits, UHC is trying to make it easier for you to get the care you need when you need it during these unprecedented times. The following sets of examples are governed by these terms and deadlines.

The following services are *eligible* for a \$0 copay:

- Primary care provider (PCP) office visits
- Specialist physician office visits
- Physician assistant or nurse practitioner office visits
- Medicare-covered chiropractic and acupuncture services
- Podiatry services and routine eye and hearing exams
- Physical therapy, occupational therapy and speech therapy
- Cardiac and pulmonary rehabilitation services
- Outpatient mental health and substance abuse visits
- Opioid treatment services

The following services are *not included in the out-of-pocket waiver unless related to COVID-19 testing or treatments*:

- Lab and diagnostic tests (radiological and non-radiological)
- Part B and Part D drugs

See MEHP Benefits, page 9

MEHP Benefits, from page 8

- Durable medical equipment, prosthetics, orthotics and supplies
- Renal dialysis
- Other services not covered by your plan

Copays, coinsurance and deductibles for services in the following settings are not waived:

- Inpatient hospital and outpatient surgery or observation services
- Skilled nursing facilities
- Emergency, urgent and ambulance services

If you need assistance or have questions, call UnitedHealthcare at 844-518-5877.



COVID-19 Support from UnitedHealthcare

Visit www.uhcretiree.com/trs for additional resources including a symptom checker, telehealth information and test site locator. You can also call the UHC Emotional Support Help Line at 866-342-6892, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

KEHP
MEHP

Employed and Participating in TRS Insurance?

Retirees and their spouses who are active in the workforce must drop health insurance coverage through the Teachers' Retirement System if they are eligible for health insurance through their job. If insurance is available through the employer, TRS insurance must be waived regardless of whether the person is in the Kentucky Employees' Health Plan (KEHP) or the Medicare Eligible Health Plan (MEHP).

Additionally, once a retiree or spouse leaves a postretirement job or loses eligibility for the active insurance that came with that job, contact TRS to enroll in its coverage within the qualifying event period (usually 30 days) and provide the required documentation.

Teachers' Retirement System
of the State of Kentucky
479 Versailles Road
Frankfort, Kentucky 40601-3800



New Contact Information?

Keeping your contact information current ensures that you receive important communications from the Teachers' Retirement System, such as annual statements, newsletters, trustee election ballots, payment stubs, tax forms and retiree health insurance updates.

Even if you change your address with the school district where you work (or worked), the school district doesn't report that change to TRS. So, TRS needs to be notified of the change independently by members and retirees.

Besides your physical address, please keep email addresses and telephone numbers up to date.

TRS offers multiple ways to update personal information, including by changing it online using Pathway. Also, members and retirees may mail or fax a signed letter to TRS with your name and TRS ID and the new information.

Finally, a downloadable form also is available from the website. The mailing address is 479 Versailles Rd., Frankfort, KY 40601.

PATHWAY  <https://mss.trs.ky.gov>

 [KyTeachersRS](#)

 facebook.com/KyTeachersRS

 [Website https://trs.ky.gov](https://trs.ky.gov)

 [800-618-1687](tel:800-618-1687)

 info@trs.ky.gov