

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2009**

**SESSION LAW 2009-66
HOUSE BILL 642**

AN ACT TO MAKE TECHNICAL CORRECTIONS AND OTHER CHANGES TO THE STATUTES GOVERNING THE TEACHERS' AND STATE EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM, THE JUDICIAL RETIREMENT SYSTEM, THE LEGISLATIVE RETIREMENT SYSTEM, THE LOCAL GOVERNMENTAL EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM, AND THE FIREMEN'S AND RESCUE SQUAD WORKERS' PENSION FUND.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

SECTION 1.(a) G.S. 135-18.7(d) reads as rewritten:

"(d) This subsection applies to distributions made on or after January 1, 1993. Notwithstanding any other provision of the Plan to the contrary that would otherwise limit a distributee's election under this Article, a distributee may elect, at the time and in the manner prescribed by the Plan administrator, to have any portion of an eligible rollover distribution paid directly to an eligible retirement plan specified by the distributee in a direct rollover. Provided, an eligible rollover distribution is any distribution of all or any portion of the balance to the credit of the distributee, except that an eligible rollover distribution does not include: any distribution that is one of a series of substantially equal periodic payments (not less frequently than annually) made for the life (or life expectancy) of the distributee or the joint lives (or joint life expectancies) of the distributee and the distributee's designated beneficiary, or for a specified period of 10 years or more; any distribution to the extent such distribution is required under section 401(a)(9) of the Code; and the portion of any distribution that is not includible in gross income (determined without regard to the exclusion for net realized appreciation with respect to employer securities). Effective as of January 1, 2002, and notwithstanding the preceding sentence, a portion of a distribution shall not fail to be an eligible rollover distribution merely because the portion consists of after-tax employee contributions which are not includible in gross income. However, such portion may be transferred only to an individual retirement account or annuity described in Section 408(a) or (b) of the Code, or to a qualified defined contribution plan described in Section 401(a) or 403(a) of the Code that agrees to separately account for amounts so transferred, including separately accounting for the portion of such distribution which is includible in gross income and the portion of such distribution which is not so includible. Provided, an eligible retirement plan is an individual retirement account described in section 408(a) of the Code, an individual retirement annuity described in section 408(b) of the Code, an annuity plan described in section 403(a) of the Code, or a qualified trust described in section 401(a) of the Code, that accepts the distributee's eligible rollover distribution. Effective on and after January 1, 2002, an eligible retirement plan shall also mean an annuity contract described in Section 403(b) of the Code and an eligible plan under Section 457(b) of the Code which is maintained by a state, political subdivision of a state, or any agency or instrumentality of a state or political subdivision of a state and which agrees to separately account for amounts transferred into such plan from this Plan. The definition of eligible retirement plan shall also apply in the case of a distribution to surviving spouse, or to a spouse or former spouse who is the alternate payee under a qualified domestic



relations order, as defined in Section 414(p) of the Internal Revenue Code, or a court-ordered equitable distribution of marital property, as provided under G.S. 50-30. Provided, a distributee includes an employee or former employee. Provided further, a direct rollover is a payment by the Plan to the eligible retirement plan specified by the distributee. Effective on and after January 1, 2007, notwithstanding any other provision of this subsection, a nonspouse beneficiary of a deceased member may elect, at the time and in the manner prescribed by the administrator of the Board of Trustees of this Retirement System, to directly roll over any portion of the beneficiary's distribution from the Retirement System; however, such rollover shall conform with the provisions of section 402(c)(11) of the Code."

SECTION 1.(b) G.S. 135-74(d) reads as rewritten:

"(d) This subsection applies to distributions made on or after January 1, 1993. Notwithstanding any other provision of the Plan to the contrary that would otherwise limit a distributee's election under this Article, a distributee may elect, at the time and in the manner prescribed by the Plan administrator, to have any portion of an eligible rollover distribution paid directly to an eligible retirement plan specified by the distributee in a direct rollover. Provided, an eligible rollover distribution is any distribution of all or any portion of the balance to the credit of the distributee, except that an eligible rollover distribution does not include: any distribution that is one of a series of substantially equal periodic payments (not less frequently than annually) made for the life (or life expectancy) of the distributee or the joint lives (or joint life expectancies) of the distributee and the distributee's designated beneficiary, or for a specified period of 10 years or more; any distribution to the extent such distribution is required under section 401(a)(9) of the Code; and the portion of any distribution that is not includible in gross income (determined without regard to the exclusion for net realized appreciation with respect to employer securities). Effective as of January 1, 2002, and notwithstanding the preceding sentence, a portion of a distribution shall not fail to be an eligible rollover distribution merely because the portion consists of after-tax employee contributions which are not includible in gross income. However, such portion may be transferred only to an individual retirement account or annuity described in Section 408(a) or (b) of the Code, or to a qualified defined contribution plan described in Section 401(a) or 403(a) of the Code that agrees to separately account for amounts so transferred, including separately accounting for the portion of such distribution which is includible in gross income and the portion of such distribution which is not so includible. Provided, an eligible retirement plan is an individual retirement account described in section 408(a) of the Code, an individual retirement annuity described in section 408(b) of the Code, an annuity plan described in section 403(a) of the Code, or a qualified trust described in section 401(a) of the Code, that accepts the distributee's eligible rollover distribution. Effective on and after January 1, 2002, an eligible retirement plan shall also mean an annuity contract described in Section 403(b) of the Code and an eligible plan under Section 457(b) of the Code which is maintained by a state, political subdivision of a state, or any agency or instrumentality of a state or political subdivision of a state and which agrees to separately account for amounts transferred into such plan from this Plan. The definition of eligible retirement plan shall also apply in the case of a distribution to surviving spouse, or to a spouse or former spouse who is the alternate payee under a qualified domestic relations order, as defined in Section 414(p) of the Internal Revenue Code, or a court-ordered equitable distribution of marital property, as provided under G.S. 50-30. Provided, a distributee includes an employee or former employee. Provided further, a direct rollover is a payment by the Plan to the eligible retirement plan specified by the distributee. Effective on and after January 1, 2007, notwithstanding any other provision of this subsection, a nonspouse beneficiary of a deceased member may elect, at the time and in the manner prescribed by the administrator of the Board of Trustees of this Retirement System, to directly roll over any portion of the beneficiary's distribution from the Retirement System; however, such rollover shall conform with the provisions of section 402(c)(11) of the Code."

SECTION 1.(c) G.S. 120-4.31(d) reads as rewritten:

"(d) This subsection applies to distributions made on or after January 1, 1993. Notwithstanding any other provision of the Plan to the contrary that would otherwise limit a distributee's election under this Article, a distributee may elect, at the time and in the manner prescribed by the Plan administrator, to have any portion of an eligible rollover distribution paid directly to an eligible retirement plan specified by the distributee in a direct rollover. Provided, an eligible rollover distribution is any distribution of all or any portion of the balance to the credit of the distributee, except that an eligible rollover distribution does not include: any distribution that is one of a series of substantially equal periodic payments (not less frequently than annually) made for the life (or life expectancy) of the distributee or the joint lives (or joint life expectancies) of the distributee and the distributee's designated beneficiary, or for a specified period of 10 years or more; any distribution to the extent such distribution is required under section 401(a)(9) of the Code; and the portion of any distribution that is not includible in gross income (determined without regard to the exclusion for net realized appreciation with respect to employer securities). Effective as of January 1, 2002, and notwithstanding the preceding sentence, a portion of a distribution shall not fail to be an eligible rollover distribution merely because the portion consists of after-tax employee contributions that are not includible in gross income. However, such portion may be transferred only to an individual retirement account or annuity described in Section 408(a) or (b) of the Code, or to a qualified defined contribution plan described in Section 401(a) or 403(a) of the Code that agrees to separately account for amounts so transferred, including separately accounting for the portion of such distribution which is includible in gross income and the portion of such distribution which is not so includible. Provided, an eligible retirement plan is an individual retirement account described in section 408(a) of the Code, an individual retirement annuity described in section 408(b) of the Code, an annuity plan described in section 403(a) of the Code, or a qualified trust described in section 401(a) of the Code, that accepts the distributee's eligible rollover distribution. Effective on and after January 1, 2002, an eligible retirement plan shall also mean an annuity contract described in Section 403(b) of the Code and an eligible plan under Section 457(b) of the Code which is maintained by a state, political subdivision of a state, or any agency or instrumentality of a state or political subdivision of a state and which agrees to separately account for amounts transferred into such plan from this Plan. The definition of eligible retirement plan shall also apply in the case of a distribution to surviving spouse, or to a spouse or former spouse who is the alternate payee under a qualified domestic relations order, as defined in Section 414(p) of the Internal Revenue Code, or a court-ordered equitable distribution of marital property, as provided under G.S. 50-30. Provided, a distributee includes an employee or former employee. Provided further, a direct rollover is a payment by the Plan to the eligible retirement plan specified by the distributee. Effective on and after January 1, 2007, notwithstanding any other provision of this subsection, a nonspouse beneficiary of a deceased member may elect, at the time and in the manner prescribed by the administrator of the Board of Trustees of this Retirement System, to directly roll over any portion of the beneficiary's distribution from the Retirement System; however, such rollover shall conform with the provisions of section 402(c)(11) of the Code."

SECTION 1.(d) G.S. 128-38.2(d) reads as rewritten:

"(d) This subsection applies to distributions made on or after January 1, 1993. Notwithstanding any other provision of the Plan to the contrary that would otherwise limit a distributee's election under this Article, a distributee may elect, at the time and in the manner prescribed by the Plan administrator, to have any portion of an eligible rollover distribution paid directly to an eligible retirement plan specified by the distributee in a direct rollover. Provided, an eligible rollover distribution is any distribution of all or any portion of the balance to the credit of the distributee, except that an eligible rollover distribution does not include: any distribution that is one of a series of substantially equal periodic payments (not less frequently

than annually) made for the life (or life expectancy) of the distributee or the joint lives (or joint life expectancies) of the distributee and the distributee's designated beneficiary, or for a specified period of 10 years or more; any distribution to the extent such distribution is required under section 401(a)(9) of the Code; and the portion of any distribution that is not includible in gross income (determined without regard to the exclusion for net realized appreciation with respect to employer securities). Effective as of January 1, 2002, and notwithstanding the preceding sentence, a portion of a distribution shall not fail to be an eligible rollover distribution merely because the portion consists of after-tax employee contributions which are not includible in gross income. However, such portion may be transferred only to an individual retirement account or annuity described in Section 408(a) or (b) of the Code, or to a qualified defined contribution plan described in Section 401(a) or 403(a) of the Code that agrees to separately account for amounts so transferred, including separately accounting for the portion of such distribution which is includible in gross income and the portion of such distribution which is not so includible. Provided, an eligible retirement plan is an individual retirement account described in section 408(a) of the Code, an individual retirement annuity described in section 408(b) of the Code, an annuity plan described in section 403(a) of the Code, or a qualified trust described in section 401(a) of the Code, that accepts the distributee's eligible rollover distribution. Effective on and after January 1, 2002, an eligible retirement plan shall also mean an annuity contract described in Section 403(b) of the Code and an eligible plan under Section 457(b) of the Code which is maintained by a state, political subdivision of a state, or any agency or instrumentality of a state or political subdivision of a state and which agrees to separately account for amounts transferred into such plan from this Plan. The definition of eligible retirement plan shall also apply in the case of a distribution to surviving spouse, or to a spouse or former spouse who is the alternate payee under a qualified domestic relations order, as defined in Section 414(p) of the Internal Revenue Code, or a court-ordered equitable distribution of marital property, as provided under G.S. 50-30. Provided, a distributee includes an employee or former employee. Provided further, a direct rollover is a payment by the Plan to the eligible retirement plan specified by the distributee. Effective on and after January 1, 2007, notwithstanding any other provision of this subsection, a nonspouse beneficiary of a deceased member may elect, at the time and in the manner prescribed by the administrator of the Board of Trustees of this Retirement System, to directly roll over any portion of the beneficiary's distribution from the Retirement System; however, such rollover shall conform with the provisions of section 402(c)(11) of the Code."

SECTION 2.(a) G.S. 128-21(11) reads as rewritten:

"(11) "Employer" shall mean any county, incorporated city or town, the board of alcoholic control of any county or incorporated city or town, the North Carolina League of Municipalities, and the State Association of County Commissioners. "Employer" shall also mean any separate, juristic political subdivision of the State as may be approved by the Board of Trustees upon the advice of the Attorney General. ~~"Employer" also means any fire department that serves a city or county or any part of a city or county and that is supported in whole or in part by municipal or county funds."~~

SECTION 2.(b) G.S. 58-86-25 reads as rewritten:

"§ 58-86-25. "Eligible firemen" defined; determination and certification of volunteers meeting qualifications.

"Eligible firemen" shall mean all firemen of the State of North Carolina or any political subdivision thereof, including those performing such functions in the protection of life and property through fire fighting within a county or city governmental unit and so certified to the Commissioner of Insurance by the governing body thereof, and who belong to a bona fide fire department which, as determined by the Commissioner, is classified as not less than class "9" or class "A" and "AA" departments in accordance with rating methods, schedules,

classifications, underwriting rules, bylaws or regulations effective or applied with respect to the establishment of rates or premiums used or charged pursuant to Article 36 or 40 of this Chapter or by such other reasonable methods as the Commissioner may determine, and which operates fire apparatus and equipment of the value of five thousand dollars (\$5,000) or more, and said fire department holds drills and meetings not less than four hours monthly and said firemen attend at least 36 hours of all drills and meetings in each calendar year. "Eligible firemen" shall also mean an employee of a county whose sole duty is to act as fire marshal, deputy fire marshal, assistant fire marshal, or firefighter of the county, provided the board of county commissioners of that county certifies the employee's attendance at no less than 36 hours of all drills and meetings in each calendar year. "Eligible firemen" shall also mean those persons meeting the other qualifications of this section, not exceeding 25 volunteer firemen plus one additional volunteer fireman per 100 population in the area served by their respective departments. Each department shall annually determine and report the names of those firemen meeting the eligibility qualifications of this section to its respective governing body, which upon determination of the validity and accuracy of the qualification shall promptly certify the list to the North Carolina State Firemen's Association. The Firemen's Association shall provide a list of those persons meeting the eligibility requirements of this section to the State Treasurer by ~~July 1~~ January 31 of each year. For the purposes of the preceding sentence, the governing body of a fire department operated: by a county is the county board of commissioners; by a city is the city council; by a sanitary district is the sanitary district board; by a corporation, whether profit or nonprofit, is the corporation's board of directors; and by any other entity is that group designated by the board."

SECTION 2.(c) G.S. 58-86-30 reads as rewritten:

"§ 58-86-30. "Eligible rescue squad worker" defined; determination and certification of eligibility.

"Eligible rescue squad worker" means a person who is a member of a rescue or emergency medical services squad that is eligible for membership in the North Carolina Association of Rescue and Emergency Medical Services, Inc., and who has attended a minimum of 36 hours of training and meetings in the last calendar year. Each rescue or emergency medical services squad eligible for membership in the North Carolina Association of Rescue and Emergency Medical Services, Inc., must file a roster certified by the secretary of the association of those rescue or emergency medical services squad workers meeting the requirements of this section with the State Treasurer by ~~January 1~~ January 31 of each calendar year.

"Eligible rescue squad worker" does not mean "eligible fireman" as defined by G.S. 58-86-25, nor may an "eligible rescue squad worker" qualify also as an "eligible fireman" in order to receive double benefits available under this Article."

SECTION 2.(d) G.S. 58-86-35 reads as rewritten:

"§ 58-86-35. Firemen's application for membership in fund; monthly payments by members; payments credited to separate accounts of members; termination of membership.

Those firemen who are eligible pursuant to G.S. 58-86-25 may make application for membership to the board. Each fireman upon becoming a member of the fund shall pay the director of the fund the sum of ten dollars (\$10.00) per ~~month.~~ month; each payment shall be made no later than 90 days after the end of the calendar year in which the month occurred. The monthly payments shall be credited to the separate account of the member and shall be kept by the custodian so it is available for payment on withdrawal from membership or retirement.

A member may elect to terminate membership in the fund at anytime and request the refund of payments previously made to the fund. However, a member's delinquency in making the monthly payments required by this section does not result in the termination of membership without such an election by the member."

SECTION 2.(e) G.S. 58-86-40 reads as rewritten:

"§ 58-86-40. Rescue squad worker's application for membership in funds; monthly payments by members; payments credited to separate accounts of members; termination of membership.

Those rescue squad workers eligible pursuant to G.S. 58-86-30 may apply to the board for membership. Each eligible rescue squad worker upon becoming a member shall pay the director of the fund the sum of ten dollars (\$10.00) per ~~month~~. month; each payment shall be made no later than 90 days after the end of the calendar year in which the month occurred. The monthly payments shall be credited to the separate account of the member and shall be kept by the custodian so it is available for payment on withdrawal from membership or retirement.

A member may elect to terminate membership in the fund at anytime and request the refund of payments previously made to the fund. However, a member's delinquency in making the monthly payments required by this section does not result in the termination of membership without such an election by the member."

SECTION 2.(f) G.S. 58-86-45(b) reads as rewritten:

"(b) An eligible fireman or rescue squad worker who is not yet 35 years old ~~and has not previously elected to become a member~~ may apply to the board of trustees for membership in the fund at any time. Upon becoming a member, the worker ~~must~~ may make a lump sum payment of ten dollars (\$10.00) per month retroactively to the time the worker first became eligible to become a member, plus interest at an annual rate to be set by the board for each year of retroactive payments. Upon making this lump sum payment, the worker shall be given credit for all prior service in the same manner as if the worker had applied for membership upon first becoming eligible.

A member who is not yet 35 years old, ~~who applied for membership after first becoming eligible, and who did not receive credit for prior service~~ old may receive credit for the prior service upon making a lump sum payment of ten dollars (\$10.00) for each month since the worker first became eligible, plus interest at an annual rate to be set by the board for each year of retroactive payments. Upon making this lump sum payment, the date of membership shall be the same as if the worker had applied for membership upon first becoming eligible."

SECTION 2.(g) G.S. 58-86-50 is repealed.

SECTION 2.(h) G.S. 58-86-60 reads as rewritten:

"§ 58-86-60. Payments in lump sums.

The board shall direct payment in lump sums from the fund in the following cases:

- (1) To any fireman or rescue squad worker upon the attaining of the age of 55 years, who, for any reason, is not qualified to receive the monthly retirement pension and who was enrolled as a member of the fund, an amount equal to the amount paid into the fund by him. This provision shall not be construed to preclude any active fireman or rescue squad worker from completing the requisite number of years of active service after attaining the age of 55 years necessary to entitle him to the pension.
- (2) If any fireman or rescue squad worker dies before attaining the age at which a pension is payable to him under the provisions of this Article, there shall be paid to his widow, or if there be no widow, to the person responsible for his child or children, or if there be no widow or children, then to his heirs at law as may be determined by the board or to his estate, if it is administered and there are no heirs, an amount equal to the amount paid into the ~~fund~~ member's separate account by or on behalf of the said fireman or rescue squad worker.
- (3) If any fireman or rescue squad worker dies after beginning to receive the pension payable to him by this Article, and before receiving an amount equal to the amount paid into the fund by him, there shall be paid to his widow, or if there be no widow, then to the person responsible for his child or children,

or if there be no widow or children, then to his heirs at law as may be determined by the board or to his estate, if it is administered and there are no heirs, an amount equal to the difference between the amount paid into the ~~fund-member's separate account by or on behalf of~~ the said fireman or rescue squad worker and the amount received by him as a pensioner.

- (4) Any member withdrawing from the fund shall, upon proper application, be paid all moneys the individual contributed to the fund without accumulated earnings on the payments after the time they were ~~made less an administrative fee equal to the lesser of the amount the individual contributed to the fund or twenty five dollars (\$25.00). The administrative fees collected by the fund shall be retained by the Board to defray administrative expenses, including salaries.~~ made. Notwithstanding the foregoing, if any person, firm, corporation, or other entity has made contributions on behalf of a member and that member withdraws from the fund, the person, firm, corporation, or other entity shall be entitled to a refund equal to the amount of contributions made by them after the Board has been notified of the contributor's desire to be refunded its contributions upon the member's withdrawal. ~~Any refunds to a contributor other than a member shall also be subject to the twenty five dollar (\$25.00) administrative fee. If a refund is to be shared by a member and another party the administrative fee shall be applied to each portion on a pro rata basis."~~

SECTION 3.(a) G.S. 135-5(a)(3) reads as rewritten:

- "(3) Any member who was in service October 8, 1981, who had attained 60 years of age, may retire upon written application to the Board of Trustees setting forth at what time, as of the first day of a calendar month, not less than one day nor more than ~~90~~ 120 days subsequent to the execution and filing thereof, he desires to be retired."

SECTION 3.(b) G.S. 135-5(a)(4) reads as rewritten:

- "(4) Any member who is a law-enforcement officer, and who attains age 50 and completes 15 or more years of creditable service in this capacity or who attains age 55 and completes five or more years of creditable service in this capacity, may retire upon written application to the Board of Trustees setting forth at what time, as of the first day of a calendar month, not less than one day nor more than ~~90~~ 120 days subsequent to the execution and filing thereof, he desires to be retired; Provided, also, any member who has met the conditions herein required but does not retire, and later becomes a teacher or an employee other than as a law-enforcement officer shall continue to have the right to commence retirement."

SECTION 3.(c) G.S. 135-5(a1) reads as rewritten:

"(a1) Early Service Retirement Benefits. – Any member may retire and receive a reduced retirement allowance upon written application to the Board of Trustees setting forth at what time, as of the first day of a calendar month, not less than one day nor more than ~~90~~ 120 days subsequent to the execution of and filing thereof, he desires to be retired: Provided, that the said member at the time so specified for his retirement shall have attained the age of 50 years and have at least 20 years of creditable service."

SECTION 3.(d) G.S. 135-5(c) reads as rewritten:

"(c) Disability Retirement Benefits of Members Leaving Service Prior to January 1, 1988. – The provisions of this subsection shall not be applicable to members in service on or after January 1, 1988. Upon the application of a member or of his employer, any member who has had five or more years of creditable service may be retired by the Board of Trustees, on the first day of any calendar month, not less than one day nor more than ~~90~~ 120 days next

following the date of filing such application, on a disability retirement allowance: Provided, that the medical board, after a medical examination of such member, shall certify that such member is mentally or physically incapacitated for the further performance of duty, that such incapacity was incurred at the time of active employment and has been continuous thereafter, that such incapacity is likely to be permanent, and that such member should be retired; Provided further the medical board shall determine if the member is able to engage in gainful employment and, if so, the member may still be retired and the disability retirement allowance as a result thereof shall be reduced as in subsection (e) below. Provided further, that the medical board shall not certify any member as disabled who:

- (1) Applies for disability retirement based upon a mental or physical incapacity which existed when the member first established membership in the system; or
- (2) Is in receipt of any payments on account of the same disability which existed when the member first established membership in the system.

The Board of Trustees shall require each employee upon enrolling in the retirement system to provide information on the membership application concerning any mental or physical incapacities existing at the time the member enrolls.

Supplemental disability benefits heretofore provided are hereby made a permanent part of disability benefits after age 65, and shall not be discontinued at age 65.

Notwithstanding the requirement of five or more years of creditable service to the contrary, a member who is a law-enforcement officer and who has had one year or more of creditable service and becomes incapacitated for duty as the natural and proximate result of an accident occurring while in the actual performance of duty, and meets all other requirements for disability retirement benefits, may be retired by the Board of Trustees on a disability retirement allowance.

Notwithstanding the foregoing to the contrary, any beneficiary who commenced retirement with an early or service retirement benefit has the right, within three years of his retirement, to convert to an allowance with disability retirement benefits without modification of any election of optional allowance previously made; provided, the beneficiary presents clear and convincing evidence that the beneficiary would have met all applicable requirements for disability retirement benefits while still in service as a member. The allowance on account of disability retirement benefits to the beneficiary shall be retroactive to the effective date of early or service retirement.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, the surviving designated beneficiary of a deceased member who met all other requirements for disability retirement benefits, except whose death occurred before the first day of the calendar month in which the member's disability retirement allowance was to be due and payable, may elect to receive the reduced retirement allowance provided by a fifty percent (50%) joint and survivor payment option in lieu of a return of accumulated contributions, provided the following conditions apply:

- (1) The member had designated as the principal beneficiary, to receive a return of accumulated contributions at the time of his death, one and only one person, and
- (2) The member had not instructed the Board of Trustees in writing that he did not wish the provision of this subsection to apply."

SECTION 3.(e) G.S. 135-57(d) reads as rewritten:

"(d) Any member who was in service October 8, 1981, who had attained 50 years of age, may retire upon written application to the board of trustees setting forth at what time, as of the first day of a calendar month, not less than one day nor more than ~~90~~ 120 days subsequent to the execution and filing thereof, he desires to be retired."

SECTION 3.(f) G.S. 135-59(a) reads as rewritten:

"(a) Upon application by or on behalf of the member, any member in service who has completed five or more years of creditable service and who has not attained his sixty-fifth birthday may be retired by the Board of Trustees, on the first day of any calendar month, not less than one day nor more than ~~90~~ 120 days next following the date of filing such application, on a disability retirement allowance; provided, that the medical board, after a medical examination of such member, shall certify that such member is mentally or physically incapacitated for the further performance of duty, that such incapacity was incurred at the time of active employment and has been continuous thereafter, that such incapacity is likely to be permanent, and that such member should be retired; and, provided further, that if a member is removed by the Supreme Court for mental or physical incapacity under the provisions of G.S. 7A-376, no action is required by the medical board under this section and, provided further, the medical board shall determine if the member is able to engage in gainful employment and, if so, the member shall still be retired and the disability retirement allowance as a result thereof shall be reduced as in G.S. 135-60(d). Provided further, that the medical board shall not certify any member as disabled who:

- (1) Applies for disability retirement based upon a mental or physical incapacity which existed when the member first established membership in the system; or
- (2) Is in receipt of any payments on account of the same disability which existed when the member first established membership in the system.

The Board of Trustees shall require each employee upon enrolling in the Retirement System to provide information on the membership application concerning any mental or physical incapacities existing at the time the member enrolls.

Notwithstanding the foregoing to the contrary, any beneficiary who commenced retirement with an early or service retirement benefit has the right, within three years of this retirement, to convert to an allowance with disability retirement benefits without modification of any election of optional allowance previously made; provided, the beneficiary presents clear and convincing evidence that the beneficiary would have met all applicable requirements for disability retirement benefits while still in service as a member. The allowance on account of disability retirement benefits to the beneficiary shall be retroactive to the effective date of early or service retirement."

SECTION 3.(g) G.S. 128-24(4) reads as rewritten:

- "(4) The provisions of this subdivision (4) shall apply to any member whose retirement became effective prior to July 1, 1965, and became entitled to benefits hereunder in accordance with the provisions hereof. Such benefits shall be computed in accordance with the provisions of G.S. 128-27(b1) as in effect at the date of such separation from service.
- a. Notwithstanding any other provision of this Chapter, any member who separates from service prior to the time he shall have attained the age of 60 years, or if a uniformed policeman or fireman prior to the time he shall have attained the age of 55 years, for any reason other than death or retirement for disability as provided in G.S. 128-27(c), after completing 20 or more years of creditable service, and who leaves his total accumulated contributions in the Retirement System, shall have the right to retire on a deferred retirement allowance upon the date he shall have attained the age of 60 years, or if a uniformed policeman or fireman upon the date he shall have attained the age of 55 years; provided that such member may retire only upon written application to the Board of Trustees setting forth at what time, not less than 30 days nor more than ~~90~~ 120 days next following the date of filing such application, he desires to

be retired. Such deferred retirement allowance shall be computed in accordance with the provisions of G.S. 128-27(b), paragraphs (1), (2) and (3).

- b. In lieu of the benefits provided in paragraph a of this subdivision (4), any member who separates from service prior to the time he shall have attained the age of 60 years, or if a uniformed policeman or fireman prior to the time he shall have attained the age of 55 years, for any reason other than death or retirement for disability as provided in G.S. 128-27(c), after completing 30 or more years of creditable service, and who leaves his total accumulated contributions in the Retirement System, may elect to retire on an early retirement allowance; provided that such a member may so retire only upon written application to the Board of Trustees setting forth at what time, not less than 30 days nor more than ~~90~~ 120 days next following the date of filing such application, he desires to be retired; provided further that such application shall be duly filed within 60 days following the date of such separation. Such early retirement allowance so elected shall be the actuarial equivalent of the deferred retirement allowance otherwise payable at the attainment of age 60 years, or if a uniformed policeman or fireman at the attainment of age 55 years, upon proper application therefor.
- c. Should an employee who retired on an early or service retirement allowance be restored to service prior to the time he shall have attained the age of 62 years, or if a uniformed policeman or fireman prior to the time he shall have attained the age of 55 years, his allowance shall cease, he shall again become a member of the Retirement System, and he shall contribute thereafter at the uniform contribution rate for his class member. Upon his subsequent retirement, he shall be entitled to an allowance not less than the allowance described in 1 below reduced by the amount in 2 below.
 - 1. The allowance to which he would have been entitled if he were retiring for the first time, calculated on the basis of his total creditable service represented by the sum of his creditable service at the time of his first retirement, and his creditable service after he was restored to service.
 - 2. The actuarial equivalent of the retirement benefits he previously received.
- d. Should an employee who retired on an early or service retirement allowance be restored to service after the attainment of the age of 62 years, his retirement allowance shall be reduced to the extent necessary (if any) so that the sum of the retirement allowance at the time of retirement and earnings from employment by a unit of the Retirement System for any year (beginning January 1 and ending December 31) will not exceed the member's compensation received for the 12 months of service prior to retirement. Provided, however, that under no circumstances will the member's retirement allowance be reduced below the amount of his annuity as defined in G.S. 128-21(3)."

SECTION 3.(h) G.S. 128-24(5) reads as rewritten:

"(5) The provisions of this subdivision (5) shall apply to any member whose membership is terminated on or after July 1, 1965, and who becomes entitled to benefits hereunder in accordance with the provisions hereof.

a. Notwithstanding any other provision of this Chapter, any member who separates from service prior to the attainment of the age of 60 years for any reason other than death or retirement for disability as provided in G.S. 128-27(c), after completing 15 or more years of creditable service, and who leaves his total accumulated contributions in said System shall have the right to retire on a deferred retirement allowance upon attaining the age of 60 years; provided that such member may retire only upon written application to the Board of Trustees setting forth at what time, not less than one day nor more than ~~90~~ 120 days subsequent to the execution and filing thereof, he desires to be retired; and further provided that in the case of a member who so separates from service on or after July 1, 1967, the aforesated requirement of 15 or more years of creditable service shall be reduced to 12 or more years of creditable service; and further provided that in the case of a member who so separates from service on or after July 1, 1971, or whose account is active on July 1, 1971, the aforesated requirement of 12 or more years of creditable service shall be reduced to five or more years of creditable service. Such deferred retirement allowance shall be computed in accordance with the service retirement provisions of this Article pertaining to a member who is not a law enforcement officer or eligible former law enforcement officer.

b. In lieu of the benefits provided in paragraph a of this subdivision, any member who separates from service prior to the attainment of the age of 60 years, for any reason other than death or retirement for disability as provided in G.S. 128-27(c), after completing 20 or more years of creditable service, and who leaves his total accumulated contributions in said System may elect to retire on an early retirement allowance upon attaining the age of 50 years or at any time thereafter; provided that such member may so retire only upon written application to the Board of Trustees setting forth at what time, not less than one day nor more than ~~90~~ 120 days subsequent to the execution and filing thereof, he desires to be retired. Such early retirement allowance so elected shall be equal to the deferred retirement allowance otherwise payable at the attainment of the age of 60 years reduced by the percentage thereof indicated below.

Age at Retirement	Percentage Reduction
59	7
58	14
57	20
56	25
55	30
54	35
53	39
52	43
51	46
50	50

- b1. In lieu of the benefits provided in paragraphs a and b of this subdivision, any member who is a law enforcement officer at the time of separation from service prior to the attainment of the age of 50 years, for any reason other than death or disability as provided in this Article, after completing 15 or more years of creditable service in this capacity immediately prior to separation from service, and who leaves his total accumulated contributions in this System, may elect to retire on a deferred early retirement allowance upon attaining the age of 50 years or at any time thereafter; provided, that the member may commence retirement only upon written application to the Board of Trustees setting forth at what time, as of the first day of a calendar month, not less than one day nor more than ~~90~~ 120 days subsequent to the execution and filing thereof, he desires to commence retirement. The deferred early retirement allowance shall be computed in accordance with the service retirement provisions of this Article pertaining to law enforcement officers.
- b2. In lieu of the benefits provided in paragraphs a and b of this subdivision, any member who is a law enforcement officer at the time of separation from service prior to the attainment of the age of 55 years, for any reason other than death or disability as provided in this Article, after completing five or more years of creditable service in this capacity immediately prior to separation from service, and who leaves his total accumulated contributions in this System may elect to retire on a deferred service retirement allowance upon attaining the age of 55 years or at any time thereafter; provided, that the member may commence retirement only upon written application to the Board of Trustees setting forth at what time, as of the first day of a calendar month not less than one day nor more than ~~90~~ 120 days subsequent to the execution and filing thereof, he desires to commence retirement. The deferred service retirement allowance shall be computed in accordance with the service retirement provisions of this Article pertaining to law enforcement officers.
- b3. Deferred retirement allowance of members retiring on or after July 1, 1995. – In lieu of the benefits provided in paragraphs a. and b. of this subdivision, any member who separates from service prior to attainment of age 60 years, after completing 20 or more years of creditable service, and who leaves his total accumulated contributions in said System, may elect to retire on a deferred retirement allowance upon attaining the age of 50 years or any time thereafter; provided that such member may so retire only upon written application to the Board of Trustees setting forth at what time, not less than one day nor more than ~~90~~ 120 days subsequent to the execution and filing thereof, he desires to be retired. Such deferred retirement allowance shall be computed in accordance with the service retirement provisions of this Article pertaining to a member who is not a law enforcement officer or an eligible former law enforcement officer.
- c. Should a beneficiary who retired on an early or service retirement allowance be reemployed by, or otherwise engaged to perform services for, an employer participating in the Retirement System on a part-time, temporary, interim, or on fee-for-service basis, whether

contractual or otherwise, and if such beneficiary earns an amount during the 12-month period immediately following the effective date of retirement or in any calendar year which exceeds fifty percent (50%) of the reported compensation, excluding terminal payments, during the 12 months of service preceding the effective date of retirement, or twenty thousand dollars (\$20,000), whichever is greater, as hereinafter indexed, then the retirement allowance shall be suspended as of the first day of the month following the month in which the reemployment earnings exceed the amount above, for the balance of the calendar year, except when the reemployment earnings exceed the amount above in the month of December, in which case the retirement allowance shall not be suspended. The retirement allowance of the beneficiary shall be reinstated as of January 1 of each year following suspension. The amount that may be earned before suspension shall be increased on January 1 of each year by the ratio of the Consumer Price Index to the Index one year earlier, calculated to the nearest tenth of a percent (1/10 of 1%).

- d. Should a beneficiary who retired on an early or service retirement allowance be restored to service as an employee, then the retirement allowance shall cease as of the first day of the month following the month in which the beneficiary is restored to service and the beneficiary shall become a member of the Retirement System and shall contribute thereafter as allowed by law at the uniform contribution payable by all members.

Upon his subsequent retirement, he shall be paid a retirement allowance determined as follows:

1. For a member who earns at least three years' membership service after restoration to service, the retirement allowance shall be computed on the basis of his compensation and service before and after the period of prior retirement without restriction; provided, that if the prior allowance was based on a social security leveling payment option, the allowance shall be adjusted actuarially for the difference between the amount received under the optional payment and what would have been paid if the retirement allowance had been paid without optional modification.
2. For a member who does not earn three years' membership service after restoration to service, the retirement allowance shall be equal to the sum of the retirement allowance to which he would have been entitled had he not been restored to service, without modification of the election of an optional allowance previously made, and the retirement allowance that results from service earned since being restored to service; provided, that if the prior retirement allowance was based on a social security leveling payment option, the prior allowance shall be adjusted actuarially for the difference between the amount that would have been paid for each month had the payment not been suspended and what would have been paid if the retirement allowance had been paid without optional modification."

SECTION 3.(i) G.S. 128-27(a) reads as rewritten:

"(a) Service Retirement Benefits. –

- (1) Any member may retire upon written application to the Board of Trustees setting forth at what time, as of the first day of a calendar month, not less than one day nor more than 120 days subsequent to the execution and filing thereof, he desires to be retired: Provided, that the said member at the time so specified for his retirement shall have attained the age of 60 years and have at least five years of creditable service or shall have completed 30 years of creditable service, or if a fireman, he shall have attained the age of 55 years and have at least five years of creditable service.
- (2) Repealed by Session Laws 1983 (Regular Session, 1984), c. 1019, s. 1.
- (3) Repealed by Session Laws 1971, c. 325, s. 12.
- (4) Any member who was in service October 8, 1981, who had attained 60 years of age, may retire upon written application to the Board of Trustees setting forth at what time, as of the first day of a calendar month, not less than one day nor more than ~~90~~ 120 days subsequent to the execution and filing thereof, he desires to be retired.
- (5) Any member who is a law enforcement officer, and who attains age 50 and completes 15 or more years of creditable service in this capacity or who attains age 55 and completes five or more years of creditable service in this capacity, may retire upon written application to the Board of Trustees setting forth at what time, as of the first day of a calendar month, not less than one day nor more than ~~90~~ 120 days subsequent to the execution and filing thereof, he desires to be retired; provided, also, any member who has met the conditions required by this subdivision but does not retire, and later becomes an employee other than as a law enforcement officer, continues to have the right to commence retirement."

SECTION 3.(j) G.S. 128-27(a1) reads as rewritten:

"(a1) Early Service Retirement Benefits. – Any member may retire and receive a reduced retirement allowance upon written application to the Board of Trustees setting forth at what time, as of the first day of a calendar month, not less than one day nor more than ~~90~~ 120 days subsequent to the execution and filing thereof, he desires to be retired: Provided, that the said member at the time so specified for his retirement shall have attained the age of 50 years and have at least 20 years of creditable service."

SECTION 3.(k) G.S. 128-27(c) reads as rewritten:

"(c) Disability Retirement Benefits. – Upon the application of a member or of his employer, any member who has had five or more years of creditable service may be retired by the Board of Trustees, on the first day of any calendar month, not less than one day nor more than ~~90~~ 120 days next following the date of filing such application, on a disability retirement allowance: Provided, that the medical board, after a medical examination of such member, shall certify that such member is mentally or physically incapacitated for the further performance of duty, that such incapacity was incurred at the time of active employment and has been continuous thereafter, that such incapacity is likely to be permanent, and that such member should be retired; Provided further the medical board shall determine if the member is able to engage in gainful employment and, if so, the member may still be retired and the disability retirement allowance as a result thereof shall be reduced as in subsection (e) below. Provided further, that the Medical Board shall not certify any member as disabled who:

- (1) Applies for disability retirement based upon a mental or physical incapacity which existed when the member first established membership in the system; or
- (2) Is in receipt of any payments on account of the same disability which existed when the member first established membership in the system.

The Board of Trustees shall require each employee upon enrolling in the retirement system to provide information on the membership application concerning any mental or physical incapacities existing at the time the member enrolls.

Notwithstanding the requirement of five or more years of creditable service to the contrary, a member who is a law enforcement officer or a fireman as defined in G.S. 58-86-25 or rescue squad worker as defined in G.S. 58-86-30 and who has had one year or more of creditable service and becomes incapacitated for duty as the natural and proximate result of an accident occurring while in the actual performance of duty, and meets all other requirements for disability retirement benefits, may be retired by the Board of Trustees on a disability retirement allowance.

Notwithstanding the foregoing to the contrary, any beneficiary who commenced retirement with an early or service retirement benefit has the right, within three years of his retirement, to convert to an allowance with disability retirement benefits without modification of any election of optional allowance previously made; provided, the beneficiary would have met all applicable requirements for disability retirement benefits while still in service as a member. The allowance on account of disability retirement benefits to the beneficiary shall be retroactive to the effective date of early or service retirement.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, effective April 1, 1991, the surviving designated beneficiary of a deceased member who met all other requirements for disability retirement benefits, except whose death occurred before the first day of the calendar month in which the member's disability retirement allowance was to be due and payable, may elect to receive the reduced retirement allowance provided by a one hundred percent (100%) joint and survivor payment option in lieu of a return of accumulated contributions, provided the following conditions apply:

- (1) The member had designated as the principal beneficiary, to receive a return of accumulated contributions at the time of his death, one and only one person, and
- (2) The member had not instructed the Board of Trustees in writing that he did not wish the provision of this subsection to apply."

SECTION 3.(I) G.S. 120-4.22(a) reads as rewritten:

"(a) Eligibility; Application. – Upon application by or on behalf of the member, any member in service who has completed at least five years of creditable service and who has not reached his 60th birthday may, after medical certification, be retired on a disability retirement allowance by the Board of Trustees on the first day of the particular calendar month designated by the applicant. The designated date shall be no less than one day nor more than ~~90~~ 120 days from the filing of the application."

SECTION 4.(a) G.S. 128-32.1 reads as rewritten:

"§ 128-32.1. Failure to respond.

If a member fails to respond in any way within 90 days after preliminary option figures and ~~Form 6-E, Election of Benefits,~~ the Form 6-E are mailed, ~~the Form 6, Application for Service, Early, or Disability Retirement,~~ the Form 6 shall be null and void; the retirement system shall not be liable for any benefits due on account of the voided application, and a new application must be filed establishing a subsequent effective date of retirement. If an applicant for disability retirement fails to furnish requested additional medical information within 90 days following such request, the application shall be declared null and void under the same conditions outlined above, unless the applicant is eligible for early or service retirement in which case the application shall be processed accordingly, using the same effective date as would have been used had the application for disability retirement been approved. The Director of the Retirement Systems Division, acting on behalf of the Board of Trustees, may extend the 90-day limitation provided for in this section when a member has suffered incapacitation such that a reasonable person would not have expected the member to be able to complete the

required paperwork within the regular deadline, or when an omission by the Retirement Systems Division prevents the member from having sufficient time to meet the regular deadline."

SECTION 4.(b) G.S. 135-10.1 reads as rewritten:

"§ 135-10.1. Failure to respond.

If a member fails to respond in any way within 90 days after preliminary option figures and ~~Form 6-E, Election of Benefits, the Form 6-E~~ are mailed, ~~the Form 6, Application for Service, Early or Disability Retirement, the Form 6~~ shall be null and void; the retirement system shall not be liable for any benefits due on account of the voided application, and a new application must be filed establishing a subsequent effective date of retirement. If an applicant for disability retirement fails to furnish requested additional medical information within 90 days following such request, the application shall be declared null and void under the same conditions outlined above, unless the applicant is eligible for early or service retirement in which case the application shall be processed accordingly, using the same effective date as would have been used had the application for disability retirement been approved. The Director of the Retirement Systems Division, acting on behalf of the Board of Trustees, may extend the 90-day limitation provided for in this section when a member has suffered incapacitation such that a reasonable person would not have expected the member to be able to complete the required paperwork within the regular deadline, or when an omission by the Retirement Systems Division prevents the member from having sufficient time to meet the regular deadline."

SECTION 5.(a) G.S. 135-5(g) reads as rewritten:

"(g) Election of Optional Allowance. – With the provision that until the first payment on account of any benefit becomes normally due, or his first retirement check has been cashed, any member may elect to receive his benefits in a retirement allowance payable throughout life, or he may elect to receive the actuarial equivalent of such retirement allowance, including any special retirement allowance, in a reduced allowance payable throughout life under the provisions of one of the options set forth below. The election of Option 2 or Option 3 or nomination of the person thereunder shall be revoked if such person nominated dies prior to the date the first payment becomes normally due or until the first retirement check has been cashed. Such election may be revoked by the member prior to the date the first payment becomes normally due or until his first retirement check has been cashed. Provided, however, in the event a member has elected Option 2 or Option 3 and nominated his or her spouse to receive a retirement allowance upon the member's death, and the spouse predeceases the member after the first payment becomes normally due or the first retirement check has been cashed, if the member remarries he or she may request to nominate a new spouse to receive the retirement allowance under the previously elected option, within 90 days of the remarriage, and may nominate a new spouse to receive the retirement allowance under the previously elected option by written designation duly acknowledged and filed with the Board of Trustees within 120 days of the remarriage. The new nomination shall be effective on the first day of the month in which it is made and shall provide for a retirement allowance computed to be the actuarial equivalent of the retirement allowance in effect immediately prior to the effective date of the new nomination. Any member having elected Options 2, 3, or 6 and nominated his or her spouse to receive a retirement allowance upon the member's death may, after divorce from his or her spouse, revoke the nomination and elect a new option, effective on the first day of the month in which the new option is elected, providing for a retirement allowance computed to be the actuarial equivalent of the retirement allowance in effect immediately prior to the effective date of the new option.

Option 1.(a) In the Case of a Member Who Retires prior to July 1, 1963. – If he dies before he has received in annuity payments the present value of his annuity as it was at the time of his retirement, the balance shall be paid to his legal

representatives or to such person as he shall nominate by written designation duly acknowledged and filed with the Board of Trustees.

- (b) In the Case of a Member Who Retires on or after July 1, 1963, but prior to July 1, 1993. – If he dies within 10 years from his retirement date, an amount equal to his accumulated contributions at retirement, less 1/120 thereof for each month for which he has received a retirement allowance payment, shall be paid to his legal representatives or to such person as he shall nominate by written designation duly acknowledged and filed with the Board of Trustees; or

Option 2. Upon his death his reduced retirement allowance shall be continued throughout the life of and paid to such person as he shall nominate by written designation duly acknowledged and filed with the Board of Trustees at the time of his retirement, provided that if the person selected is other than his spouse the reduced retirement allowance payable to the member shall not be less than one half of the retirement allowance without optional modification which would otherwise be payable to him; or

Option 3. Upon his death, one half of his reduced retirement allowance shall be continued throughout the life of, and paid to such person as he shall nominate by written designation duly acknowledged and filed with the Board of Trustees at the time of his retirement; or

Option 4. Adjustment of Retirement Allowance for Social Security Benefits. – Until the first payment on account of any benefit becomes normally due, any member may elect to convert his benefit otherwise payable on his account after retirement into a retirement allowance of equivalent actuarial value of such amount that with his benefit under Title II of the Federal Social Security Act, he will receive, so far as possible, approximately the same amount per year before and after the earliest age at which he becomes eligible, upon application therefor, to receive a social security benefit.

Option 5. For Members Retiring Prior to July 1, 1993. – The member may elect to receive a reduced retirement allowance under the conditions of Option 2 or Option 3, as provided for above, with the modification that if both he and the person nominated die within 10 years from his retirement date, an amount equal to his accumulated contributions at retirement, less 1/120 thereof for each month for which a retirement allowance has been paid, shall be paid to his legal representatives or to such person as he shall nominate by written designation duly acknowledged and filed with the Board of Trustees.

Option 6. A member may elect either Option 2 or Option 3 with the added provision that in the event the designated beneficiary predeceases the member, the retirement allowance payable to the member after the designated beneficiary's death shall be equal to the retirement allowance which would have been payable had the member not elected the option.

Upon the death of a member after the effective date of a retirement for which the member has been approved and following receipt by the Board of Trustees of an election of benefits but prior to the cashing of the first benefit check, the retirement benefit shall be payable as provided by the member's election of benefits under this subsection.

Upon the death of a member after the effective date of a retirement for which the member has been approved but prior to the receipt by the Board of Trustees of an election of benefits (Form 6-E or Form 7-E), properly acknowledged and filed by the member, the member's designated beneficiary for a return of accumulated contributions may elect to receive the benefit, if only one beneficiary is named for the return of accumulated contributions. If more than one beneficiary is named for the return of accumulated contributions, the administrator or executor of the member's estate will select an option and name the beneficiary or beneficiaries."

SECTION 5.(b) G.S. 135-5(g1) reads as rewritten:

"(g1) In the event of the death of a retired member while in receipt of a retirement allowance under the provisions of this Article, there shall be paid to such person or persons as the retiree shall have nominated by written designation duly acknowledged and filed with the

Board of Trustees, if such person or persons are living at the time of the retiree's death, otherwise to the retiree's legal representatives, a death benefit equal to the excess, if any, of the accumulated contributions of the retiree at the date of retirement over the total of the retirement allowances paid prior to the death of the retiree. For purposes of this paragraph, the term "accumulated contributions" includes amounts of employee voluntary contributions that were transferred from the Supplemental Retirement Income Plan of North Carolina to this Retirement System at retirement by eligible law enforcement officers.

In the event that a retirement allowance becomes payable to the designated survivor of a retired member under the provisions above and such retirement allowance to the survivor shall terminate upon the death of the survivor before the total of the retirement allowances paid to the retiree and the designated survivor combined equals the amount of the accumulated contributions of the retiree at the date of retirement, the excess, if any, of such accumulated contributions over the total of the retirement allowances paid to the retiree and the survivor combined shall be paid in a lump sum to such person or persons as the retiree shall have nominated by written designation duly acknowledged and filed with the Board of Trustees, if such person or persons are living at the time such payment falls due, otherwise to the retiree's legal representative. For purposes of this paragraph, the term "accumulated contributions" includes amounts of employee voluntary contributions that were transferred from the Supplemental Retirement Income Plan of North Carolina to this Retirement System at retirement by eligible law enforcement officers.

In the event that a retirement allowance becomes payable to the principal beneficiary designated to receive a return of accumulated contributions pursuant to subsection (m) of this section and that beneficiary dies before the total of the retirement allowances paid equals the amount of the accumulated contributions of the member at the date of the member's death, the excess of those accumulated contributions over the total of the retirement allowances paid to the beneficiary shall be paid in a lump sum to the person or persons the member has designated as the contingent beneficiary for return of accumulated contributions, if the person or persons are living at the time the payment falls due, otherwise to the principal beneficiary's legal representative. For purposes of this paragraph, the term "accumulated contributions" includes amounts of employee voluntary contributions that were transferred from the Supplemental Retirement Income Plan of North Carolina to this Retirement System at retirement by eligible law enforcement officers.

In the event a retiree purchases creditable service as provided in G.S. 135-4, there shall be paid to such person or persons as the retiree shall have nominated by written designation duly acknowledged and filed with the Board of Trustees, if such person or persons are living at the time of the retiree's death, otherwise to the retiree's legal representatives, an additional death benefit equal to the excess, if any, of the cost of the creditable service purchased less the administrative fee, if any, over the total of the increase in the retirement allowance attributable to the additional creditable service, paid from the month following the month in which payment was received to the death of the retiree.

In the event that a retirement allowance becomes payable to the designated survivor of a retired member under the provisions above and such retirement allowance to the survivor shall terminate upon the death of the survivor before the total of the increase in the retirement allowance attributable to the additional creditable service paid to the retiree and the designated survivor combined equals the cost of the creditable service purchased less the administrative fee, the excess, if any, shall be paid in a lump sum to such person or persons as the retiree shall have nominated by written designation duly acknowledged and filed with the Board of Trustees, if such person or persons are living at the time such payment falls due, otherwise to the retiree's legal representative.

In the event that a retiree dies without having designated a beneficiary to receive a benefit under the provisions of this subsection, any such benefit that becomes payable shall be paid to the member's estate."

SECTION 5.(c) G.S. 135-5(m) reads as rewritten:

"(m) Survivor's Alternate Benefit. – Upon the death of a member in service, the principal beneficiary designated to receive a return of accumulated contributions shall have the right to elect to receive in lieu thereof the reduced retirement allowance provided by Option 2 of subsection (g) above computed by assuming that the member had retired on the first day of the month following the date of his death, provided that the following conditions apply:

- (1) a. The member had attained such age and/or creditable service to be eligible to commence retirement with an early or service retirement allowance,
- b. The member had obtained 20 years of creditable service in which case the retirement allowance shall be computed in accordance with G.S. 135-5(b19)(1)b. or G.S. 135-5(b19)(2)c., notwithstanding the requirement of obtaining age 50, or
- c. The member had not commenced to receive a retirement allowance as provided under this Chapter.
- (2) The member had designated as the principal beneficiary to receive a return of his accumulated contributions one and only one person who was living at the time of his death.
- (3) The member had not instructed the Board of Trustees in writing that he did not wish the provisions of this subsection to apply.

For the purpose of this benefit, a member is considered to be in service at the date of his death if his death occurs within 180 days from the last day of his actual service. The last day of actual service shall be determined as provided in subsection (l) of this section. Upon the death of a member in service, the surviving spouse may make all purchases for creditable service as provided for under this Chapter for which the member had made application in writing prior to the date of death, provided that the date of death occurred prior to or within 60 days after notification of the cost to make the purchase. The term "in service" as used in this subsection includes a member in receipt of a benefit under the Disability Income Plan as provided in Article 6 of this Chapter.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, a member who is in receipt of Workers' Compensation during the period for which the member would have otherwise been eligible to receive short-term benefits, as provided in G.S. 135-105, and who dies on or after 181 days from the last day of the member's actual service but on or before the date the benefits as provided in G.S. 135-105 would have ended, shall be considered in service at the time of the member's death for the purpose of this benefit.

For the purpose of calculating this benefit, any terminal payouts made after the date of death that meet the definition of compensation shall be credited to the month prior to the month of death. These terminal payouts do not include salary or wages paid for work performed during the month of death."

SECTION 5.(d) G.S. 128-27(g) reads as rewritten:

"(g) Election of Optional Allowance. – With the provision that until the first payment on account of any benefit becomes normally due, or his first retirement check has been cashed, any member may elect to receive his benefits in a retirement allowance payable throughout life, or he may elect to receive the actuarial equivalent of such retirement allowance, including any special retirement allowance, in a reduced allowance payable throughout life under the provisions of one of the Options set forth below. The election of Option two or Option three or nomination of the person thereunder shall be revoked if such person nominated dies prior to the date the first payment becomes normally due or the first retirement check has been cashed.

Such election may be revoked by the member prior to the date the first payment becomes normally due or his first retirement check has been cashed. Provided, however, in the event a member has elected Option 2 or Option 3 and nominated his or her spouse to receive a retirement allowance upon the member's death, and the spouse predeceases the member after the first payment becomes normally due or the first retirement check has been cashed, if the member remarries he or she may request to nominate a new spouse to receive the retirement allowance under the previously elected option, within 90 days of the remarriage, and may nominate a new spouse to receive the retirement allowance under the previously elected option by written designation duly acknowledged and filed with the Board of Trustees within 120 days of the remarriage. The new nomination shall be effective on the first day of the month in which it is made and shall provide for a retirement allowance computed to be the actuarial equivalent of the retirement allowance in effect immediately prior to the effective date of the new nomination. Any member having elected Options two, three, or six and nominated his or her spouse to receive a retirement allowance upon the member's death may, after divorce from his or her spouse, revoke the nomination and elect a new option, effective on the first day of the month in which the new option is elected, providing for a retirement allowance computed to be the actuarial equivalent of the retirement allowance in effect immediately prior to the effective date of the new option.

Option one.

- (a) In the Case of a Member Who Retires prior to July 1, 1965. – If he dies before he has received in annuity payments the present value of his annuity as it was at the time of his retirement, the balance shall be paid to such person as he shall nominate by written designation duly acknowledged and filed with the Board of Trustees or, if none, to his legal representative.
- (b) In the Case of a Member Who Retires on or after July 1, 1965, but prior to July 1, 1993. – If he dies within 10 years from his retirement date, an amount equal to his accumulated contributions at retirement, less one one-hundred-twentieth thereof for each month for which he has received a retirement allowance payment, shall be paid to such person as he shall nominate by written designation duly acknowledged and filed with the Board of Trustees or, if none, to his legal representative; or

Option two. Upon his death his reduced retirement allowance shall be continued throughout the life of and paid to such person as he shall nominate by written designation duly acknowledged and filed with the Board of Trustees at the time of his retirement, provided that if the person selected is other than his spouse the reduced retirement allowance payable to the member shall not be less than one half of the retirement allowance without optional modification which would otherwise be payable to him; or

Option three. Upon his death, one half of his reduced retirement allowance shall be continued throughout the life of, and paid to such person as he shall nominate by written designation duly acknowledged and filed with the Board of Trustees at the time of his retirement; or

Option four. Adjustment of Retirement Allowance for Social Security Benefits. – Until the first payment on account of any benefit becomes normally due, any member may elect to convert his benefit otherwise payable on his account after retirement into a retirement allowance of equivalent actuarial value of such amount that with his benefit under ~~Table~~ Title II of the Federal Social Security Act, he will receive, so far as possible, approximately the same amount per year before and after the earliest age at which he becomes eligible, upon application therefor, to receive a social security benefit.

Option five. For Members Retiring prior to July 1, 1993. – The member may elect to receive a reduced retirement allowance under the conditions of Option two or Option three, as provided for above, with the modification that if both he and the person nominated die within

10 years from his retirement date, an amount equal to his accumulated contributions at retirement, less 1/120th thereof for each month for which a retirement allowance has been paid, shall be paid to his legal representatives or to such person as he shall nominate by written designation duly acknowledged and filed with the Board of Trustees.

Option six. A member may elect either Option two or Option three with the added provision that in the event the designated beneficiary predeceases the member, the retirement allowance payable to the member after the designated beneficiary's death shall be equal to the retirement allowance which would have been payable had the member not elected the option.

Upon the death of a member after the effective date of a retirement for which the member has been approved and following receipt by the Board of Trustees of an election of benefits but prior to the cashing of the first benefit check, the retirement benefit shall be payable as provided by the member's election of benefits under this subsection.

Upon the death of a member after the effective date of a retirement for which the member has been approved but prior to the receipt by the Board of Trustees of an election of benefits (Form 6-E or Form 7-E), properly acknowledged and filed by the member, the member's designated beneficiary for a return of accumulated contributions may elect to receive the benefit, if only one beneficiary is named for the return of accumulated contributions. If more than one beneficiary is named for the return of accumulated contributions, the administrator or executor of the member's estate will select an option and name the beneficiary or beneficiaries."

SECTION 5.(e) G.S. 128-27(g1) reads as rewritten:

"(g1) In the event of the death of a retired member while in receipt of a retirement allowance under the provisions of this Article, there shall be paid to such person or persons as the retiree shall have nominated by written designation duly acknowledged and filed with the Board of Trustees, if such person or persons are living at the time of the retiree's death, otherwise to the retiree's legal representatives, a death benefit equal to the excess, if any, of the accumulated contributions of the retiree at the date of retirement over the total of the retirement allowances paid prior to the death of the retiree. For purposes of this paragraph, the term "accumulated contributions" includes amounts of employee voluntary contributions that were transferred from the Supplemental Retirement Income Plan of North Carolina to this Retirement System at retirement by eligible law enforcement officers.

In the event that a retirement allowance becomes payable to the designated survivor of a retired member under the provisions above and such retirement allowance to the survivor shall terminate upon the death of the survivor before the total of the retirement allowances paid to the retiree and the designated survivor combined equals the amount of the accumulated contributions of the retiree at the date of retirement, the excess, if any, of such accumulated contributions over the total of the retirement allowances paid to the retiree and the survivor combined shall be paid in a lump sum to such person or persons as the retiree shall have nominated by written designation duly acknowledged and filed with the Board of Trustees, if such person or persons are living at the time such payment falls due, otherwise to the retiree's legal representative. For purposes of this paragraph, the term "accumulated contributions" includes amounts of employee voluntary contributions that were transferred from the Supplemental Retirement Income Plan of North Carolina to this Retirement System at retirement by eligible law enforcement officers.

In the event that a retirement allowance becomes payable to the principal beneficiary designated to receive a return of accumulated contributions pursuant to subsection (m) of this section and that beneficiary dies before the total of the retirement allowances paid equals the amount of the accumulated contributions of the member at the date of the member's death, the excess of those accumulated contributions over the total of the retirement allowances paid to the beneficiary shall be paid in a lump sum to the person or persons the member has designated as the contingent beneficiary for return of accumulated contributions, if the person or persons are living at the time the payment falls due, otherwise to the principal beneficiary's legal

representative. For purposes of this paragraph, the term "accumulated contributions" includes amounts of employee voluntary contributions that were transferred from the Supplemental Retirement Income Plan of North Carolina to this Retirement System at retirement by eligible law enforcement officers.

In the event a retiree purchases creditable service as provided in G.S. 128-26, there shall be paid to such person or persons as the retiree shall have nominated by written designation duly acknowledged and filed with the Board of Trustees, if such person or persons are living at the time of the retiree's death, otherwise to the retiree's legal representatives, an additional death benefit equal to the excess, if any, of the cost of the creditable service purchased less the administrative fee, if any, over the total of the increase in the retirement allowance attributable to the additional creditable service, paid from the month following the month in which payment was received to the death of the retiree.

In the event that a retirement allowance becomes payable to the designated survivor of a retired member under the provisions above, and such retirement allowance to the survivor shall terminate upon the death of the survivor before the total of the increase in the retirement allowance attributable to the additional creditable service paid to the retiree and the designated survivor combined equals the cost of the creditable service purchased less the administrative fee, the excess, if any, shall be paid in a lump sum to such person or persons as the retiree shall have nominated by written designation duly acknowledged and filed with the Board of Trustees, if such person or persons are living at the time such payment falls due, otherwise to the retiree's legal representative.

In the event that a retiree dies without having designated a beneficiary to receive a benefit under the provisions of this subsection, any such benefit that becomes payable shall be paid to the member's estate."

SECTION 5.(f) G.S. 128-27(m) reads as rewritten:

"(m) Survivor's Alternate Benefit. – Upon the death of a member in service, the principal beneficiary designated to receive a return of accumulated contributions shall have the right to elect to receive in lieu thereof the reduced retirement allowance provided by Option two of subsection (g) above computed by assuming that the member had retired on the first day of the month following the date of his death, provided that all three of the following conditions apply:

- (1) a. The member had attained such age and/or creditable service to be eligible to commence retirement with an early or service retirement allowance, or
- b. The member had obtained 20 years of creditable service in which case the retirement allowance shall be computed in accordance with G.S. 128-27(b21)(1)b. or G.S. 128-27(b21)(2)c., notwithstanding the requirement of obtaining age 50, or
- c. The member had not commenced to receive a retirement allowance as provided under this Chapter.
- (2) The member had designated as the principal beneficiary to receive a return of his accumulated contributions one and only one person who is living at the time of his death.
- (3) The member had not instructed the Board of Trustees in writing that he did not wish the provisions of this subsection apply.

For the purpose of this benefit, a member is considered to be in service at the date of his death if his death occurs within 180 days from the last day of his actual service. The last day of actual service shall be determined as provided in subsection (l) of this section. Upon the death of a member in service, the surviving spouse may make all purchases for creditable service as provided for under this Chapter for which the member had made application in writing prior to the date of death, provided that the date of death occurred prior to or within 60 days after notification of the cost to make the purchase.

For the purpose of calculating this benefit, any terminal payouts made after the date of death that meet the definition of compensation shall be credited to the month prior to the month of death. These terminal payouts do not include salary or wages paid for work performed during the month of death."

SECTION 6.(a) G.S. 135-5(l) reads as rewritten:

"(l) Death Benefit Plan. – There is hereby created a Group Life Insurance Plan (hereinafter called the "Plan") which is established as an employee welfare benefit plan that is separate and apart from the Retirement System and under which the members of the Retirement System shall participate and be eligible for group life insurance benefits. Upon receipt of proof, satisfactory to the Board of Trustees in their capacity as trustees under the Group Life Insurance Plan, of the death, in service, of a member who had completed at least one full calendar year of membership in the Retirement System, there shall be paid to such person as he shall have nominated by written designation duly acknowledged and filed with the Board of Trustees, if such person is living at the time of the member's death, otherwise to the member's legal representatives, a death benefit. Such death benefit shall be equal to the greater of:

- (1) The compensation on which contributions were made by the member during the calendar year preceding the year in which his death occurs, or
- (2) The greatest compensation on which contributions were made by the member during a 12-month period of service within the 24-month period of service ending on the last day of the month preceding the month in which his last day of actual service occurs;
- (3), (4) Repealed by Session Laws 1983 (Regular Session, 1984), c. 1049, s. 2.

subject to a minimum of twenty-five thousand dollars (\$25,000) and to a maximum of fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000). Such death benefit shall be payable apart and separate from the payment of the member's accumulated contributions under the System on his death pursuant to the provisions of subsection (f) of this section. For the purpose of the Plan, a member shall be deemed to be in service at the date of his death if his death occurs within 180 days from the last day of his actual service.

The death benefit provided in this subsection (l) shall not be payable, notwithstanding the member's compliance with all the conditions set forth in the preceding paragraph, if his death occurs

- (1) After December 31, 1968 and after he has attained age 70; or
- (2) After December 31, 1969 and after he has attained age 69; or
- (3) After December 31, 1970 and after he has attained age 68; or
- (4) After December 31, 1971 and after he has attained age 67; or
- (5) After December 31, 1972 and after he has attained age 66; or
- (6) After December 31, 1973 and after he has attained age 65; or
- (7) After December 31, 1978, but before January 1, 1987, and after he has attained age 70.

Notwithstanding the above provisions, the death benefit shall be payable on account of the death of any member who died or dies on or after January 1, 1974, but before January 1, 1979, after attaining age 65, if he or she had not yet attained age 65, if he or she had not yet attained age 66, was at the time of death completing the work year for those individuals under specific contract, or during the fiscal year for those individuals not under specific contract, in which he or she attained 65, and otherwise met all conditions for payment of the death benefit.

Notwithstanding the above provisions, the Board of Trustees may and is specifically authorized to provide the death benefit according to the terms and conditions otherwise appearing in this Plan in the form of group life insurance, either (i) by purchasing a contract or contracts of group life insurance with any life insurance company or companies licensed and authorized to transact business in this State for the purpose of insuring the lives of members in service, or (ii) by establishing a separate trust fund qualified under Section 501(c)(9) of the

Internal Revenue Code of 1954, as amended, for such purpose. To that end the Board of Trustees is authorized, empowered and directed to investigate the desirability of utilizing group life insurance by either of the foregoing methods for the purpose of providing the death benefit. If a separate trust fund is established, it shall be operated in accordance with rules and regulations adopted by the Board of Trustees and all investment earnings on the trust fund shall be credited to such fund.

In administration of the death benefit the following shall apply:

- (1) For the purpose of determining eligibility only, in this subsection "calendar year" shall mean any period of 12 consecutive months or, if less, the period covered by an annual contract of employment. For all other purposes in this subsection "calendar year" shall mean the 12 months beginning January 1 and ending December 31.
- (2) Last day of actual service shall be:
 - a. When employment has been terminated, the last day the member actually worked.
 - b. When employment has not been terminated, the date on which an absent member's sick and annual leave expire, unless he is on approved leave of absence and is in service under the provisions of G.S. 135-4(h).
 - c. When a participant's employment is interrupted by reason of service in the Uniformed Services, as that term is defined in section 4303(16) of the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act, Public Law 103-353, and the participant does not return immediately after that service to employment with a covered employer in this System, the date on which the participant was first eligible to be separated or released from his or her involuntary military service.
- (3) For a period when a member is on leave of absence, his status with respect to the death benefit will be determined by the provisions of G.S. 135-4(h).
- (4) A member on leave of absence from his position as a teacher or State employee for the purpose of serving as a member or officer of the General Assembly shall be deemed to be in service during sessions of the General Assembly and thereby covered by the provisions of the death benefit. The amount of the death benefit for such member shall be the equivalent of the salary to which the member would have been entitled as a teacher or State employee during the 12-month period immediately prior to the month in which death occurred, not to be less than twenty-five thousand dollars (\$25,000) nor to exceed fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000).

The provisions of the Retirement System pertaining to Administration, G.S. 135-6, and management of funds, G.S. 135-7, are hereby made applicable to the Plan.

A member who is a beneficiary of the Disability Income Plan provided for in Article 6 of this Chapter, or a member who is in receipt of Workers' Compensation during the period for which he or she would have otherwise been eligible to receive short-term benefits as provided in G.S. 135-105 and dies on or after 181 days from the last day of his or her actual service but prior to the date the benefits as provided in G.S. 135-105 would have ended, shall be eligible for group life insurance benefits as provided in this subsection, notwithstanding that the member is no longer an employee or teacher or that the member's death occurs after the eligibility period after active service. The basis of the death benefit payable hereunder shall be the higher of the death benefit computed as above or a death benefit based on compensation used in computing the benefit payable under G.S. 135-105 and G.S. 135-106, as may be adjusted for percentage post-disability increases, all subject to the maximum dollar limitation

as provided above. A member in receipt of benefits from the Disability Income Plan under the provisions of G.S. 135-112 whose right to a benefit accrued under the former Disability Salary Continuation Plan shall not be covered under the provisions of this paragraph.

Upon receipt of proof, satisfactory to the Board of Trustees in its capacity under this subsection, of the death of a retired member of the Retirement System on or after July 1, 1988, but before January 1, 1999, there shall be paid a death benefit to the surviving spouse of the deceased retired member or to the deceased retired member's legal representative if not survived by a spouse; provided the retired member has elected, when first eligible, to make, and has continuously made, in advance of his death required contributions as determined by the Board of Trustees on a fully contributory basis, through retirement allowance deductions or other methods adopted by the Board of Trustees, to a group death benefit trust fund administered by the Board of Trustees separate and apart from the Retirement System's Annuity Savings Fund and Pension Accumulation Fund. This death benefit shall be a lump-sum payment in the amount of five thousand dollars (\$5,000) upon the completion of twenty-four months of contributions required under this subsection. Should death occur before the completion of twenty-four months of contributions required under this subsection, the deceased retired member's surviving spouse or legal representative if not survived by a spouse shall be paid the sum of the retired member's contributions required by this subsection plus interest to be determined by the Board of Trustees.

Upon receipt of proof, satisfactory to the Board of Trustees in its capacity under this subsection, of the death of a retired member of the Retirement System on or after January 1, 1999, but before July 1, 2004, there shall be paid a death benefit to the surviving spouse of the deceased retired member or to the deceased retired member's legal representative if not survived by a spouse; provided the retired member has elected, when first eligible, to make, and has continuously made, in advance of his death required contributions as determined by the Board of Trustees on a fully contributory basis, through retirement allowance deductions or other methods adopted by the Board of Trustees, to a group death benefit trust fund administered by the Board of Trustees separate and apart from the Retirement System's Annuity Savings Fund and Pension Accumulation Fund. This death benefit shall be a lump-sum payment in the amount of six thousand dollars (\$6,000) upon the completion of 24 months of contributions required under this subsection. Should death occur before the completion of 24 months of contributions required under this subsection, the deceased retired member's surviving spouse or legal representative if not survived by a spouse shall be paid the sum of the retired member's contributions required by this subsection plus interest to be determined by the Board of Trustees.

Upon receipt of proof, satisfactory to the Board of Trustees in its capacity under this subsection, of the death of a retired member of the Retirement System on or after July 1, 2004, but before July 1, 2007, there shall be paid a death benefit to the surviving spouse of the deceased retired member or to the deceased retired member's legal representative if not survived by a spouse; provided the retired member has elected, when first eligible, to make, and has continuously made, in advance of his death required contributions as determined by the Board of Trustees on a fully contributory basis, through retirement allowance deductions or other methods adopted by the Board of Trustees, to a group death benefit trust fund administered by the Board of Trustees Fund and Pension Accumulation Fund. This death benefit shall be a lump-sum payment in the amount of nine thousand dollars (\$9,000) upon the completion of 24 months of contributions required under this subsection. Should death occur before the completion of 24 months of contributions required under this subsection, the deceased retired member's surviving spouse or legal representative if not survived by a spouse shall be paid the sum of the retired member's contributions required by this subsection plus interest to be determined by the Board of Trustees.

Upon receipt of proof, satisfactory to the Board of Trustees in its capacity under this subsection, of the death of a retired member of the Retirement System on or after July 1, 2007, there shall be paid a death benefit to the surviving spouse of the deceased retired member or to the deceased retired member's legal representative if not survived by a spouse; provided the retired member has elected, when first eligible, to make, and has continuously made, in advance of his death required contributions as determined by the Board of Trustees on a fully contributory basis, through retirement allowance deductions or other methods adopted by the Board of Trustees, to a group death benefit trust fund administered by the Board of Trustees Fund and Pension Accumulation Fund. This death benefit shall be a lump-sum payment in the amount of ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) upon the completion of 24 months of contributions required under this subsection. Should death occur before the completion of 24 months of contributions required under this subsection, the deceased retired member's surviving spouse or legal representative if not survived by a spouse shall be paid the sum of the retired member's contributions required by this subsection plus interest to be determined by the Board of Trustees."

SECTION 6.(b) G.S. 128-27(1) reads as rewritten:

"(1) Death Benefit Plan. – The provisions of this subsection shall become effective for any employer only after an agreement to that effect has been executed by the employer and the Director of the Retirement System. There is hereby created a Group Life Insurance Plan (hereinafter called the "Plan") which is established as an employee welfare benefit plan that is separate and apart from the Retirement System and under which the members of the Retirement System shall participate and be eligible for group life insurance benefits. Upon receipt of proof, satisfactory to the Board of Trustees in their capacity as trustees under the Group Life Insurance Plan, of the death, in service, of a member who had completed at least one full calendar year of membership in the Retirement System, there shall be paid to such person as he shall have nominated by written designation duly acknowledged and filed with the Board of Trustees, if such person is living at the time of the member's death, otherwise to the member's legal representatives, a death benefit. Such death benefit shall be equal to the greater of:

- (1) The compensation on which contributions were made by the member during the calendar year preceding the year in which his death occurs, or
- (2) The greatest compensation on which contributions were made by the member during a 12-month period of service within the 24-month period of service ending on the last day of the month preceding the month in which his last day of actual service occurs;
- (3) Repealed by Session Laws 1983 (Regular Session, 1984), c. 1049, s. 2;

subject to a minimum of twenty-five thousand dollars (\$25,000) and a maximum of fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000). Such death benefit shall be payable apart and separate from the payment of the member's accumulated contributions under the System on his death pursuant to the provisions of subsection (f) of this section. For the purpose of the Plan, a member shall be deemed to be in service at the date of his death if his death occurs within 180 days from the last day of his actual service.

The death benefit provided in this subsection shall not be payable, notwithstanding the member's compliance with all the conditions set forth in the preceding paragraph, if his death occurs

- (1) After June 30, 1969 and after he has attained age 70; or
- (2) After December 31, 1969 and after he has attained age 69; or
- (3) After December 31, 1970 and after he has attained age 68; or
- (4) After December 31, 1971 and after he has attained age 67; or
- (5) After December 31, 1972 and after he has attained age 66; or
- (6) After December 31, 1973 and after he has attained age 65; or

- (7) After December 31, 1978, but before January 1, 1987, and after he has attained age 70.

Notwithstanding the above provisions, the death benefit shall be payable on account of the death of any member who died or dies on or after January 1, 1974, but before January 1, 1979, after attaining age 65, if he or she had not yet attained age 65, if he or she had not yet attained age 66, was at the time of death completing the work year for those individuals under specific contract, or during the fiscal year for those individuals not under specific contract, in which he or she attained age 65, and otherwise met all conditions for payment of the death benefit.

Notwithstanding the above provisions, the Board of Trustees may and is specifically authorized to provide the death benefit according to the terms and conditions otherwise appearing in this Plan in the form of group life insurance, either (i) by purchasing a contract or contracts of group life insurance with any life insurance company or companies licensed and authorized to transact business in this State for the purpose of insuring the lives of members in service, or (ii) by establishing a separate trust fund qualified under section 501(c)(9) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954, as amended, for such purpose. To that end the Board of Trustees is authorized, empowered and directed to investigate the desirability of utilizing group life insurance by either of the foregoing methods for the purpose of providing the death benefit. If a separate trust fund is established, it shall be operated in accordance with rules and regulations adopted by the Board of Trustees and all investment earnings on the trust fund shall be credited to such fund.

In administration of the death benefit the following shall apply:

- (1) For the purpose of determining eligibility only, in this subsection "calendar year" shall mean any period of 12 consecutive months. For all other purposes in this subsection "calendar year" shall mean the 12 months beginning January 1 and ending December 31.
- (2) Last day of actual service shall be:
 - a. When employment has been terminated, the last day the member actually worked.
 - b. When employment has not been terminated, the date on which an absent member's sick and annual leave expire.
 - c. When a participant's employment is interrupted by reason of service in the Uniformed Services, as that term is defined in section 4303(16) of the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act, Public Law 103-353, and the participant does not return immediately after that service to employment with a covered employer in this System, the date on which the participant was first eligible to be separated or released from his or her involuntary military service.
- (3) For a period when a member is on leave of absence, his status with respect to the death benefit will be determined by the provisions of G.S. 128-26(g).
- (4) A member on leave of absence from his position as a local governmental employee for the purpose of serving as a member or officer of the General Assembly shall be deemed to be in service during sessions of the General Assembly and thereby covered by the provisions of the death benefit, if applicable. The amount of the death benefit for such member shall be the equivalent of the salary to which the member would have been entitled as a local governmental employee during the 12-month period immediately prior to the month in which death occurred, not to be less than twenty-five thousand dollars (\$25,000) nor to exceed fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000).

The provisions of the Retirement System pertaining to administration, G.S. 128-28, and management of funds, G.S. 128-29, are hereby made applicable to the Plan."

SECTION 6.(c) G.S. 135-63 is amended by adding a new subsection to read:

"(e) For purposes of this subsection, a participant whose employment is interrupted by reason of service in the Uniformed Services, as that term is defined in section 4303(16) of the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act, Public Law 103-353, shall be deemed to be "in service" until the last day of such service in the Uniformed Services. If the participant does not return immediately after that service to employment with a covered employer in this System, then the participant shall be deemed "in service" until the date on which the participant was first eligible to be separated or released from his or her involuntary military service."

SECTION 6.(d) G.S. 120-4.27 reads as rewritten:

"§ 120-4.27. Death benefit.

The designated beneficiary of a member who dies while in service after completing one year of creditable service shall receive a lump-sum payment of an amount equal to the deceased member's highest annual salary, to a maximum of fifteen thousand dollars (\$15,000). For purposes of this death benefit "in service" means currently serving as a member of the North Carolina General Assembly. "In service" also means service in the Uniformed Services, as that term is defined in section 4303(16) of the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act, Public Law 103-353, if that service begins during the member's term of office. If the participant does not return immediately after that service to employment with a covered employer in this System, then the participant shall be deemed "in service" until the date on which the participant was first eligible to be separated or released from his or her involuntary military service.

The death benefit provided by this section shall be designated a group life insurance benefit payable under an employee welfare benefit plan that is separate and apart from the Retirement System but under which the members of the Retirement System shall participate and be eligible for group life insurance benefits. The Board of Trustees is authorized to provide the death benefit in the form of group life insurance either by purchasing a contract or contracts of group life insurance with any life insurance company or companies licensed and authorized to transact business in the State of North Carolina for the purpose of insuring the lives of qualified members in service, or by establishing or affiliating with a separate trust fund qualified under Section 501(c)(9) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954, as amended.

Upon receipt of proof, satisfactory to the Board of Trustees, of the death of a retired member of the Retirement System or Retirement Fund on or after July 1, 1988, but before January 1, 1999, there shall be paid a death benefit to the surviving spouse of a deceased retired member, or to the deceased retired member's legal representative if not survived by a spouse; provided the retired member has elected, when first eligible, to make, and has continuously made, in advance of his death required contributions as determined by the Retirement System on a fully contributory basis, through retirement allowance deductions or other methods adopted by the Retirement System, to a group death benefit trust fund administered by the Board of Trustees separate and apart from the Retirement System's Annuity Savings Fund and Pension Accumulation Fund. This death benefit shall be a lump-sum payment in the amount of five thousand dollars (\$5,000) upon the completion of twenty-four months of contributions required under this subsection. Should death occur before the completion of twenty-four months of contributions required under this subsection, the deceased retired member's surviving spouse or legal representative if not survived by a spouse shall be paid the sum of the retired member's contributions required by this subsection plus interest to be determined by the Board of Trustees.

Upon receipt of proof, satisfactory to the Board of Trustees, of the death of a retired member of the Retirement System or Retirement Fund on or after January 1, 1999, but before July 1, 2004, there shall be paid a death benefit to the surviving spouse of a deceased retired member, or to the deceased retired member's legal representative if not survived by a spouse;

provided the retired member has elected, when first eligible, to make, and has continuously made, in advance of his death required contributions as determined by the Retirement System on a fully contributory basis, through retirement allowance deductions or other methods adopted by the Retirement System, to a group death benefit trust fund administered by the Board of Trustees separate and apart from the Retirement System's Annuity Savings Fund and Pension Accumulation Fund. This death benefit shall be a lump-sum payment in the amount of six thousand dollars (\$6,000) upon the completion of 24 months of contributions required under this subsection. Should death occur before the completion of 24 months of contributions required under this subsection, the deceased retired member's surviving spouse or legal representative if not survived by a spouse shall be paid the sum of the retired member's contributions required by this subsection plus interest to be determined by the Board of Trustees.

Upon receipt of proof, satisfactory to the Board of Trustees, of the death of a retired member of the Retirement System or Retirement Fund on or after July 1, 2004, but before July 1, 2007, there shall be paid a death benefit to the surviving spouse of a deceased retired member, or to the deceased retired member's legal representative if not survived by a spouse; provided the retired member has elected, when first eligible, to make, and has continuously made, in advance of his death required contributions as determined by the Retirement System on a fully contributory basis, through retirement allowance deductions or other methods adopted by the Retirement System, to a group death benefit trust fund administered by the Board of Trustees separate and apart from the Retirement System's Annuity Savings Fund and Pension Accumulation Fund. This death benefit shall be a lump-sum payment in the amount of nine thousand dollars (\$9,000) upon the completion of 24 months of contributions required under this subsection. Should death occur before the completion of 24 months of contributions required under this subsection, the deceased retired member's surviving spouse or legal representative if not survived by a spouse shall be paid the sum of the retired member's contributions required by this subsection plus interest to be determined by the Board of Trustees.

Upon receipt of proof, satisfactory to the Board of Trustees, of the death of a retired member of the Retirement System or Retirement Fund on or after July 1, 2007, there shall be paid a death benefit to the surviving spouse of a deceased retired member, or to the deceased retired member's legal representative if not survived by a spouse; provided the retired member has elected, when first eligible, to make, and has continuously made, in advance of his death required contributions as determined by the Retirement System on a fully contributory basis, through retirement allowance deductions or other methods adopted by the Retirement System, to a group death benefit trust fund administered by the Board of Trustees separate and apart from the Retirement System's Annuity Savings Fund and Pension Accumulation Fund. This death benefit shall be a lump-sum payment in the amount of ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) upon the completion of 24 months of contributions required under this subsection. Should death occur before the completion of 24 months of contributions required under this subsection, the deceased retired member's surviving spouse or legal representative if not survived by a spouse shall be paid the sum of the retired member's contributions required by this subsection plus interest to be determined by the Board of Trustees."

SECTION 6.(e) G.S. 135-1(7a) reads as rewritten:

"(7a) a. "Compensation" shall mean all salaries and wages prior to any reduction pursuant to sections 125, 401(k), 403(b), 414(h)(2), and 457 of the Internal Revenue Code, not including any terminal payments for unused sick leave, derived from public funds which are earned by a member of the Retirement System for service as an employee or teacher in the unit of the Retirement System for which

he is performing full-time work. In addition to the foregoing, "compensation" shall include:

1. Performance-based compensation (regardless of whether paid in a lump sum, in periodic installments, or on a monthly basis);
 2. Conversion of additional benefits to salary (additional benefits such as health, life, or disability plans), so long as the benefits are other than mandated by State law or regulation;
 3. Payment of tax consequences for benefits provided by the employer, so long as they constitute an adjustment or increase in salary and not a "reimbursement of expenses";
 4. Payout of vacation leave so long as such payouts are permitted by applicable law and regulation; ~~and~~
 5. Employee contributions to eligible deferred compensation ~~plans~~.plans; and
 6. Effective July 1, 2009, payment of military differential wages.
- b. "Compensation" shall not include any payment, as determined by the Board of Trustees, for the reimbursement of expenses or payments for housing or any other allowances whether or not classified as salary and wages. "Compensation" includes all special pay contribution of annual leave made to a 401(a) Special Pay Plan for the benefit of an employee. Notwithstanding any other provision of this Chapter, "compensation" shall not include:
1. Supplement/allowance provided to employee to purchase additional benefits such as health, life, or disability plans;
 2. Travel supplement/allowance (nonaccountable allowance plans);
 3. Employer contributions to eligible deferred compensation plans;
 4. Employer-provided fringe benefits (additional benefits such as health, life, or disability plans);
 5. Reimbursement of uninsured medical expenses;
 6. Reimbursement of business expenses;
 7. Reimbursement of moving expenses;
 8. Reimbursement/payment of personal expenses;
 9. Incentive payments for early retirement;
 10. Bonuses paid incident to retirement;
 11. Contract buyout/severance payments; and
 12. Payouts for unused sick leave.
- c. In the event an employer reports as "compensation" payments not specifically included or excluded as "compensation", such payments shall be "compensation" for retirement purposes only if the employer pays the Retirement System the additional actuarial liability created by such payments."

SECTION 6.(f) G.S.128-21(7a) reads as rewritten:

- "(7a) a. "Compensation" shall mean all salaries and wages prior to any reduction pursuant to sections 125, 401(k), 403(b), 414(h)(2), and 457 of the Internal Revenue Code, not including any terminal payments for unused sick leave, derived from public funds which are earned by a member of the Retirement System for service as an

employee in the unit of the Retirement System for which he is performing full-time work. In addition to the foregoing, "compensation" shall include:

1. Performance-based compensation (regardless of whether paid in a lump sum, periodic installments, or on a monthly basis);
 2. Conversion of additional benefits to salary (additional benefits such as health, life, or disability plans), so long as the benefits are other than mandated by State law or regulation;
 3. Payment of tax consequences for benefits provided by the employer so long as they constitute an adjustment or increase in salary and not a "reimbursement of expenses";
 4. Payout of vacation leave so long as such payouts are permitted by applicable law and regulation; ~~and~~
 5. Employee contributions to eligible deferred compensation ~~plans~~.plans; and
 6. Effective July 1, 2009, payment of military differential wages.
- b. "Compensation" shall not include any payment, as determined by the Board of Trustees, for the reimbursement of expenses or payments for housing or any other allowances whether or not classified as salary and wages. Notwithstanding any other provision of this Chapter, "compensation" shall not include:
1. Supplement/allowance provided to employee to purchase additional benefits such as health, life, or disability plans;
 2. Travel supplement/allowance (nonaccountable allowance plans);
 3. Employer contributions to eligible deferred compensation plans;
 4. Employer-provided fringe benefits (additional benefits such as health, life, or disability plans);
 5. Reimbursement of uninsured medical expenses;
 6. Reimbursement of business expenses;
 7. Reimbursement of moving expenses;
 8. Reimbursement/payment of personal expenses;
 9. Incentive payments for early retirement;
 10. Bonuses paid incident to retirement;
 11. Contract buyout/severance payments; and
 12. Payouts for unused sick leave.
- c. In the event an employer reports as "compensation" payments not specifically included or excluded as "compensation", such payments shall be "compensation" for retirement purposes only if the employer pays the Retirement System the additional actuarial liability created by such payments."

SECTION 6.(g) G.S. 135-53(5) reads as rewritten:

"(5) "Compensation" shall mean all salaries and wages derived from public funds which are earned by a member of the Retirement System for his service as a justice or judge, or district attorney, or clerk of superior court, or public defender, or the Director of Indigent Defense Services. Effective July 1, 2009, "compensation" also means payment of military differential wages."

SECTION 6.(h) G.S. 120-4.8(5) reads as rewritten:

"(5) "Compensation" means salary and expense allowance paid for service as a legislator in the North Carolina General Assembly, exclusive of travel and per diem. Effective July 1, 2009, "compensation" also means payment of military differential wages."

SECTION 6.(i) G.S. 135-1(10) reads as rewritten:

"(10) "Employee" shall mean all full-time employees, agents or officers of the State of North Carolina or any of its departments, bureaus and institutions other than educational, whether such employees are elected, appointed or employed: Provided that the term "employee" shall not include any person who is a member of the Consolidated Judicial Retirement System, any member of the General Assembly or any part-time or temporary employee. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, "employee" shall include all employees of the General Assembly except participants in the Legislative Intern Program, pages, and beneficiaries in receipt of a monthly retirement allowance under this Chapter who are reemployed on a temporary basis. "Employee" also includes any participant whose employment is interrupted by reason of service in the Uniformed Services, as that term is defined in section 4303(16) of the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act, Public Law 103-353, if that participant was an employee at the time of the interruption; if the participant does not return immediately after that service to employment with a covered employer in this System, then the participant shall be deemed "in service" until the date on which the participant was first eligible to be separated or released from his or her involuntary military service. In all cases of doubt, the Board of Trustees shall determine whether any person is an employee as defined in this Chapter. "Employee" shall also mean every full-time civilian employee of the army national guard and air national guard of this State who is employed pursuant to section 709 of Title 32 of the United States Code and paid from federal appropriated funds, but held by the federal authorities not to be a federal employee: Provided, however, that the authority or agency paying the salaries of such employees shall deduct or cause to be deducted from each employee's salary the employee's contribution in accordance with applicable provisions of G.S. 135-8 and remit the same, either directly or indirectly, to the Retirement System; coverage of employees described in this sentence shall commence upon the first day of the calendar year or fiscal year, whichever is earlier, next following the date of execution of an agreement between the Secretary of Defense of the United States and the Adjutant General of the State acting for the Governor in behalf of the State, but no credit shall be allowed pursuant to this sentence for any service previously rendered in the above-described capacity as a civilian employee of the national guard: Provided, further, that the Adjutant General, in his discretion, may terminate the Retirement System coverage of the above-described national guard employees if a federal retirement system is established for such employees and the Adjutant General elects to secure coverage of such employees under such federal retirement system. Any full-time civilian employee of the national guard described above who is now or hereafter may become a member of the Retirement System may secure Retirement System credit for such service as a national guard civilian employee for the period preceding the time when such employees became eligible for Retirement System coverage by paying to the Retirement System an amount equal to that which would have constituted employee

contributions if he had been a member during the years of ineligibility, plus interest. Employees of State agencies, departments, institutions, boards, and commissions who are employed in permanent job positions on a recurring basis and who work 30 or more hours per week for nine or more months per calendar year are covered by the provisions of this subdivision. On and after August 1, 2001, a person who is a nonimmigrant alien and who otherwise meets the requirements of this subdivision shall not be excluded from the definition of "employee" solely because the person holds a temporary or time-limited visa."

SECTION 6.(j) G.S. 128-21(10) reads as rewritten:

"(10) "Employee" shall mean any person who is regularly employed in the service of and whose salary or compensation is paid by the employer as defined in subdivision (11) of this section, whether employed or appointed for stated terms or otherwise, except teachers in the public schools and except such employees who hold office by popular election as are not required to devote a major portion of their time to the duties of their office. "Employee" also means all full-time, paid firemen who are employed by any fire department that serves a city or county or any part of a city or county and that is supported in whole or in part by municipal or county funds. "Employee" also includes any participant whose employment is interrupted by reason of service in the Uniformed Services, as that term is defined in section 4303(16) of the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act, Public Law 103-353, if that participant was an employee at the time of the interruption; if the participant does not return immediately after that service to employment with a covered employer in this System, then the participant shall be deemed "in service" until the date on which the participant was first eligible to be separated or released from his or her involuntary military service. In all cases of doubt the Board of Trustees shall decide who is an employee. On and after August 1, 2001, a person who is a nonimmigrant alien and who otherwise meets the requirements of this subdivision shall not be excluded from the definition of "employee" solely because the person holds a temporary or time-limited visa."

SECTION 7.(a) G.S. 135-8(b2) reads as rewritten:

"(b2) Retroactive Adjustment in Compensation or an Underreporting of Compensation. – A member or beneficiary who is awarded backpay in cases of a denied promotional opportunity in which the aggrieved member or beneficiary is granted a promotion retroactively, or in cases in which an employer errs in the reporting of compensation, including the employee and employer contributions, the member or beneficiary and employer may make employee and employer contributions on the retroactive or additional compensation, after submitting clear and convincing evidence of the retroactive promotion or underreporting of compensation, as follows:

- (1) Within 90 days of the denial of the promotion or the error in reporting, by the payment of employee and employer contributions that would have been paid; or
- (2) After 90 days of the denial of the promotion or the error in reporting, by the payment of the employee and employer contributions that would have been paid plus interest compounded annually at a rate equal to the greater of the average yield on the pension accumulation fund for the preceding calendar year or the actuarial investment rate-of-return assumption, as adopted by the Board of Trustees.

For members or beneficiaries electing to make the employee contributions on the retroactive adjustment in compensation or on the underreported compensation, the member's or beneficiary's employer, which granted the retroactive promotion or erred in underreporting compensation and contributions, shall make the required employer contributions. Nothing contained in this subsection shall prevent an employer from paying all or a part of the interest assessed on the employee contributions; and to the extent paid by the employer, the interest paid by the employer shall be credited to the pension accumulation fund; provided, however, an employer does not discriminate against any member or beneficiary or group of members or beneficiaries in his employ in paying all or any part of the interest assessed on the employee contributions due.

In the event the retroactive adjustment in compensation or the underreported compensation is for a period that occurs during the four consecutive calendar years that would have produced the highest average annual compensation pursuant to G.S. 135-1(5) the compensation the member or beneficiary would have received during the period shall be included in calculating the member's or beneficiary's average final compensation only in the event the appropriate employee and employer contributions are paid on such compensation.

An employer error in underreporting compensation shall not include a retroactive increase in compensation that occurs during the four consecutive calendar years that would have produced the highest average annual compensation pursuant to G.S. 135-1(5) for reasons other than a wrongfully denied promotional opportunity where the member is promoted retroactively."

SECTION 7.(b) G.S. 128-30(b2) reads as rewritten:

"(b2) Retroactive Adjustment in Compensation or an Underreporting of Compensation. – A member or beneficiary who is awarded backpay in cases of a denied promotional opportunity in which the aggrieved member or beneficiary is granted a promotion retroactively, or in cases in which an employer errs in the reporting of compensation, including the employee and employer contributions, the member or beneficiary and employer may make employee and employer contributions on the retroactive or additional compensation after submitting clear and convincing evidence of the retroactive promotion or underreporting of compensation, as follows:

- (1) Within 90 days of the denial of the promotion or the error in reporting, by the payment of employee and employer contributions that would have been paid; or
- (2) After 90 days of the denial of the promotion or the error in reporting, by the payment of the employee and employer contributions that would have been paid plus interest compounded annually at a rate equal to the greater of the average yield on the pension accumulation fund for the preceding calendar year or the actuarial investment rate-of-return assumption, as adopted by the Board of Trustees.

For members or beneficiaries electing to make the employee contributions on the retroactive adjustment in compensation or on the underreported compensation, the member's or beneficiary's employer, which granted the retroactive promotion or erred in underreporting compensation and contributions, shall make the required employer contributions. Nothing contained in this subsection shall prevent an employer from paying all or a part of the interest assessed on the employee contributions; and to the extent paid by the employer, the interest paid by the employer shall be credited to the pension accumulation fund; provided, however, an employer does not discriminate against any member or beneficiary or group of members or beneficiaries in his employ in paying all or any part of the interest assessed on the employee contributions due.

In the event the retroactive adjustment in compensation or the underreported compensation is for a period that occurs during the four consecutive calendar years that would have produced

the highest average annual compensation pursuant to G.S. 135-1(5), the compensation the member or beneficiary would have received during the period shall be included in calculating the member's or beneficiary's average final compensation only in the event the appropriate employee and employer contributions are paid on such compensation.

An employer error in underreporting compensation shall not include a retroactive increase in compensation that occurs during the four consecutive calendar years that would have produced the highest average annual compensation pursuant to G.S. 135-1(5), for reasons other than a wrongfully denied promotional opportunity where the member is promoted retroactively."

SECTION 8.(a) G.S. 135-3(8) is amended by adding a new sub-subdivision to read:

"c1. Within 90 days of the end of each month in which a beneficiary is reemployed under the provisions of sub-subdivision c. of this subdivision, each employer shall provide a report for that month on each reemployed beneficiary, including the terms of the reemployment, the date of the reemployment, and the amount of the monthly compensation. If such a report is not received within the required 90 days, the Board shall assess the employer with a penalty of ten percent (10%) of the compensation of the unreported reemployed beneficiaries during the months for which the employer did not report the reemployed beneficiaries, with a minimum penalty of twenty-five dollars (\$25.00)."

SECTION 8.(b) G.S. 128-24(5) is amended by adding a new sub-subdivision to read:

"c1. Within 90 days of the end of each month in which a beneficiary is reemployed under the provisions of sub-subdivision c. of this subdivision, each employer shall provide a report for that month on each reemployed beneficiary, including the terms of the reemployment, the date of the reemployment, and the amount of the monthly compensation. If such a report is not received within the required 90 days, the Board shall assess the employer with a penalty of ten percent (10%) of the compensation of the unreported reemployed beneficiaries during the months for which the employer did not report the reemployed beneficiaries, with a minimum penalty of twenty-five dollars (\$25.00)."

SECTION 9. G.S. 135-5(c), amended by Section 3(d) of this act, reads as rewritten:

"(c) Disability Retirement Benefits of Members Leaving Service Prior to January 1, 1988. – The provisions of this subsection shall not be applicable to members in service on or after January 1, 1988. Upon the application of a member or of his employer, any member who has had five or more years of creditable service may be retired by the Board of Trustees, on the first day of any calendar month, not less than one day nor more than 120 days next following the date of filing such application, on a disability retirement allowance: Provided, that the medical board, after a medical examination of such member, shall certify that such member is mentally or physically incapacitated for the further performance of duty, that such incapacity was incurred at the time of active employment and has been continuous thereafter, that such incapacity is likely to be permanent, and that such member should be retired; Provided further the medical board shall determine if the member is able to engage in gainful employment and, if so, the member may still be retired and the disability retirement allowance as a result thereof shall be reduced as in subsection (e) below. Provided further, that the medical board shall not certify any member as disabled who:

- (1) Applies for disability retirement based upon a mental or physical incapacity which existed when the member first established membership in the system; or
- (2) Is in receipt of any payments on account of the same disability which existed when the member first established membership in the system.

The Board of Trustees shall require each employee upon enrolling in the retirement system to provide information on the membership application concerning any mental or physical incapacities existing at the time the member enrolls.

Supplemental disability benefits heretofore provided are hereby made a permanent part of disability benefits after age 65, and shall not be discontinued at age 65.

Notwithstanding the requirement of five or more years of creditable service to the contrary, a member who is a law-enforcement officer and who has had one year or more of creditable service and becomes incapacitated for duty as the natural and proximate result of an accident occurring while in the actual performance of duty, and meets all other requirements for disability retirement benefits, may be retired by the Board of Trustees on a disability retirement allowance.

Notwithstanding the foregoing to the contrary, any beneficiary who commenced retirement with an early or service retirement benefit has the right, within three years of his retirement, to convert to an allowance with disability retirement benefits without modification of any election of optional allowance previously made; provided, the beneficiary presents clear and convincing evidence that the beneficiary would have met all applicable requirements for disability retirement benefits while still in service as a member. The allowance on account of disability retirement benefits to the beneficiary shall be retroactive to the effective date of early or service retirement.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, the surviving designated beneficiary of a deceased member who met all other requirements for disability retirement benefits, except whose death occurred before the first day of the calendar month in which the member's disability retirement allowance was to be due and payable, may elect to receive the reduced retirement allowance provided by a ~~fifty percent (50%)~~ one hundred percent (100%) joint and survivor payment option in lieu of a return of accumulated contributions, provided the following conditions apply:

- (1) The member had designated as the principal beneficiary, to receive a return of accumulated contributions at the time of his death, one and only one person, and
- (2) The member had not instructed the Board of Trustees in writing that he did not wish the provision of this subsection to apply."

SECTION 10. G.S. 127A-40(b) reads as rewritten:

"(b) Payment to a retired member of the North Carolina national guard under the provisions of this section will cease at the death of the individual and no payment will be made to beneficiaries or to the decedent's ~~estate.~~ estate, except that the legal representative of a retired member who dies shall be entitled to a full check for the month in which the death occurred."

SECTION 11.(a) G.S. 135-63(a) reads as rewritten:

"(a) Upon receipt of proof, satisfactory to the Board of Trustees, of the death of a member in service, there shall be paid in a lump sum to such person as the member shall have nominated by electronic submission prior to completing 10 years of service in a form approved by the Board of Trustees or by written designation duly acknowledged and filed with the Board of Trustees, if such person is living at the time of the member's death, otherwise to the member's legal representatives, a death benefit equal to the sum of (i) the member's accumulated contributions, plus (ii) the member's final compensation; provided, however, that if the member has attained his fiftieth birthday with at least five years of membership service at

his date of death, and if the designated recipient of the death benefits is the member's spouse who survives him, and if the spouse so elects, then the lump-sum death benefit provided for herein shall consist only of a payment equal to the member's final compensation and there shall be paid to the surviving spouse an annual retirement allowance, payable monthly, which shall commence on the first day of the calendar month coinciding with or next following the death of the member and shall be continued on the first day of each month thereafter until the remarriage or death of the spouse. The amount of any such retirement allowance shall be equal to one half of the amount of the retirement allowance to which the member would have been entitled had he retired under the provisions of G.S. 135-57(a) on the first day of the calendar month coinciding with or next following his date of death, reduced by two percent (2%) thereof for each full year, if any, by which the age of the member at his date of death exceeds that of his spouse. If the retirement allowance to the spouse shall terminate on the remarriage or death of the spouse before the total of the retirement allowance payments made equals the amount of the member's accumulated contributions at date of death, the excess of such accumulated contributions over the total of the retirement allowances paid to the spouse shall be paid in a lump sum to such person as the member shall have nominated by electronic submission in a form approved by the Board of Trustees or by written designation duly acknowledged and filed with the Board of Trustees, if such person is living at the time such payment falls due, otherwise to the former member's legal representatives."

SECTION 11.(b) G.S. 135-63(c) reads as rewritten:

"(c) Upon receipt of proof, satisfactory to the Board of Trustees, of the death of a member not in service, there shall be paid in a lump sum to such person as the member shall have nominated by electronic submission prior to completing 10 years of service in a form approved by the Board of Trustees or by written designation duly acknowledged and filed with the Board of Trustees, if such person is living at the time of the member's death, otherwise to the member's legal representatives, a death benefit equal to the member's accumulated contributions."

SECTION 11.(c) G.S. 135-64(c) reads as rewritten:

"(c) In the event of the death of a former member while in receipt of a retirement allowance under the provisions of G.S. 135-58, 135-60, or 135-61, if such former member is not survived by a spouse to whom a retirement allowance is payable under the provisions of subsection (a) or subsection (b) above, nor survived by a beneficiary to whom a monthly survivorship benefit is payable under one of the optional modes of payment under G.S. 135-61, there shall be paid to such person as the member shall have nominated by electronic submission in a form approved by the Board of Trustees or by written designation duly acknowledged and filed with the Board of Trustees, if such person is living at the time of the member's death, otherwise to the member's legal representatives, a death benefit equal to the excess, if any, of the accumulated contributions of the member at his date of retirement over the total of the retirement allowances paid to him prior to his death."

SECTION 11.(d) G.S. 135-64(d) reads as rewritten:

"(d) In the event that a retirement allowance becomes payable to the spouse of a former member under the provisions of subsection (a) or subsection (b) above, or to the designated survivor of a former member under one of the optional modes of payment under G.S. 135-61, and such retirement allowance to the spouse shall terminate on the remarriage or death of the spouse, or on the death of the designated survivor, before the total of the retirement allowances paid to the former member and his spouse or designated survivor combined equals the amount of the member's accumulated contributions at his date of retirement, the excess of such accumulated contributions over the total of the retirement allowances paid to the former member and his spouse or designated survivor combined shall be paid in a lump sum to such person as the member shall have nominated by electronic submission in a form approved by the Board of Trustees or by written designation duly acknowledged and filed with the Board of

Trustees, if such person is living at the time such payment falls due, otherwise to the former member's legal representatives."

SECTION 11.(e) G.S. 135-5(f) reads as rewritten:

"(f) Return of Accumulated Contributions. – Should a member cease to be a teacher or State employee except by death or retirement under the provisions of this Chapter, he shall upon submission of an application be paid, not earlier than 60 days from the date of termination of service, his contributions, and if he has attained at least five years of membership service or if termination of his membership service is involuntary as certified by the employer, the accumulated regular interest thereon, provided that he has not in the meantime returned to service. Upon payment of such sum his membership in the System shall cease and, if he thereafter again becomes a member, no credit shall be allowed for any service previously rendered except as provided in G.S. 135-4, and such payment shall be in full and complete discharge of any rights in or to any benefits otherwise payable hereunder. Upon receipt of proof satisfactory to the Board of Trustees of the death, prior to retirement, of a member or former member there shall be paid to such person or persons as he shall have nominated by electronic submission prior to completing 10 years of service in a form approved by the Board of Trustees or by written designation duly acknowledged and filed with the Board of Trustees, if such person or persons are living at the time of the member's death, otherwise to the member's legal representatives, the amount of his accumulated contributions at the time of his death, unless the beneficiary elects to receive the alternate benefit under the provisions of (m) below. An extension service employee who made contributions to the Local Governmental Employees' Retirement System and the Teachers' and State Employees' Retirement System as a result of dual employment may not be paid his accumulated contributions unless he is eligible to be paid his accumulated contributions in both systems for the same period of service.

Pursuant to the provisions of G.S. 135-56.2, a member who is also a member of the Consolidated Judicial Retirement System may irrevocably elect to transfer any accumulated contributions to the Consolidated Judicial Retirement System or to the Supplemental Retirement Income Plan and forfeit any rights in or to any benefits otherwise payable hereunder.

A member who is a participant or beneficiary of the Disability Income Plan of North Carolina as is provided in Article 6 of this Chapter shall not be paid a return of accumulated contributions, notwithstanding the member's status as an employee or teacher. Notwithstanding any other provision of law to the contrary, a member who is a beneficiary of the Disability Income Plan of North Carolina as provided in Article 6 of this Chapter and who is receiving disability benefits under the transition provisions as provided in G.S. 135-112, shall not be prohibited from receiving a return of accumulated contributions as provided in this subsection."

SECTION 11.(f) G.S. 135-5(g1), as amended by Section 5(b) of this act, reads as rewritten:

"(g1) In the event of the death of a retired member while in receipt of a retirement allowance under the provisions of this Article, there shall be paid to such person or persons as the retiree shall have nominated by electronic submission in a form approved by the Board of Trustees or by written designation duly acknowledged and filed with the Board of Trustees, if such person or persons are living at the time of the retiree's death, otherwise to the retiree's legal representatives, a death benefit equal to the excess, if any, of the accumulated contributions of the retiree at the date of retirement over the total of the retirement allowances paid prior to the death of the retiree. For purposes of this paragraph, the term "accumulated contributions" includes amounts of employee voluntary contributions that were transferred from the Supplemental Retirement Income Plan of North Carolina to this Retirement System at retirement by eligible law enforcement officers.

In the event that a retirement allowance becomes payable to the designated survivor of a retired member under the provisions above and such retirement allowance to the survivor shall

terminate upon the death of the survivor before the total of the retirement allowances paid to the retiree and the designated survivor combined equals the amount of the accumulated contributions of the retiree at the date of retirement, the excess, if any, of such accumulated contributions over the total of the retirement allowances paid to the retiree and the survivor combined shall be paid in a lump sum to such person or persons as the retiree shall have nominated by electronic submission in a form approved by the Board of Trustees or by written designation duly acknowledged and filed with the Board of Trustees, if such person or persons are living at the time such payment falls due, otherwise to the retiree's legal representative. For purposes of this paragraph, the term "accumulated contributions" includes amounts of employee voluntary contributions that were transferred from the Supplemental Retirement Income Plan of North Carolina to this Retirement System at retirement by eligible law enforcement officers.

In the event that a retirement allowance becomes payable to the principal beneficiary designated to receive a return of accumulated contributions pursuant to subsection (m) of this section and that beneficiary dies before the total of the retirement allowances paid equals the amount of the accumulated contributions of the member at the date of the member's death, the excess of those accumulated contributions over the total of the retirement allowances paid to the beneficiary shall be paid in a lump sum to the person or persons the member has designated as the contingent beneficiary for return of accumulated contributions, if the person or persons are living at the time the payment falls due, otherwise to the principal beneficiary's legal representative. For purposes of this paragraph, the term "accumulated contributions" includes amounts of employee voluntary contributions that were transferred from the Supplemental Retirement Income Plan of North Carolina to this Retirement System at retirement by eligible law enforcement officers.

In the event a retiree purchases creditable service as provided in G.S. 135-4, there shall be paid to such person or persons as the retiree shall have nominated by electronic submission in a form approved by the Board of Trustees or by written designation duly acknowledged and filed with the Board of Trustees, if such person or persons are living at the time of the retiree's death, otherwise to the retiree's legal representatives, an additional death benefit equal to the excess, if any, of the cost of the creditable service purchased less the administrative fee, if any, over the total of the increase in the retirement allowance attributable to the additional creditable service, paid from the month following the month in which payment was received to the death of the retiree.

In the event that a retirement allowance becomes payable to the designated survivor of a retired member under the provisions above and such retirement allowance to the survivor shall terminate upon the death of the survivor before the total of the increase in the retirement allowance attributable to the additional creditable service paid to the retiree and the designated survivor combined equals the cost of the creditable service purchased less the administrative fee, the excess, if any, shall be paid in a lump sum to such person or persons as the retiree shall have nominated by electronic submission in a form approved by the Board of Trustees or by written designation duly acknowledged and filed with the Board of Trustees, if such person or persons are living at the time such payment falls due, otherwise to the retiree's legal representative.

In the event that a retiree dies without having designated a beneficiary to receive a benefit under the provisions of this subsection, any such benefit that becomes payable shall be paid to the member's estate."

SECTION 11.(g) G.S. 135-5(1), as amended by Section 6(a) of this act, reads as rewritten:

"(1) Death Benefit Plan. – There is hereby created a Group Life Insurance Plan (hereinafter called the "Plan") which is established as an employee welfare benefit plan that is separate and apart from the Retirement System and under which the members of the Retirement

System shall participate and be eligible for group life insurance benefits. Upon receipt of proof, satisfactory to the Board of Trustees in their capacity as trustees under the Group Life Insurance Plan, of the death, in service, of a member who had completed at least one full calendar year of membership in the Retirement System, there shall be paid to such person as he shall have nominated by electronic submission prior to completing 10 years of service in a form approved by the Board of Trustees or by written designation duly acknowledged and filed with the Board of Trustees, if such person is living at the time of the member's death, otherwise to the member's legal representatives, a death benefit. Such death benefit shall be equal to the greater of:

- (1) The compensation on which contributions were made by the member during the calendar year preceding the year in which his death occurs, or
- (2) The greatest compensation on which contributions were made by the member during a 12-month period of service within the 24-month period of service ending on the last day of the month preceding the month in which his last day of actual service occurs;

(3),(4) Repealed by Session Laws 1983 (Regular Session, 1984), c. 1049, s. 2.

subject to a minimum of twenty-five thousand dollars (\$25,000) and to a maximum of fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000). Such death benefit shall be payable apart and separate from the payment of the member's accumulated contributions under the System on his death pursuant to the provisions of subsection (f) of this section. For the purpose of the Plan, a member shall be deemed to be in service at the date of his death if his death occurs within 180 days from the last day of his actual service.

The death benefit provided in this subsection (1) shall not be payable, notwithstanding the member's compliance with all the conditions set forth in the preceding paragraph, if his death occurs

- (1) After December 31, 1968 and after he has attained age 70; or
- (2) After December 31, 1969 and after he has attained age 69; or
- (3) After December 31, 1970 and after he has attained age 68; or
- (4) After December 31, 1971 and after he has attained age 67; or
- (5) After December 31, 1972 and after he has attained age 66; or
- (6) After December 31, 1973 and after he has attained age 65; or
- (7) After December 31, 1978, but before January 1, 1987, and after he has attained age 70.

Notwithstanding the above provisions, the death benefit shall be payable on account of the death of any member who died or dies on or after January 1, 1974, but before January 1, 1979, after attaining age 65, if he or she had not yet attained age 65, if he or she had not yet attained age 66, was at the time of death completing the work year for those individuals under specific contract, or during the fiscal year for those individuals not under specific contract, in which he or she attained 65, and otherwise met all conditions for payment of the death benefit.

Notwithstanding the above provisions, the Board of Trustees may and is specifically authorized to provide the death benefit according to the terms and conditions otherwise appearing in this Plan in the form of group life insurance, either (i) by purchasing a contract or contracts of group life insurance with any life insurance company or companies licensed and authorized to transact business in this State for the purpose of insuring the lives of members in service, or (ii) by establishing a separate trust fund qualified under Section 501(c)(9) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954, as amended, for such purpose. To that end the Board of Trustees is authorized, empowered and directed to investigate the desirability of utilizing group life insurance by either of the foregoing methods for the purpose of providing the death benefit. If a separate trust fund is established, it shall be operated in accordance with rules and regulations adopted by the Board of Trustees and all investment earnings on the trust fund shall be credited to such fund.

In administration of the death benefit the following shall apply:

- (1) For the purpose of determining eligibility only, in this subsection "calendar year" shall mean any period of 12 consecutive months or, if less, the period covered by an annual contract of employment. For all other purposes in this subsection "calendar year" shall mean the 12 months beginning January 1 and ending December 31.
- (2) Last day of actual service shall be:
 - a. When employment has been terminated, the last day the member actually worked.
 - b. When employment has not been terminated, the date on which an absent member's sick and annual leave expire, unless he is on approved leave of absence and is in service under the provisions of G.S. 135-4(h).
 - c. When a participant's employment is interrupted by reason of service in the Uniformed Services, as that term is defined in section 4303(16) of the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act, Public Law 103-353, and the participant does not return immediately after that service to employment with a covered employer in this System, the date on which the participant was first eligible to be separated or released from his or her involuntary military service.
- (3) For a period when a member is on leave of absence, his status with respect to the death benefit will be determined by the provisions of G.S. 135-4(h).
- (4) A member on leave of absence from his position as a teacher or State employee for the purpose of serving as a member or officer of the General Assembly shall be deemed to be in service during sessions of the General Assembly and thereby covered by the provisions of the death benefit. The amount of the death benefit for such member shall be the equivalent of the salary to which the member would have been entitled as a teacher or State employee during the 12-month period immediately prior to the month in which death occurred, not to be less than twenty-five thousand dollars (\$25,000) nor to exceed fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000).

The provisions of the Retirement System pertaining to Administration, G.S. 135-6, and management of funds, G.S. 135-7, are hereby made applicable to the Plan.

A member who is a beneficiary of the Disability Income Plan provided for in Article 6 of this Chapter, or a member who is in receipt of Workers' Compensation during the period for which he or she would have otherwise been eligible to receive short-term benefits as provided in G.S. 135-105 and dies on or after 181 days from the last day of his or her actual service but prior to the date the benefits as provided in G.S. 135-105 would have ended, shall be eligible for group life insurance benefits as provided in this subsection, notwithstanding that the member is no longer an employee or teacher or that the member's death occurs after the eligibility period after active service. The basis of the death benefit payable hereunder shall be the higher of the death benefit computed as above or a death benefit based on compensation used in computing the benefit payable under G.S. 135-105 and G.S. 135-106, as may be adjusted for percentage post-disability increases, all subject to the maximum dollar limitation as provided above. A member in receipt of benefits from the Disability Income Plan under the provisions of G.S. 135-112 whose right to a benefit accrued under the former Disability Salary Continuation Plan shall not be covered under the provisions of this paragraph.

Upon receipt of proof, satisfactory to the Board of Trustees in its capacity under this subsection, of the death of a retired member of the Retirement System on or after July 1, 1988, but before January 1, 1999, there shall be paid a death benefit to the surviving spouse of the

deceased retired member or to the deceased retired member's legal representative if not survived by a spouse; provided the retired member has elected, when first eligible, to make, and has continuously made, in advance of his death required contributions as determined by the Board of Trustees on a fully contributory basis, through retirement allowance deductions or other methods adopted by the Board of Trustees, to a group death benefit trust fund administered by the Board of Trustees separate and apart from the Retirement System's Annuity Savings Fund and Pension Accumulation Fund. This death benefit shall be a lump-sum payment in the amount of five thousand dollars (\$5,000) upon the completion of twenty-four months of contributions required under this subsection. Should death occur before the completion of twenty-four months of contributions required under this subsection, the deceased retired member's surviving spouse or legal representative if not survived by a spouse shall be paid the sum of the retired member's contributions required by this subsection plus interest to be determined by the Board of Trustees.

Upon receipt of proof, satisfactory to the Board of Trustees in its capacity under this subsection, of the death of a retired member of the Retirement System on or after January 1, 1999, but before July 1, 2004, there shall be paid a death benefit to the surviving spouse of the deceased retired member or to the deceased retired member's legal representative if not survived by a spouse; provided the retired member has elected, when first eligible, to make, and has continuously made, in advance of his death required contributions as determined by the Board of Trustees on a fully contributory basis, through retirement allowance deductions or other methods adopted by the Board of Trustees, to a group death benefit trust fund administered by the Board of Trustees separate and apart from the Retirement System's Annuity Savings Fund and Pension Accumulation Fund. This death benefit shall be a lump-sum payment in the amount of six thousand dollars (\$6,000) upon the completion of 24 months of contributions required under this subsection. Should death occur before the completion of 24 months of contributions required under this subsection, the deceased retired member's surviving spouse or legal representative if not survived by a spouse shall be paid the sum of the retired member's contributions required by this subsection plus interest to be determined by the Board of Trustees.

Upon receipt of proof, satisfactory to the Board of Trustees in its capacity under this subsection, of the death of a retired member of the Retirement System on or after July 1, 2004, but before July 1, 2007, there shall be paid a death benefit to the surviving spouse of the deceased retired member or to the deceased retired member's legal representative if not survived by a spouse; provided the retired member has elected, when first eligible, to make, and has continuously made, in advance of his death required contributions as determined by the Board of Trustees on a fully contributory basis, through retirement allowance deductions or other methods adopted by the Board of Trustees, to a group death benefit trust fund administered by the Board of Trustees Fund and Pension Accumulation Fund. This death benefit shall be a lump-sum payment in the amount of nine thousand dollars (\$9,000) upon the completion of 24 months of contributions required under this subsection. Should death occur before the completion of 24 months of contributions required under this subsection, the deceased retired member's surviving spouse or legal representative if not survived by a spouse shall be paid the sum of the retired member's contributions required by this subsection plus interest to be determined by the Board of Trustees.

Upon receipt of proof, satisfactory to the Board of Trustees in its capacity under this subsection, of the death of a retired member of the Retirement System on or after July 1, 2007, there shall be paid a death benefit to the surviving spouse of the deceased retired member or to the deceased retired member's legal representative if not survived by a spouse; provided the retired member has elected, when first eligible, to make, and has continuously made, in advance of his death required contributions as determined by the Board of Trustees on a fully contributory basis, through retirement allowance deductions or other methods adopted by the

Board of Trustees, to a group death benefit trust fund administered by the Board of Trustees Fund and Pension Accumulation Fund. This death benefit shall be a lump-sum payment in the amount of ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) upon the completion of 24 months of contributions required under this subsection. Should death occur before the completion of 24 months of contributions required under this subsection, the deceased retired member's surviving spouse or legal representative if not survived by a spouse shall be paid the sum of the retired member's contributions required by this subsection plus interest to be determined by the Board of Trustees."

SECTION 11.(h) G.S. 128-27(f) reads as rewritten:

"(f) Return of Accumulated Contributions. – Should a member cease to be an employee except by death or retirement under the provisions of this Chapter, he shall upon submission of an application be paid, not earlier than 60 days from the date of termination of service, his contributions and, if he has attained at least five years of membership service or if termination of his membership service is involuntary as certified by the employer, the accumulated regular interest thereon, provided that he has not in the meantime returned to service. Upon payment of such sum his membership in the System shall cease and, if he thereafter again becomes a member, no credit shall be allowed for any service previously rendered except as provided in G.S. 128-26; and such payment shall be in full and complete discharge of any rights in or to any benefits otherwise payable hereunder. Upon receipt of proof satisfactory to the Board of Trustees of the death, prior to retirement, of a member or former member there shall be paid to such person or persons as he shall have nominated by electronic submission prior to completing 10 years of service in a form approved by the Board of Trustees or by written designation duly acknowledged and filed with the Board of Trustees, if such person or persons are living at the time of the member's death, otherwise to the member's legal representatives, the amount of his accumulated contributions at the time of his death, unless the beneficiary elects to receive the alternate benefit under the provisions of (m) below. An extension service employee who made contributions to the Local Governmental Employees' Retirement System and the Teachers' and State Employees' Retirement System as a result of dual employment may not be paid his accumulated contributions unless he is eligible to be paid his accumulated contributions in both systems for the same period of service.

Pursuant to the provisions of G.S. 135-56.2, a member who is also a member of the Consolidated Judicial Retirement System may irrevocably elect to transfer any accumulated contributions to the Consolidated Judicial Retirement System or to the Supplemental Retirement Income Plan and forfeit any rights in or to any benefits otherwise payable hereunder."

SECTION 11.(i) G.S. 128-27(g1), as amended by Section 5(e) of this act, reads as rewritten:

"(g1) In the event of the death of a retired member while in receipt of a retirement allowance under the provisions of this Article, there shall be paid to such person or persons as the retiree shall have nominated by electronic submission in a form approved by the Board of Trustees or by written designation duly acknowledged and filed with the Board of Trustees, if such person or persons are living at the time of the retiree's death, otherwise to the retiree's legal representatives, a death benefit equal to the excess, if any, of the accumulated contributions of the retiree at the date of retirement over the total of the retirement allowances paid prior to the death of the retiree. For purposes of this paragraph, the term "accumulated contributions" includes amounts of employee voluntary contributions that were transferred from the Supplemental Retirement Income Plan of North Carolina to this Retirement System at retirement by eligible law enforcement officers.

In the event that a retirement allowance becomes payable to the designated survivor of a retired member under the provisions above and such retirement allowance to the survivor shall terminate upon the death of the survivor before the total of the retirement allowances paid to

the retiree and the designated survivor combined equals the amount of the accumulated contributions of the retiree at the date of retirement, the excess, if any, of such accumulated contributions over the total of the retirement allowances paid to the retiree and the survivor combined shall be paid in a lump sum to such person or persons as the retiree shall have nominated by electronic submission in a form approved by the Board of Trustees or by written designation duly acknowledged and filed with the Board of Trustees, if such person or persons are living at the time such payment falls due, otherwise to the retiree's legal representative. For purposes of this paragraph, the term "accumulated contributions" includes amounts of employee voluntary contributions that were transferred from the Supplemental Retirement Income Plan of North Carolina to this Retirement System at retirement by eligible law enforcement officers.

In the event that a retirement allowance becomes payable to the principal beneficiary designated to receive a return of accumulated contributions pursuant to subsection (m) of this section and that beneficiary dies before the total of the retirement allowances paid equals the amount of the accumulated contributions of the member at the date of the member's death, the excess of those accumulated contributions over the total of the retirement allowances paid to the beneficiary shall be paid in a lump sum to the person or persons the member has designated as the contingent beneficiary for return of accumulated contributions, if the person or persons are living at the time the payment falls due, otherwise to the principal beneficiary's legal representative. For purposes of this paragraph, the term "accumulated contributions" includes amounts of employee voluntary contributions that were transferred from the Supplemental Retirement Income Plan of North Carolina to this Retirement System at retirement by eligible law enforcement officers.

In the event a retiree purchases creditable service as provided in G.S. 128-26, there shall be paid to such person or persons as the retiree shall have nominated by electronic submission in a form approved by the Board of Trustees or by written designation duly acknowledged and filed with the Board of Trustees, if such person or persons are living at the time of the retiree's death, otherwise to the retiree's legal representatives, an additional death benefit equal to the excess, if any, of the cost of the creditable service purchased less the administrative fee, if any, over the total of the increase in the retirement allowance attributable to the additional creditable service, paid from the month following the month in which payment was received to the death of the retiree.

In the event that a retirement allowance becomes payable to the designated survivor of a retired member under the provisions above, and such retirement allowance to the survivor shall terminate upon the death of the survivor before the total of the increase in the retirement allowance attributable to the additional creditable service paid to the retiree and the designated survivor combined equals the cost of the creditable service purchased less the administrative fee, the excess, if any, shall be paid in a lump sum to such person or persons as the retiree shall have nominated by electronic submission in a form approved by the Board of Trustees or by written designation duly acknowledged and filed with the Board of Trustees, if such person or persons are living at the time such payment falls due, otherwise to the retiree's legal representative.

In the event that a retiree dies without having designated a beneficiary to receive a benefit under the provisions of this subsection, any such benefit that becomes payable shall be paid to the member's estate."

SECTION 11.(j) G.S. 128-27(1), as amended by Section 6(b) of this act, reads as rewritten:

"(1) **Death Benefit Plan.** – The provisions of this subsection shall become effective for any employer only after an agreement to that effect has been executed by the employer and the Director of the Retirement System. There is hereby created a Group Life Insurance Plan (hereinafter called the "Plan") which is established as an employee welfare benefit plan that is

separate and apart from the Retirement System and under which the members of the Retirement System shall participate and be eligible for group life insurance benefits. Upon receipt of proof, satisfactory to the Board of Trustees in their capacity as trustees under the Group Life Insurance Plan, of the death, in service, of a member who had completed at least one full calendar year of membership in the Retirement System, there shall be paid to such person as he shall have nominated by electronic submission prior to completing 10 years of service in a form approved by the Board of Trustees or by written designation duly acknowledged and filed with the Board of Trustees, if such person is living at the time of the member's death, otherwise to the member's legal representatives, a death benefit. Such death benefit shall be equal to the greater of:

- (1) The compensation on which contributions were made by the member during the calendar year preceding the year in which his death occurs, or
- (2) The greatest compensation on which contributions were made by the member during a 12-month period of service within the 24-month period of service ending on the last day of the month preceding the month in which his last day of actual service occurs;
- (3) Repealed by Session Laws 1983 (Regular Session, 1984), c. 1049, s. 2;

subject to a minimum of twenty-five thousand dollars (\$25,000) and a maximum of fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000). Such death benefit shall be payable apart and separate from the payment of the member's accumulated contributions under the System on his death pursuant to the provisions of subsection (f) of this section. For the purpose of the Plan, a member shall be deemed to be in service at the date of his death if his death occurs within 180 days from the last day of his actual service.

The death benefit provided in this subsection shall not be payable, notwithstanding the member's compliance with all the conditions set forth in the preceding paragraph, if his death occurs

- (1) After June 30, 1969 and after he has attained age 70; or
- (2) After December 31, 1969 and after he has attained age 69; or
- (3) After December 31, 1970 and after he has attained age 68; or
- (4) After December 31, 1971 and after he has attained age 67; or
- (5) After December 31, 1972 and after he has attained age 66; or
- (6) After December 31, 1973 and after he has attained age 65; or
- (7) After December 31, 1978, but before January 1, 1987, and after he has attained age 70.

Notwithstanding the above provisions, the death benefit shall be payable on account of the death of any member who died or dies on or after January 1, 1974, but before January 1, 1979, after attaining age 65, if he or she had not yet attained age 65, if he or she had not yet attained age 66, was at the time of death completing the work year for those individuals under specific contract, or during the fiscal year for those individuals not under specific contract, in which he or she attained age 65, and otherwise met all conditions for payment of the death benefit.

Notwithstanding the above provisions, the Board of Trustees may and is specifically authorized to provide the death benefit according to the terms and conditions otherwise appearing in this Plan in the form of group life insurance, either (i) by purchasing a contract or contracts of group life insurance with any life insurance company or companies licensed and authorized to transact business in this State for the purpose of insuring the lives of members in service, or (ii) by establishing a separate trust fund qualified under section 501(c)(9) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954, as amended, for such purpose. To that end the Board of Trustees is authorized, empowered and directed to investigate the desirability of utilizing group life insurance by either of the foregoing methods for the purpose of providing the death benefit. If a separate trust fund is established, it shall be operated in accordance with rules and

regulations adopted by the Board of Trustees and all investment earnings on the trust fund shall be credited to such fund.

In administration of the death benefit the following shall apply:

- (1) For the purpose of determining eligibility only, in this subsection "calendar year" shall mean any period of 12 consecutive months. For all other purposes in this subsection "calendar year" shall mean the 12 months beginning January 1 and ending December 31.
- (2) Last day of actual service shall be:
 - a. When employment has been terminated, the last day the member actually worked.
 - b. When employment has not been terminated, the date on which an absent member's sick and annual leave expire.
 - c. When a participant's employment is interrupted by reason of service in the Uniformed Services, as that term is defined in section 4303(16) of the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act, Public Law 103-353, and the participant does not return immediately after that service to employment with a covered employer in this System, the date on which the participant was first eligible to be separated or released from his or her involuntary military service.
- (3) For a period when a member is on leave of absence, his status with respect to the death benefit will be determined by the provisions of G.S. 128-26(g).
- (4) A member on leave of absence from his position as a local governmental employee for the purpose of serving as a member or officer of the General Assembly shall be deemed to be in service during sessions of the General Assembly and thereby covered by the provisions of the death benefit, if applicable. The amount of the death benefit for such member shall be the equivalent of the salary to which the member would have been entitled as a local governmental employee during the 12-month period immediately prior to the month in which death occurred, not to be less than twenty-five thousand dollars (\$25,000) nor to exceed fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000).

The provisions of the Retirement System pertaining to administration, G.S. 128-28, and management of funds, G.S. 128-29, are hereby made applicable to the Plan."

SECTION 11.(k) G.S. 120-4.25 reads as rewritten:

"§ 120-4.25. Return of accumulated contributions.

If a member ceases to be a member of the General Assembly except by death or retirement, he shall, upon submission of an application, be paid not earlier than 60 days following the date of termination of service, the sum of his contributions if he has less than five years of creditable service, or the sum of his accumulated contributions if he has five or more years of creditable service, provided he has not in the meantime returned to service. Upon payment of this sum his membership in the System ceases. If he becomes a member afterwards, no credit shall be allowed for any service previously rendered except as provided in G.S. 120-4.14 and the payment shall be in full and complete discharge of any rights in or to any benefits otherwise payable under this Article. Upon receipt of proof satisfactory to the Board of Trustees of the death, prior to retirement, of a member or former member, there shall be paid to the person or persons he nominated by electronic submission prior to completing 10 years of service in a form approved by the Board of Trustees or by written designation duly acknowledged and filed with the Board of Trustees, if the person or persons are living at the time of the member's death, otherwise to the member's legal representatives, the amount of his accumulated contributions at the time of his death, unless the beneficiary elects to receive the alternate benefit under the provisions of G.S. 120-4.28."

SECTION 11.(I) G.S. 120-4.26A reads as rewritten:

"§ 120-4.26A. Benefits on death after retirement.

In the event of the death of a retired member while in receipt of a retirement allowance under the provisions of this Article, there shall be paid to such person or persons as the retiree shall have nominated by electronic submission in a form approved by the Board of Trustees or by written designation duly acknowledged and filed with the Board of Trustees, if such person or persons are living at the time of the retiree's death, otherwise to the retiree's legal representatives, a death benefit equal to the excess, if any, of the accumulated contributions of the retiree at the date of retirement over the total of the retirement allowances paid prior to the death of the retiree.

In the event that a retirement allowance becomes payable to the designated survivor of a retired member under the provisions of G.S. 120-4.26 and such retirement allowance to the survivor shall terminate upon the death of the survivor before the total of the retirement allowances paid to the retiree and the designated survivor combined equals the amount of the accumulated contributions of the retiree at the date of retirement, the excess, if any, of such accumulated contributions over the total of the retirement allowances paid to the retiree and the survivor combined shall be paid in a lump sum to such person or persons as the retiree shall have nominated by electronic submission in a form approved by the Board of Trustees or by written designation duly acknowledged and filed with the Board of Trustees, if such person or persons are living at the time such payment falls due, otherwise to the retiree's legal representative."

SECTION 12.(a) G.S. 135-3(3) reads as rewritten:

"(3) Should any member in any period of six consecutive years after becoming a member be absent from service more than five years, or should he withdraw his accumulated contributions, or should he become a beneficiary or die, he shall thereupon cease to be a member: Provided that on and after July 1, 1967, should any member in any period of eight consecutive years after becoming a member be absent from service more than seven years, or should he withdraw his accumulated contributions, or should he become a beneficiary or die, he shall thereupon cease to be a member; provided further that the period of absence from service shall be computed from January 1, 1962, or later date of separation for any member whose contributions were not withdrawn prior to July 1, 1967: Provided that on and after July 1, 1971, a member shall cease to be a member only if he withdraws his accumulated contributions, or becomes a beneficiary, or dies.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, any persons whose membership was terminated under the provisions set forth above who had five or more years of creditable service and had not effected a return of contributions may elect to receive a retirement allowance on or after age 60; provided that this member may retire only upon electronic submission or written application to the Board of Trustees setting forth at which time, not less than 30 days nor more than 90 days subsequent to the execution and filing, he desires to be retired."

SECTION 12.(b) G.S. 135-3(8), as amended by Section 8(a) of this act, reads as rewritten:

"(8) The provisions of this subsection (8) shall apply to any member whose membership is terminated on or after July 1, 1963 and who becomes entitled to benefits hereunder in accordance with the provisions hereof.

a. Notwithstanding any other provision of this Chapter, any member who separates from service prior to the attainment of the age of 60 years for any reason other than death or retirement for disability as

provided in G.S. 135-5(c), after completing 15 or more years of creditable service, and who leaves his total accumulated contributions in said System shall have the right to retire on a deferred retirement allowance upon attaining the age of 60 years; provided that such member may retire only upon electronic submission or written application to the Board of Trustees setting forth at what time, not less than one day nor more than 90 days subsequent to the execution and filing thereof, he desires to be retired; and further provided that in the case of a member who so separates from service on or after July 1, 1967, or whose account is active on July 1, 1967, or has not withdrawn his contributions, the aforestated requirement of 15 or more years of creditable service shall be reduced to 12 or more years of creditable service; and further provided that in the case of a member who so separates from service on or after July 1, 1971, or whose account is active on July 1, 1971, the aforestated requirement of 12 or more years of creditable service shall be reduced to five or more years of creditable service. Such deferred retirement allowance shall be computed in accordance with the service retirement provisions of this Article pertaining to a member who is not a law enforcement officer or an eligible former law enforcement officer. Notwithstanding the foregoing, any member whose services as a teacher or employee are terminated for any reason other than retirement, who becomes employed by a nonprofit, nonsectarian private school in North Carolina below the college level within one year after such teacher or employee has ceased to be a teacher or employee, may elect to leave his total accumulated contributions in the Teachers' and State Employees' Retirement System during the period he is in the employment of such employer; provided that he files notice thereof in writing with the Board of Trustees of the Retirement System within five years after separation from service as a public school teacher or State employee; such member shall be deemed to have met the requirements of the above provisions of this subdivision upon attainment of age 60 while in such employment provided that he is otherwise vested.

- b. In lieu of the benefits provided in paragraph a of this subdivision (8), any member who separates from service prior to the attainment of the age of 60 years, for any reason other than death or retirement for disability as provided in G.S. 135-5(c), after completing 20 or more years of creditable service, and who leaves his total accumulated contributions in said System, may elect to retire on an early retirement allowance upon attaining the age of 50 years or at any time thereafter; provided that such member may so retire only upon electronic submission or written application to the Board of Trustees setting forth at what time, not less than one day nor more than 90 days subsequent to the execution and filing thereof, he desires to be retired. Such early retirement allowance so elected shall be equal to the deferred retirement allowance otherwise payable at the attainment of the age of 60 years reduced by the percentage thereof indicated below.

Age at Retirement	Percentage Reduction
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59	7
58	14
57	20
56	25
55	30
54	35
53	39
52	43
51	46
50	50

- b1. In lieu of the benefits provided in paragraphs a and b of this subdivision, any member who is a law-enforcement officer at the time of separation from service prior to the attainment of the age of 50 years, for any reason other than death or disability as provided in this Article, after completing 15 or more years of creditable service in this capacity immediately prior to separation from service, and who leaves his total accumulated contributions in this System may elect to retire on a deferred early retirement allowance upon attaining the age of 50 years or at any time thereafter; provided, that the member may commence retirement only upon electronic submission or written application to the Board of Trustees setting forth at what time, as of the first day of a calendar month, not less than one day nor more than 90 days subsequent to the execution and filing thereof, he desires to commence retirement. The deferred early retirement allowance shall be computed in accordance with the service retirement provisions of this Article pertaining to law-enforcement officers.
- b2. In lieu of the benefits provided in paragraphs a and b of this subdivision, any member who is a law-enforcement officer at the time of separation from service prior to the attainment of the age of 55 years, for any reason other than death or disability as provided in this Article, after completing five or more years of creditable service in this capacity immediately prior to separation from service, and who leaves his total accumulated contributions in this System may elect to retire on a deferred early retirement allowance upon attaining the age of 55 years or at any time thereafter; provided, that the member may commence retirement only upon electronic submission or written application to the Board of Trustees setting forth at what time, as of the first day of a calendar month not less than one day nor more than 90 days subsequent to the execution and filing thereof, he desires to commence retirement. The deferred early retirement allowance shall be computed in accordance with the service retirement provisions of this Article pertaining to law-enforcement officers.
- b3. Vested deferred retirement allowance of members retiring on or after July 1, 1994. – In lieu of the benefits provided in paragraphs a. and b. of this subdivision, any member who separates from service prior to attainment of age 60 years, after completing 20 or more years of creditable service, and who leaves his total accumulated contributions in said System, may elect to retire on a deferred retirement allowance upon attaining the age of 50 years or any time

thereafter; provided that such member may so retire only upon electronic submission or written application to the Board of Trustees setting forth at what time, not less than one day nor more than 90 days subsequent to the execution and filing thereof, he desires to be retired. Such deferred retirement allowance shall be computed in accordance with the service retirement provisions of this Article pertaining to a member who is not a law enforcement officer or an eligible former law enforcement officer.

- c. Should a beneficiary who retired on an early or service retirement allowance under this Chapter be reemployed by, or otherwise engaged to perform services for, an employer participating in the Retirement System on a part time, temporary, interim, or on a fee for service basis, whether contractual or otherwise, and if such beneficiary earns an amount during the 12 month period immediately following the effective date of retirement or in any calendar year which exceeds fifty percent (50%) of the reported compensation, excluding terminal payments, during the 12 months of service preceding the effective date of retirement, or twenty thousand dollars (\$20,000), whichever is greater, as hereinafter indexed, then the retirement allowance shall be suspended as of the first day of the month following the month in which the reemployment earnings exceed the amount above, for the balance of the calendar year, except when the reemployment earnings exceed the amount above in the month of December, in which case the retirement allowance shall not be suspended. The retirement allowance of the beneficiary shall be reinstated as of January 1 of each year following suspension. The amount that may be earned before suspension shall be increased on January 1 of each year by the ratio of the Consumer Price Index to the Index one year earlier, calculated to the nearest tenth of a percent (1/10 of 1%).

The computation of postretirement earnings of a beneficiary under this sub-subdivision, who retired on or before October 1, 2007, and who has been retired at least six months and has not been employed in any capacity with a public school for at least six months immediately preceding the effective date of reemployment, shall not include earnings while the beneficiary is employed to teach in a permanent full-time or part-time capacity that exceeds fifty percent (50%) of the applicable workweek in a public school. The Department of Public Instruction shall certify to the Retirement System that a beneficiary is employed to teach by a local school administrative unit under the provisions of this sub-subdivision and as a retired teacher as the term is defined under the provisions of G.S. 115C-325(a)(5a).

The computation of postretirement earnings of a beneficiary under this sub-subdivision, who retired after October 1, 2007, after attaining (i) the age of at least 65 with five years of creditable service; or (ii) the age of at least 60 with 25 years of creditable service; or (iii) 30 years of service; and who has been retired at least six months and has not been employed in any capacity with a public school for at least six months immediately preceding the effective date of reemployment, shall not include earnings while the

beneficiary is employed to teach in a permanent full-time or part-time capacity that exceeds fifty percent (50%) of the applicable workweek in a public school. The Department of Public Instruction shall certify to the Retirement System that a beneficiary is employed to teach by a local school administrative unit under the provisions of this sub-subdivision and as a retired teacher as the term is defined under the provisions of G.S. 115C-325(a)(5a).

Beneficiaries employed under this sub-subdivision are not entitled to any benefits otherwise provided under this Chapter as a result of this period of employment.

- c1. Employers shall report each reemployment covered by the provisions of sub-subdivision c. of this subdivision within 90 days of the reemployment, including the nature of the reemployment, the date of the reemployment, and the compensation. If such a report is not received within the required 90 days, the Board shall assess the employer with a penalty of one percent (1%) per month with a minimum penalty of twenty-five dollars (\$25.00).
- d. Should a beneficiary who retired on an early or service retirement allowance under this Chapter be restored to service as an employee or teacher, then the retirement allowance shall cease as of the first of the month following the month in which the beneficiary is restored to service and the beneficiary shall become a member of the Retirement System and shall contribute thereafter as allowed by law at the uniform contribution payable by all members.

Upon his subsequent retirement, he shall be paid a retirement allowance determined as follows:

1. For a member who earns at least three years' membership service after restoration to service, the retirement allowance shall be computed on the basis of his compensation and service before and after the period of prior retirement without restrictions; provided, that if the prior allowance was based on a social security leveling payment option, the allowance shall be adjusted actuarially for the difference between the amount received under the optional payment and what would have been paid if the retirement allowance had been paid without optional modification.
2. For a member who does not earn three years' membership service after restoration to service, the retirement allowance shall be equal to the sum of the retirement allowance to which he would have been entitled had he not been restored to service, without modification of the election of an optional allowance previously made, and the retirement allowance that results from service earned since being restored to service; provided, that if the prior retirement allowance was based on a social security leveling payment option, the prior allowance shall be adjusted actuarially for the difference between the amount that would have been paid for each month had the payment not been suspended and what would have been paid if the retirement allowance had been paid without optional modification.

- e. Any beneficiary who retired on an early or service retirement allowance as an employee of any State department, agency or institution under the Law Enforcement Officers' Retirement System and becomes employed as an employee by a State department, agency, or institution as an employer participating in the Retirement System shall become subject to the provisions of G.S. 135-3(8)c and G.S. 135-3(8)d on and after January 1, 1989."

SECTION 12.(c) G.S. 135-5(a), as amended by Sections 3(a) and 3(b) of this act, reads as rewritten:

"(a) Service Retirement Benefits. –

- (1) Any member may retire upon electronic submission or written application to the Board of Trustees setting forth at what time, as of the first day of a calendar month, not less than one day nor more than 120 days subsequent to the execution of and filing thereof, he desires to be retired: Provided, that the said member at the time so specified for his retirement shall have attained the age of 60 years and have at least five years of membership service or shall have completed 30 years of creditable service.
- (2) Repealed by Session Laws 1983 (Regular Session, 1984), c. 1019, s. 1.
- (3) Any member who was in service October 8, 1981, who had attained 60 years of age, may retire upon electronic submission or written application to the Board of Trustees setting forth at what time, as of the first day of a calendar month, not less than one day nor more than 120 days subsequent to the execution and filing thereof, he desires to be retired.
- (4) Any member who is a law-enforcement officer, and who attains age 50 and completes 15 or more years of creditable service in this capacity or who attains age 55 and completes five or more years of creditable service in this capacity, may retire upon electronic submission or written application to the Board of Trustees setting forth at what time, as of the first day of a calendar month, not less than one day nor more than 120 days subsequent to the execution and filing thereof, he desires to be retired; Provided, also, any member who has met the conditions herein required but does not retire, and later becomes a teacher or an employee other than as a law-enforcement officer shall continue to have the right to commence retirement.
- (5) Any member who is eligible for and is being paid a benefit under the Disability Income Plan as provided in G.S. 135-105 or G.S. 135-106 shall be deemed a member in service and may not retire under the provisions of this section. Any member who has made electronic submission or written application for long-term or extended short-term benefits under the Disability Income Plan as provided in G.S. 135-105 or G.S. 135-106, and who has been rejected by the Plan's Medical Board for a long-term or extended short-term benefit shall have 90 days from the date of notification of the rejection to convert his application to an early or service retirement application, provided that the member meets the eligibility requirements, effective the first day of the month following the month in which short-term disability benefits ended or the first day of the month following the month in which any salary continuation as may be provided in G.S. 135-104 ended, whichever is later."

SECTION 12.(d) G.S. 135-5(a1), as amended by Section 3(c) of this act, reads as rewritten:

"(a1) Early Service Retirement Benefits. – Any member may retire and receive a reduced retirement allowance upon electronic submission or written application to the Board of Trustees

setting forth at what time, as of the first day of a calendar month, not less than one day nor more than 120 days subsequent to the execution of and filing thereof, he desires to be retired: Provided, that the said member at the time so specified for his retirement shall have attained the age of 50 years and have at least 20 years of creditable service."

SECTION 12.(e) G.S. 128-24(4), as amended by Section 3(g) of this act, reads as rewritten:

- "(4) The provisions of this subdivision (4) shall apply to any member whose retirement became effective prior to July 1, 1965, and became entitled to benefits hereunder in accordance with the provisions hereof. Such benefits shall be computed in accordance with the provisions of G.S. 128-27(b1) as in effect at the date of such separation from service.
- a. Notwithstanding any other provision of this Chapter, any member who separates from service prior to the time he shall have attained the age of 60 years, or if a uniformed policeman or fireman prior to the time he shall have attained the age of 55 years, for any reason other than death or retirement for disability as provided in G.S. 128-27(c), after completing 20 or more years of creditable service, and who leaves his total accumulated contributions in the Retirement System, shall have the right to retire on a deferred retirement allowance upon the date he shall have attained the age of 60 years, or if a uniformed policeman or fireman upon the date he shall have attained the age of 55 years; provided that such member may retire only upon electronic submission or written application to the Board of Trustees setting forth at what time, not less than 30 days nor more than 120 days next following the date of filing such application, he desires to be retired. Such deferred retirement allowance shall be computed in accordance with the provisions of G.S. 128-27(b), paragraphs (1), (2) and (3).
 - b. In lieu of the benefits provided in paragraph a of this subdivision (4), any member who separates from service prior to the time he shall have attained the age of 60 years, or if a uniformed policeman or fireman prior to the time he shall have attained the age of 55 years, for any reason other than death or retirement for disability as provided in G.S. 128-27(c), after completing 30 or more years of creditable service, and who leaves his total accumulated contributions in the Retirement System, may elect to retire on an early retirement allowance; provided that such a member may so retire only upon electronic submission or written application to the Board of Trustees setting forth at what time, not less than 30 days nor more than 120 days next following the date of filing such application, he desires to be retired; provided further that such application shall be duly filed within 60 days following the date of such separation. Such early retirement allowance so elected shall be the actuarial equivalent of the deferred retirement allowance otherwise payable at the attainment of age 60 years, or if a uniformed policeman or fireman at the attainment of age 55 years, upon proper application therefor.
 - c. Should an employee who retired on an early or service retirement allowance be restored to service prior to the time he shall have attained the age of 62 years, or if a uniformed policeman or fireman prior to the time he shall have attained the age of 55 years, his

allowance shall cease, he shall again become a member of the Retirement System, and he shall contribute thereafter at the uniform contribution rate for his class member. Upon his subsequent retirement, he shall be entitled to an allowance not less than the allowance described in 1 below reduced by the amount in 2 below.

1. The allowance to which he would have been entitled if he were retiring for the first time, calculated on the basis of his total creditable service represented by the sum of his creditable service at the time of his first retirement, and his creditable service after he was restored to service.
 2. The actuarial equivalent of the retirement benefits he previously received.
- d. Should an employee who retired on an early or service retirement allowance be restored to service after the attainment of the age of 62 years, his retirement allowance shall be reduced to the extent necessary (if any) so that the sum of the retirement allowance at the time of retirement and earnings from employment by a unit of the Retirement System for any year (beginning January 1 and ending December 31) will not exceed the member's compensation received for the 12 months of service prior to retirement. Provided, however, that under no circumstances will the member's retirement allowance be reduced below the amount of his annuity as defined in G.S. 128-21(3)."

SECTION 12.(f) G.S. 128-24(5), as amended by Sections 3(h) and 8(b) of this act, reads as rewritten:

"(5) The provisions of this subdivision (5) shall apply to any member whose membership is terminated on or after July 1, 1965, and who becomes entitled to benefits hereunder in accordance with the provisions hereof.

- a. Notwithstanding any other provision of this Chapter, any member who separates from service prior to the attainment of the age of 60 years for any reason other than death or retirement for disability as provided in G.S. 128-27(c), after completing 15 or more years of creditable service, and who leaves his total accumulated contributions in said System shall have the right to retire on a deferred retirement allowance upon attaining the age of 60 years; provided that such member may retire only upon electronic submission or written application to the Board of Trustees setting forth at what time, not less than one day nor more than 120 days subsequent to the execution and filing thereof, he desires to be retired; and further provided that in the case of a member who so separates from service on or after July 1, 1967, the aforesated requirement of 15 or more years of creditable service shall be reduced to 12 or more years of creditable service; and further provided that in the case of a member who so separates from service on or after July 1, 1971, or whose account is active on July 1, 1971, the aforesated requirement of 12 or more years of creditable service shall be reduced to five or more years of creditable service. Such deferred retirement allowance shall be computed in accordance with the service retirement provisions of this Article pertaining to a member who is not a law enforcement officer or eligible former law enforcement officer.

- b. In lieu of the benefits provided in paragraph a of this subdivision, any member who separates from service prior to the attainment of the age of 60 years, for any reason other than death or retirement for disability as provided in G.S. 128-27(c), after completing 20 or more years of creditable service, and who leaves his total accumulated contributions in said System may elect to retire on an early retirement allowance upon attaining the age of 50 years or at any time thereafter; provided that such member may so retire only upon electronic submission or written application to the Board of Trustees setting forth at what time, not less than one day nor more than 120 days subsequent to the execution and filing thereof, he desires to be retired. Such early retirement allowance so elected shall be equal to the deferred retirement allowance otherwise payable at the attainment of the age of 60 years reduced by the percentage thereof indicated below.

Age at Retirement	Percentage Reduction
59	7
58	14
57	20
56	25
55	30
54	35
53	39
52	43
51	46
50	50

- b1. In lieu of the benefits provided in paragraphs a and b of this subdivision, any member who is a law enforcement officer at the time of separation from service prior to the attainment of the age of 50 years, for any reason other than death or disability as provided in this Article, after completing 15 or more years of creditable service in this capacity immediately prior to separation from service, and who leaves his total accumulated contributions in this System, may elect to retire on a deferred early retirement allowance upon attaining the age of 50 years or at any time thereafter; provided, that the member may commence retirement only upon electronic submission or written application to the Board of Trustees setting forth at what time, as of the first day of a calendar month, not less than one day nor more than 120 days subsequent to the execution and filing thereof, he desires to commence retirement. The deferred early retirement allowance shall be computed in accordance with the service retirement provisions of this Article pertaining to law enforcement officers.
- b2. In lieu of the benefits provided in paragraphs a and b of this subdivision, any member who is a law enforcement officer at the time of separation from service prior to the attainment of the age of 55 years, for any reason other than death or disability as provided in this Article, after completing five or more years of creditable service in this capacity immediately prior to separation from service, and who leaves his total accumulated contributions in this System may

elect to retire on a deferred service retirement allowance upon attaining the age of 55 years or at any time thereafter; provided, that the member may commence retirement only upon electronic submission or written application to the Board of Trustees setting forth at what time, as of the first day of a calendar month not less than one day nor more than 120 days subsequent to the execution and filing thereof, he desires to commence retirement. The deferred service retirement allowance shall be computed in accordance with the service retirement provisions of this Article pertaining to law enforcement officers.

- b3. Deferred retirement allowance of members retiring on or after July 1, 1995. – In lieu of the benefits provided in paragraphs a. and b. of this subdivision, any member who separates from service prior to attainment of age 60 years, after completing 20 or more years of creditable service, and who leaves his total accumulated contributions in said System, may elect to retire on a deferred retirement allowance upon attaining the age of 50 years or any time thereafter; provided that such member may so retire only upon electronic submission or written application to the Board of Trustees setting forth at what time, not less than one day nor more than 120 days subsequent to the execution and filing thereof, he desires to be retired. Such deferred retirement allowance shall be computed in accordance with the service retirement provisions of this Article pertaining to a member who is not a law enforcement officer or an eligible former law enforcement officer.
- c. Should a beneficiary who retired on an early or service retirement allowance be reemployed by, or otherwise engaged to perform services for, an employer participating in the Retirement System on a part-time, temporary, interim, or on fee-for-service basis, whether contractual or otherwise, and if such beneficiary earns an amount during the 12-month period immediately following the effective date of retirement or in any calendar year which exceeds fifty percent (50%) of the reported compensation, excluding terminal payments, during the 12 months of service preceding the effective date of retirement, or twenty thousand dollars (\$20,000), whichever is greater, as hereinafter indexed, then the retirement allowance shall be suspended as of the first day of the month following the month in which the reemployment earnings exceed the amount above, for the balance of the calendar year, except when the reemployment earnings exceed the amount above in the month of December, in which case the retirement allowance shall not be suspended. The retirement allowance of the beneficiary shall be reinstated as of January 1 of each year following suspension. The amount that may be earned before suspension shall be increased on January 1 of each year by the ratio of the Consumer Price Index to the Index one year earlier, calculated to the nearest tenth of a percent (1/10 of 1%).
- c1. Employers shall report each reemployment covered by the provisions of sub-subdivision c. of this subdivision within 90 days of the reemployment, including the nature of the reemployment, the date of the reemployment, and the compensation. If such a report is not received within the required 90 days, the Board shall assess the

employer with a penalty of one percent (1%) per month with a minimum penalty of twenty-five dollars (\$25.00).

- d. Should a beneficiary who retired on an early or service retirement allowance be restored to service as an employee, then the retirement allowance shall cease as of the first day of the month following the month in which the beneficiary is restored to service and the beneficiary shall become a member of the Retirement System and shall contribute thereafter as allowed by law at the uniform contribution payable by all members.

Upon his subsequent retirement, he shall be paid a retirement allowance determined as follows:

1. For a member who earns at least three years' membership service after restoration to service, the retirement allowance shall be computed on the basis of his compensation and service before and after the period of prior retirement without restriction; provided, that if the prior allowance was based on a social security leveling payment option, the allowance shall be adjusted actuarially for the difference between the amount received under the optional payment and what would have been paid if the retirement allowance had been paid without optional modification.
2. For a member who does not earn three years' membership service after restoration to service, the retirement allowance shall be equal to the sum of the retirement allowance to which he would have been entitled had he not been restored to service, without modification of the election of an optional allowance previously made, and the retirement allowance that results from service earned since being restored to service; provided, that if the prior retirement allowance was based on a social security leveling payment option, the prior allowance shall be adjusted actuarially for the difference between the amount that would have been paid for each month had the payment not been suspended and what would have been paid if the retirement allowance had been paid without optional modification."

SECTION 12.(g) G.S. 128-27(a), as amended by Section 3(i) of this act, reads as rewritten:

"(a) Service Retirement Benefits. –

- (1) Any member may retire upon electronic submission or written application to the Board of Trustees setting forth at what time, as of the first day of a calendar month, not less than one day nor more than 120 days subsequent to the execution and filing thereof, he desires to be retired: Provided, that the said member at the time so specified for his retirement shall have attained the age of 60 years and have at least five years of creditable service or shall have completed 30 years of creditable service, or if a fireman, he shall have attained the age of 55 years and have at least five years of creditable service.
- (2) Repealed by Session Laws 1983 (Regular Session, 1984), c. 1019, s. 1.
- (3) Repealed by Session Laws 1971, c. 325, s. 12.
- (4) Any member who was in service October 8, 1981, who had attained 60 years of age, may retire upon electronic submission or written application to the Board of Trustees setting forth at what time, as of the first day of a calendar

month, not less than one day nor more than 120 days subsequent to the execution and filing thereof, he desires to be retired.

- (5) Any member who is a law enforcement officer, and who attains age 50 and completes 15 or more years of creditable service in this capacity or who attains age 55 and completes five or more years of creditable service in this capacity, may retire upon electronic submission or written application to the Board of Trustees setting forth at what time, as of the first day of a calendar month, not less than one day nor more than 120 days subsequent to the execution and filing thereof, he desires to be retired; provided, also, any member who has met the conditions required by this subdivision but does not retire, and later becomes an employee other than as a law enforcement officer, continues to have the right to commence retirement."

SECTION 12.(h) G.S. 128-27(a1), as amended by Section 3(j) of this act, reads as rewritten:

"(a) Early Service Retirement Benefits. – Any member may retire and receive a reduced retirement allowance upon electronic submission or written application to the Board of Trustees setting forth at what time, as of the first day of a calendar month, not less than one day nor more than 120 days subsequent to the execution and filing thereof, he desires to be retired: Provided, that the said member at the time so specified for his retirement shall have attained the age of 50 years and have at least 20 years of creditable service."

SECTION 12.(i) G.S. 135-57(a) reads as rewritten:

"(a) Any member on or after January 1, 1974, who has attained his fiftieth birthday and five years of membership service may retire upon electronic submission or written application to the board of trustees setting forth at what time, as of the first day of a calendar month, not less than one day nor more than 120 days subsequent to the execution and filing thereof, he desires to be retired."

SECTION 12.(j) G.S. 135-57(d), as amended by Section 3(e) of this act, reads as rewritten:

"(d) Any member who was in service October 8, 1981, who had attained 50 years of age, may retire upon electronic submission or written application to the board of trustees setting forth at what time, as of the first day of a calendar month, not less than one day nor more than 120 days subsequent to the execution and filing thereof, he desires to be retired."

SECTION 12.(k) G.S. 120-4.21(a) reads as rewritten:

"(a) Eligibility; Application. – Any member may retire with full benefits who has reached 65 years of age with five years of creditable service. Any member may retire with reduced benefits who has reached the age of 50 years with 20 years of creditable service or 60 years with five years of creditable service. The member shall make electronic submission or written application to the Board of Trustees to retire on a service retirement allowance on the first day of the particular calendar month he designates. The designated date shall be no less than one day nor more than 120 days from the filing of the application. During this period of notification, a member may separate from service without forfeiting his retirement benefits."

SECTION 13. This act becomes effective July 1, 2009.
In the General Assembly read three times and ratified this the 1st day of June, 2009.

s/ Walter H. Dalton
President of the Senate

s/ Joe Hackney
Speaker of the House of Representatives

s/ Beverly E. Perdue
Governor

Approved 5:35 p.m. this 8th day of June, 2009