**§ 135-6.1. Member retirement record files held by the Retirement System.**

(a) The following definitions apply in this section:

(1) Employment-related information. – As defined in G.S. 126-22(b)(3).

(2) Personal information. – As defined in G.S. 126-22(b)(3).

(3) Retirement file. – Any employment-related, retirement-related, or personal information of members in a State-administered retirement plan gathered by the Retirement Systems Division of the Department of State Treasurer.

(4) Retirement-related information. – Information including membership and service details, benefit payment information, and other information the Retirement Systems Division of the Department of State Treasurer deems necessary to administer a retirement plan.

(b) Member retirement files are not subject to inspection and examination as authorized by G.S. 132-6 except as provided in G.S. 135-6(p), G.S. 128-28(q), and subsections (c), (d), and (e) of this section.

(c) The following information regarding members and individuals in receipt of a recurring monthly benefit, if held by the Retirement System, is public and subject to subsection (d) of this section:

(1) Name.

(2) Age.

(3) Date of membership in the applicable Retirement System, first service earned date, date of first enrollment, date of first employment, and date of retirement.

(4) The terms of any contract by which the member is employed whether written or oral, past and current, to the extent that the Retirement System has the written contract or a record of the oral contract in its possession.

(5) Current or most recently held position or title.

(6) Compensation and other relevant remuneration history and benefits paid.

(7) Date, general description, and type of each change and the corresponding employing agency.

(8) The office or station to which the member is currently assigned, if any.

(9) The record of benefit payments made by one of the Retirement Systems or Disability Benefits Programs administered by the Department of State Treasurer to a member or to the survivor, beneficiary, or alternate payee of a member.

(10) Purchases of educational leave.

(d) Subject only to rules and policies for the safekeeping of member retirement files adopted by the Board of Trustees, every person having custody of the retirement file information outlined in subsection (b) of this section shall permit the information to be inspected and examined and copies thereof made by any person during regular business hours. Any person who is denied access to any retirement file for the purpose of inspecting, examining, or copying the file has a right to compel compliance with the provisions of this section by application to a court of competent jurisdiction for a writ of mandamus or other appropriate relief.

(e) The Retirement Systems Division of the Department of State Treasurer may disclose the name and mailing address of former State and local government employees, former public school employees, or former community college employees to domiciled, nonprofit organizations representing 10,000 or more retired State government, local government, or public school employees.

(e1) The Retirement Systems Division of the Department of State Treasurer may disclose to employers and former employers that made a contribution for an employee or former employee to the Retirement System any information that is not public under this section regarding that employee necessary to conduct the business of the Retirement System. Employers and former

employers in receipt of this information shall treat the information as confidential, and this information shall not be a public record.

(f) All information other than the information listed in subsection (c) of this section contained in a retirement file is confidential and not open for inspection and examination except to the following persons:

(1) The member, or the member's authorized agent, who may examine his or her own retirement file, except for any information concerning a medical disability, mental or physical, that a prudent physician would not divulge to a patient. A member's medical record may be disclosed to a licensed physician in writing by the member.

(2) A member of the General Assembly who may inspect and examine records under the authority of G.S. 120-19.

(3) A party by authority of a proper court order may inspect and examine a particular confidential portion of a member's retirement file.

(g) Any public official or employee who knowingly and willfully permits any person to have access to or custody or possession of any portion of a retirement file designated as confidential by this section, unless the person is one specifically authorized by this section to have access thereto for inspection and examination, is guilty of a Class 3 misdemeanor and upon conviction shall only be fined in the discretion of the court but not in excess of five hundred dollars ($500.00).

(h) Any person not specifically authorized by this section to have access to a retirement file designated as confidential by this section, who knowingly and willfully examines, removes, or copies any portion of a confidential retirement file, is guilty of a Class 3 misdemeanor and upon conviction shall be fined in the discretion of the court but not in excess of five hundred dollars ($500.00). (2016-108, s. 2(b); 2018-85, s. 8(a); 2020-48, s. 1.16(a).)