

TRS Response to COVID-19

Dear valued TRS member:

As Texas and the nation grapple with the impact of COVID-19, I want to share with you how TRS is responding to the changes demanded by public health best practices. At TRS, our top priority is the health and safety of our members and our staff.

Governor Abbott declared a state of emergency on Friday and encouraged eligible state employees to work from home, a suggestion TRS will observe. My executive team and I are meeting daily to make sure we understand and implement the latest guidance from the US Centers for Disease Control and the Texas Department of State Health Services regarding practices such as social distancing for those employees who continue to work in the office.

Specifically, TRS has taken the following steps:

- For current annuitants, **TRS will continue to deliver benefits on schedule**. Rest assured that our entire staff will continue to work diligently to process payroll, health claims, and other core business activities.
- In-person Member Counseling sessions will be conducted by telephone or through video conferencing. For the safety of our members and staff we will not be conducting in person visits at this time. TRS will assess the latest information from public health officials and will reinstitute walk-in sessions once it is deemed safe to do so.
- TRS encourages members to use our website and telephone counseling center to conduct business with us. We expect increased call volume and wait times as more members seek information by phone—please be patient as we strive to serve you as quickly and efficiently as possible.
- TRS-Care, TRS-Care Medicare Advantage Part D Rx, and TRS-ActiveCare plan participants will have access to COVID-19 related diagnostic testing and telemedicine services at no cost. Additional services may be available depending on the specific health plan. Participants should check the TRS website or call the phone number on their health plan ID card for more details.
- TRS is taking active measures to reduce the spread of COVID-19 in our offices. We are embracing work from home for most of our workforce, and for those who continue to work on-site, we are increasing the space between individuals. Additionally, we have enhanced

our cleaning protocols to clean more frequently using the strongest antiseptic and disinfectant products.

- TRS has canceled all immediate travel. We will re-evaluate travel restrictions at the end of March based on the latest conditions and as new information becomes available.

I also want to reassure you that the TRS Investment Management Division is working hard and is well-positioned to meet the demands of a highly volatile stock market. The TRS portfolio is structured on a 30-year time horizon to ensure TRS investments can pay member benefits for decades to come. **Your annuity payments are safe and will continue to be distributed as scheduled.**

For the most up-to-date information on how TRS is handling the rapidly changing circumstances, please visit our website at trs.texas.gov.

Sincerely,

Brian Guthrie, Executive Director