

Stricken language would be deleted from and underlined language would be added to present law.

State of Arkansas

A Bill

Regular Session, 2025

HOUSE BILL 1156

By: Representative Warren

By: Senator K. Hammer

For An Act To Be Entitled

AN ACT TO AMEND THE LAW CONCERNING THE ELIGIBILITY OF
A SURVIVING SPOUSE FOR SURVIVOR ANNUITY BENEFITS
UNDER THE ARKANSAS TEACHER RETIREMENT SYSTEM; TO
DECLARE AN EMERGENCY; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

Subtitle

TO AMEND THE LAW CONCERNING THE
ELIGIBILITY OF A SURVIVING SPOUSE FOR
SURVIVOR ANNUITY BENEFITS UNDER THE
ARKANSAS TEACHER RETIREMENT SYSTEM; AND
TO DECLARE AN EMERGENCY.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

SECTION 1. Arkansas Code § 24-7-710(b)(1)(A)(i), concerning survivor annuity benefits for surviving spouses under the Arkansas Teacher Retirement System, is amended to read as follows:

(b)(1)(A)(i) Unless the active member otherwise directs an alternative beneficiary to receive the member's residue with a payable balance by using a beneficiary form approved by the system, the active member's surviving spouse, who was married to the active member for at least ~~the two (2) years~~ one (1) year immediately preceding the active member's death, shall receive an annuity computed in the same manner in all respects as if the active member had retired on the date of the active member's death and elected Option A under § 24-7-706 to provide one hundred percent (100%) survivor annuity benefits, including benefits applicable under § 24-7-713, for his or her surviving spouse.



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SECTION 2. EMERGENCY CLAUSE. It is found and determined by the General Assembly of the State of Arkansas that the operations of a state public retirement system are complex; that the Arkansas Teacher Retirement System must be able to meet the needs of its members as anticipated by the General Assembly; that certain provisions of the Arkansas Teacher Retirement System Act, § 24-7-201 et seq., need immediate revision and updating to address administrative complexities caused by these provisions and to bring these provisions into conformance with sound public pension policy and actuarial requirements; that the revisions and updates are of great importance to members of the Arkansas Teacher Retirement System and to other citizens of the State of Arkansas; that as the Arkansas Teacher Retirement System operates on a fiscal year of July 1 to June 30, an effective date of July 1, 2025, is necessary in order to allow the provisions within this act to begin on the first day of the fiscal year and to allow for a structured and proper administration of the procedures referenced in this act; that the updates and revisions to the Arkansas Teacher Retirement System Act are of great importance and necessary for protecting member benefits and clarifying the reporting and contribution requirements of employers participating in the Arkansas Teacher Retirement System; and that this act is necessary in order to maintain an orderly system of benefits for the members of the Arkansas Teacher Retirement System. Therefore, an emergency is declared to exist, and this act being necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health, and safety, shall become effective on July 1, 2025.