

1 State of Arkansas

A Bill

2

3 Regular Session, 2025

HOUSE BILL 1156

4

5 By: Representative Warren

6 By: Senator K. Hammer

7

8

For An Act To Be Entitled

9

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

13

14

15

Subtitle

16

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

21

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

23

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

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



1
2 SECTION 2. EMERGENCY CLAUSE. It is found and determined by the
3 General Assembly of the State of Arkansas that the operations of a state
4 public retirement system are complex; that the Arkansas Teacher Retirement
5 System must be able to meet the needs of its members as anticipated by the
6 General Assembly; that certain provisions of the Arkansas Teacher Retirement
7 System Act, § 24-7-201 et seq., need immediate revision and updating to
8 address administrative complexities caused by these provisions and to bring
9 these provisions into conformance with sound public pension policy and
10 actuarial requirements; that the revisions and updates are of great
11 importance to members of the Arkansas Teacher Retirement System and to other
12 citizens of the State of Arkansas; that as the Arkansas Teacher Retirement
13 System operates on a fiscal year of July 1 to June 30, an effective date of
14 July 1, 2025, is necessary in order to allow the provisions within this act
15 to begin on the first day of the fiscal year and to allow for a structured
16 and proper administration of the procedures referenced in this act; that the
17 updates and revisions to the Arkansas Teacher Retirement System Act are of
18 great importance and necessary for protecting member benefits and clarifying
19 the reporting and contribution requirements of employers participating in the
20 Arkansas Teacher Retirement System; and that this act is necessary in order
21 to maintain an orderly system of benefits for the members of the Arkansas
22 Teacher Retirement System. Therefore, an emergency is declared to exist, and
23 this act being necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health,
24 and safety, shall become effective on July 1, 2025.
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36