

1 State of Arkansas
2 95th General Assembly
3 Regular Session, 2025
4

A Bill

SENATE BILL 151

5 By: Senators M. Johnson, C. Tucker
6 By: Representatives Andrews, Rye
7

For An Act To Be Entitled

8 AN ACT TO THE AMEND LAW CONCERNING RETIREMENT
9 BENEFITS; TO PROHIBIT COLLECTION OF BENEFITS BY
10 MEMBERS, RETIRANTS, OR BENEFICIARIES OF RETIREMENT
11 SYSTEMS WHO HAVE BEEN CONVICTED OF CERTAIN OFFENSES;
12 AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.
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Subtitle

16 TO AMEND LAW CONCERNING RETIREMENT
17 BENEFITS; AND TO PROHIBIT COLLECTION OF
18 BENEFITS BY MEMBERS, RETIRANTS, OR
19 BENEFICIARIES OF RETIREMENT SYSTEMS WHO
20 HAVE BEEN CONVICTED OF CERTAIN OFFENSES.
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23 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:
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25 SECTION 1. Arkansas Code § 24-1-301, concerning the definitions used
26 in the forfeiture of retirement benefits, is amended to add additional
27 subdivisions to read as follows:

28 (3)(A) "Benefit" means a monthly payment made to a retirant or
29 the beneficiary of a member or retirant by a retirement system.

30 (B) "Benefit" does not include employee contributions to a
31 retirement system;

32 (4) "Member" means a person who is included in the membership of
33 a retirement system;

34 (5)(A) "Public office" means an office created by or under the
35 authority of the laws of the State of Arkansas or a subdivision thereof that
36 is filled by a person who is elected by the voters of the State of Arkansas.



1 (B) "Public office" does not include an office created by
2 or under the authority of any federal law;

3 (6) "Public trust crime" means a crime prohibited under Arkansas
4 Constitution, Article 5, § 9; and

5 (7) "Retirant" means a member who retires with a benefit payable
6 from funds of a retirement system.

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8 SECTION 2. Arkansas Code § 24-1-302 is amended to read as follows:

9 24-1-302. Forfeiture of benefits.

10 (a)(1) A member or retirant forfeits his or her right to benefit
11 payments under a retirement system if he or she pleads guilty or nolo
12 contendere to or is found guilty of a public trust crime while holding public
13 office in this state.

14 (2) A beneficiary forfeits his or her right to benefit payments
15 under a retirement system if he or she:

16 (A) ~~Is convicted by a court of competent jurisdiction of~~
17 ~~the unlawful killing of the member or retirant~~ Pleads guilty or nolo
18 contendere to or is found guilty of the unlawful killing of a member or
19 retirant;

20 (B) ~~Pleads guilty or nolo contendere to the unlawful~~
21 ~~killing of the member or retirant~~ Pleads guilty or nolo contendere to or is
22 found guilty of a public trust crime while holding public office in this
23 state, unless he or she is participating in a retirement system defined under
24 § 24-1-301(2)(F); or

25 (C) Is found liable by a court of competent jurisdiction
26 for the ~~unlawful killing~~ wrongful death of the member or retirant by a
27 preponderance of the evidence in a civil action;

28 (D) ~~Is acquitted by a court of competent jurisdiction for~~
29 ~~the unlawful killing of the member or retirant by reason of insanity, mental~~
30 ~~defect or disease, or any other mental incapacity; or~~

31 (E) ~~Is found by a court of competent jurisdiction to lack~~
32 ~~the capacity to understand or effectively assist in defending a criminal~~
33 ~~proceeding against him or her for the unlawful killing of the member or~~
34 ~~retirant.~~

35 ~~(2)(3)(A)~~ (3)(A) If a retirement system finds that a member, retirant,
36 or beneficiary has forfeited his or her right to benefit payments from the

1 retirement system under ~~subdivision (a)(1)~~ subsection (a) of this section,
 2 the retirement system shall ~~treat the beneficiary as if he or she is~~
 3 ~~deceased~~:

4 (i) and shall not Not make benefit payments to the
 5 member, retirant, or beneficiary; and

6 (ii) Refund the employee contributions accumulated
 7 with interest as defined by the retirement system that were made by the
 8 member or retirant to the retirement system to:

9 (a) The member or retirant; or

10 (b) If deceased, the estate of the member or
 11 retirant if the member or retirant does not have a contingent beneficiary who
 12 may receive benefit payments under this section.

13 (B) If a retirant is already receiving benefits, then his
 14 or her employee contributions, less benefits received by the retirant through
 15 the retirement system, shall be refunded to him or her in full.

16 (4)(A) A retirement system may make the refund of employee
 17 contributions accumulated with interest as defined by the retirement system
 18 to a member or retirant by a:

19 (i) Lump-sum payment to the member or retirant; or

20 (ii) Series of monthly payments to the member or
 21 retirant in amounts equal to the amount the individual paid in to the
 22 retirement system with an interest rate as defined by the retirement system.

23 (B) A retirement system shall make the refund of employee
 24 contributions to the estate of a member or retirant by a lump-sum payment to
 25 the estate of the member or retirant.

26 (C) Payments made under subdivision (a)(4)(A) of this
 27 section shall cease when the member or retirant is fully reimbursed for his
 28 or her employee contributions paid in to the retirement system with an
 29 interest rate as defined by the retirement system.

30 (b)(1) If a member, retirant, or beneficiary appeals his or her
 31 conviction for an offense or a judgment described under ~~subdivision (a)(1)~~
 32 subdivision (a)(1) or (a)(2) of this section, benefit payments shall not be
 33 paid to the member, retirant, or beneficiary unless the appeal results in a
 34 reversal of the conviction or judgment.

35 (2)(A) If the conviction of a member, retirant, or beneficiary
 36 for an offense or a judgment described under ~~subdivision (a)(1)~~ subdivision

1 (a)(1) or (a)(2) of this section is reversed, the retirement system may make
2 benefit payments to the member, retirant, or beneficiary upon repayment of
3 accumulated contributions with interest to the system.

4 (B) If the conviction of a member, retirant, or
5 beneficiary for an offense or a judgment described under ~~subdivision (a)(1)~~
6 subdivision (a)(1) or (a)(2) of this section is affirmed, the retirement
7 system shall not make benefit payments to the member, retirant, or
8 beneficiary.

9 ~~(c) If a member or retirant does not have a contingent beneficiary who~~
10 ~~may receive benefit payments under this section, the member or retirant's~~
11 ~~contributions to the retirement system shall be refunded to the estate of the~~
12 ~~member or retirant.~~

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14 SECTION 3. DO NOT CODIFY. Legislative intent.

15 It is the intent of the General Assembly that this act not be construed
16 to apply retroactively to a member or retirant of a retirement system, and
17 shall only apply to a member who begins making employee contributions
18 following the effective date of this act.

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