



June 30, 2016

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Mr. Sam Watts  
Policy Development Analyst  
State of North Carolina  
Department of State Treasurer  
Retirement Systems Division  
3200 Atlantic Avenue  
Raleigh, NC 27604

### **Re: Full Actuarial Cost Factors**

Dear Mr. Watts:

As discussed in our letter of June 10, 2016 we have prepared our recommendations for the full actuarial cost factors, which are composed of three sets of factors: salary factors, reserve factors and COLA factors. For a member to pay the full actuarial cost of any service purchase, the cost should be based on the mortality, interest rate and salary increase assumptions used in the valuation of the pension plans.

### **Salary Factor Tables**

The salary factor tables are used to project the member's average final compensation based on their current compensation and an assumed salary increase. For the salary factors to be actuarially neutral, they should be based on the salary increase used in the valuation of the pension plans. The attached tables are based on a weighted average of the salary increase assumptions in the experience investigation prepared as of December 31, 2014 of the Teachers' and State Employees' Retirement System (TSERS) and the Local Governmental Employees' Retirement System (LGERS) and adopted by the Board of Trustees on January 21, 2016. We have weighted these factors as follows: 35% TSERS Teachers, 24% TSERS General Employees, 21% LGERS General Employees, 11% TSERS Other Education Employees, 5% LGERS Law Enforcement Officers, 3% LGERS Firefighters and Rescue Squad Workers and 1% TSERS Law Enforcement Officers.

There are two tables provided – numerator and denominator – that are necessary to determine the appropriate salary factor. The numerator table is based on the member's service at the time of the purchase. The denominator table is based on the member's service at earliest retirement eligibility. This is identical to the method for the current tables.

### **Reserve Factor Tables**

The reserve factor tables are used to calculate the value of the annuity attributable to the purchased service. For the reserve factors to be actuarially neutral, they should be

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based on the mortality and interest rate assumptions used in the valuation of the pension plans. The attached tables are based on an annual interest rate of 7.25% and the mortality assumption used for the payment option factors described in our letter entitled "Payment Option Factors" dated June 30, 2016.

There are two tables provided – numerator and denominator – that are necessary to determine the appropriate reserve factor. The numerator table is based on the member's age at earliest retirement eligibility. The denominator table is based on the member's age at the time of the purchase. This is identical to the method for the current tables.

### COLA Factor Table

The COLA factor table is used to calculate the value of the assumed COLA attributable to the portion of the benefit purchased. For the COLA factors to be actuarially neutral, they should be based on the mortality and interest rate assumptions used in the valuation of the pension plans and a reasonable expectation of future COLAs. The attached table is based on an annual interest rate of 7.25%, a mortality assumption that is identical to the assumption used for the reserve factor tables, and a 4% rate of future COLAs.

The table provided is based on the member's age at earliest retirement eligibility, which is identical to the method for the current table.

### Example

Assume we have a 35-year old member of TSERS with 10 years of service with earnings of \$50,000 during the last 12 months. The member would currently be able to retire at age 55 when the member has 30 years of service. Based on the Salary Numerator and Denominator tables, the member's projected average final compensation at age 55 is \$102,344 ( $\$50,000 \times 7.4396 / 3.6346$ ). The salary numerator is based on the member's current service of 10 years and the salary denominator is based on the member's service at earliest retirement of 30 years. The member's projected retirement benefit is \$55,880. The estimated required reserve for this benefit at age 55 is \$265,602 ( $\$55,880 \times 1.6023 \times 255,102 / 85,997$ ). The reserve numerator and COLA factor are based on the member's age at earliest retirement of 55 and the reserve denominator is based on the member's current age of 35.

If this member purchased five years of service, the member would have 15 years of current service and be able to retire at age 50 with 30 years of service. Based on the Salary Numerator and Denominator tables, the member's projected average final compensation at age 50 is \$81,837 ( $\$50,000 \times 5.9489 / 3.6346$ ). The salary numerator is based on the member's current service of 15 years and the salary denominator is based on the member's service at earliest retirement of 30 years. The member's projected retirement benefit is \$44,683. The estimated required reserve for this benefit at age 50 is \$330,089 ( $\$44,683 \times 1.6675 \times 380,983 / 85,997$ ). The reserve numerator and COLA factor are based on the member's age at earliest retirement of 50 and the reserve denominator is based on the member's current age of 35.

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The difference in these reserve amounts results in a total cost of \$64,487, not including any administrative fees. This example reflects our understanding of the current methodology for determining the full actuarial cost of service purchases.

The undersigned are Members of the American Academy of Actuaries and meet the Qualification Standards of the American Academy of Actuaries to render the actuarial opinion contained herein.

If you have any questions or need additional assistance, please let us know.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael A. Ribble".

Michael A. Ribble, FSA, EA, MAAA  
Principal, Consulting Actuary

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Larry Langer".

Larry Langer, ASA, EA, MAAA  
Principal, Consulting Actuary

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## North Carolina Retirement Systems

## Administration Factors based on Experience Study at December 31, 2014

## Reserve and COLA Factors

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Age	Reserve Numerator	Reserve Denominator	COLA Factors
15	4,955,535	349,978	2.0169
16	4,616,417	326,284	2.0100
17	4,300,260	304,190	2.0028
18	4,005,513	283,588	1.9955
19	3,730,727	264,382	1.9880
20	3,474,553	246,474	1.9803
21	3,235,732	229,776	1.9725
22	3,013,092	214,207	1.9644
23	2,805,538	199,691	1.9562
24	2,612,049	186,157	1.9478
25	2,431,675	173,539	1.9393
26	2,263,527	161,778	1.9305
27	2,106,774	150,813	1.9216
28	1,960,646	140,592	1.9124
29	1,824,422	131,062	1.9031
30	1,697,432	122,178	1.8936
31	1,579,051	113,894	1.8840
32	1,468,697	106,170	1.8741
33	1,365,827	98,970	1.8640
34	1,269,934	92,256	1.8538
35	1,180,547	85,997	1.8434
36	1,097,225	80,161	1.8328
37	1,019,558	74,721	1.8220
38	947,162	69,649	1.8110
39	879,681	64,920	1.7999
40	816,781	60,512	1.7886
41	758,153	56,402	1.7771
42	703,508	52,569	1.7655
43	652,576	48,996	1.7537
44	605,107	45,664	1.7418
45	560,867	42,557	1.7297
46	519,638	39,659	1.7175
47	481,218	36,956	1.7052
48	445,418	34,435	1.6927
49	412,061	32,083	1.6802
50	380,983	29,890	1.6675
51	352,045	27,813	1.6547
52	325,119	25,877	1.6418
53	300,069	24,071	1.6288
54	276,770	22,387	1.6156
55	255,102	20,817	1.6023
56	234,956	19,353	1.5889
57	216,229	17,988	1.5753
58	198,825	16,715	1.5617
59	182,654	15,528	1.5479
60	167,633	14,422	1.5341
61	153,685	13,390	1.5202
62	140,735	12,428	1.5062
63	128,718	11,531	1.4921
64	117,571	10,695	1.4780
65	107,234	9,914	1.4638
66	97,653	9,187	1.4496
67	88,777	8,508	1.4354
68	80,560	7,874	1.4211
69	72,956	7,283	1.4069
70	65,926	6,732	1.3927
71	59,430	6,217	1.3786
72	53,434	5,736	1.3646
73	47,904	5,286	1.3506
74	42,810	4,866	1.3367
75	38,124	4,474	1.3231
76	33,818	4,107	1.3096
77	29,869	3,763	1.2964
78	26,252	3,442	1.2834
79	22,956	3,123	1.2708
80	19,970	2,825	1.2584